



Summary of our Self Evaluation Report and Improvement Plan



F.C.J. Secondary School Bunclody is a co-educational school with a current enrolment of 1,024 students and 75 teaching staff. The school provides the Junior Cycle, an optional Transition Year Programme, The Established Leaving Certificate, and an optional Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme.

Our Self-Evaluation Report and Improvement Plan

We are currently in Year two of a three year cycle where our targets are:

- Student Motivation to Learn (Senior Cycle)
- Staff Wellbeing
- Communication in our school

In the last year, August 2024 – June 2025 we have been monitoring and refining our targets for the third SSE cycle by reviewing:

- The effectiveness of the Student Voice strategy implemented as a pilot (Sept '23)
- The effectiveness of the Reflecting To Learn Journal implemented over the past two academic years starting in Sept '23.
- The effectiveness of the use of Vsware to improve communication flows between management and teaching staff
- The effectiveness of the team building and staff welfare strategies implemented in Aug/Sept 24

1. Target 1 Student Motivation to learn

1.1 Continuation of Student Reflection Journal

Following our review of the Student Reflection Journal of year 1 we decided to continue with the strategy into 6th year.

- All 6th Year students (162) were required to complete a two page reflection Journal for each month of the academic year.

Target 2 Staff Wellbeing

2.1 Bonding Day

- In Aug '24 we devoted two hours from our beginning of year staff meeting to team building and staff bonding.

Target 3 Communication in our school

3.1 “Upcoming Events” on VShare

- Following our review of this strategy(June '24) we decided to continue with this strategy to maintain the flow of communication between management and teachers about school activities (matches, assemblies, trips visitors, etc) which can cause disruption to teaching and learning

4. SURVEY/ RESEARCH FINDINGS:

4.1 Student Motivation to learn

In April '25 we surveyed the 6th year students on their two year experience of the Student Motivation to Learn strategies.

- Almost 28% of students (27.6%) felt that the student Voice strategy of 5th year had been helpful to their learning.
- 12.5% had no opinion on the effectiveness or otherwise of the Student Voice strategy
- 59.8% felt that it had not been helpful to them in their learning.
- 47.3% felt that we should discontinue the strategy while 52.6% felt either that we should continue (29.4%) or had no opinion (23.2%)

4.2 Student Reflection Journal

- 70.5% of students surveyed felt that the Reflection Journal was not helpful to their learning and progress in 6th year while 11.6% found it helpful and 17.8% had no opinion.

- 13% of students surveyed felt that we should continue with the Reflection Journal in 6th year while 83.9% felt it should be discontinued
- Through a Focus Group we learned that students found the demands of 6th year stressful and didn't value having to review their work monthly.
- Many students felt the pressure of project deadlines, orals and practical exams was sufficient to keep them focused on their studies.
- Students also felt that the Academic Monitoring was sufficiently helpful to keep them motivated and on track.

4.3 Staff Wellbeing

- 83% of teachers felt that the team building exercise of Aug '24 was beneficial to creating a spirit of collegiality and friendship.
- 75% of teachers wanted team building to be a part of our return to school staff meeting in Aug/Sept '25.
- Staff recommended creating a social seating area within the staffroom
- Staff also recommended having more treats at break time.

4.4 Communication in our School

- 96.5% of staff surveyed thought that the "Upcoming Events" posted by management on VShare was effective in improving communication flows within the school
- 100% of staff felt that the posting of "Upcoming Events" should continue on VShare.
- Staff also recommended the introduction of a staff noticeboard for announcements/information for staff.
- Staff also recommended a Schools Whatsapp for staff to keep them informed
- Vshare messaging through the app was also recommended

This is what we did to find out what we were doing well, and what we could do better:

- We conducted student surveys.
- We conducted teacher surveys
- We conducted progress meetings with the SMT and the SSE committee.
- We held focus groups with students.

This is what we are currently working on:

- a. Continuing to embed formative feedback, differentiated homework and common standard of differentiated house exams.
- b. Continuing to support and encourage students as Independent Learners using our learning to Learn Module with 1st years.
- c. Promoting Self-directed learning throughout 1st 2nd and 3rd years with our Excellence in Learning Annual Awards.
- d. Developing staff Wellbeing initiatives in the school.
- e. Enhancing the physical environment of our school for the wellbeing of the school community.
- f. Encouraging student motivation and engagement in learning.
- g. Improving communication and the flow of information within our school

This is what you can do to help:

- Encourage your son/daughter to achieve his/her potential in all curricular areas.
- Engage in conversations about their learning with your son/daughter.
- Read and discuss the feedback offered by teachers to your son/daughter in school reports.
- Encourage your son/daughter to reflect on the quality of their work and their level of effort and achievement.
- Engage in conversations with your son/daughter about goal setting, revision planning and reviewing performance/attainment.

Here is some information about how we are carrying out our work and about what the Department of Education and Skills requires us to do.

School time and holidays

The Department requires all post-primary schools to have **166 school days** each year, and a **28-hour school week**.

This year we had 166 school days, from 24th August 2024 to 30st May 2025. Our school week is 28 hours.

The Department sets out a **standardised school year and school holidays**.

This year we took all our school holidays within the permitted time . **YES**

The Department sets out arrangements for **parent/teacher meetings and staff meetings**.

This year we had **6** parent/teacher meetings and **4** staff meetings, all in line with the Department's regulations.

Looking after the children in our school

The Department requires schools to follow the *Child Protection Procedures* it has set down.

Our board of management has agreed in writing to do this. **YES**

All teachers know about the *Procedures*, and we have informed all parents about them and how we follow them.

YES

Our Designated Liaison Person (DLP) is

Mr Brendan Daly

and our Deputy DLP is

Ms Una Osborne

Enrolment and Attendance

The Department requires schools to have and publish an admissions policy, to record and report attendance accurately, and to encourage high attendance and participation.

We have an admissions policy, and it is published. **YES**

We reviewed (and updated) our admissions policy on: **15th September 2020**

We keep accurate attendance records and report them as required. **YES**

We encourage high attendance in the following ways:

We have developed a supportive, positive learning environment.

We support and plan for the needs of the individual child.

We foster positive relations with parents and offer personalised support.

We reward full attendance at our Annual Awards

We acknowledge full school attendance (5/6 years) at our Annual Awards

This is how you can help:

Discuss with your son/daughter the value of regular school attendance.

Highlight to your son/daughter the disadvantages of missing classes.

Where possible organise medical/dental appointments outside school hours

Encourage your son/daughter to be punctual for school.

Contact the school if problems arise.

Positive behaviour for a happy school

The Department requires schools to have a code of behaviour and asks us to consult parents and students about it. We do this.

YES

Our code of behaviour describes and supports positive behaviour.

YES

We have a very clear and high-profile anti-bullying policy in our school.

YES

Our Improvement Plan

Timeframe of this improvement plan is Sept 2023 - 2026

Targets	Actions	Persons /groups responsible	Criteria for Success	Targets achieved	Progress and adjustments
Student Motivation To improve student's responsibility for and ownership of their learning	Introduce a reflective journal for all 5 th Year students to allow students to reflect on their progress in all areas of the curriculum.	All 5 th Year Students Parents SSE committee 5th Year Deans Assemblies	Students will become more active and independent learners and will assume more responsibility for their own learning and be better able to reflect on future actions required	On-going from Sept '23 – May '24	Survey/focus groups to be completed at end of year by parents and students to measure effectiveness of action. Following feedback from parents teachers and students (April/May '24) we will continue both these strategies with the 6th year cohort in Sept '24
To improve student motivation and commitment to their Learning	Establish a pilot Project with 5 th Year teachers to examine how student voice in teaching and learning could improve motivation and learning outcomes	5 th year teachers 5 th year students of those teachers SSE Committee Whole staff		On-going from Sept '23 – May '24	Surveys and focus groups with students and teachers to review the pilot project May '24.

Our Improvement Plan
Timeframe of this improvement plan is Sept 2023 - 2026

					Following student surveys (April '25) we have decided to discontinue the Reflection Journal and Student voice strategy with senior cycle students We further decided (May '25) to revise the Learning to learn module used in 1st year. The new module will incorporate reflection on learning as a skill to be learned during JC studies to benefit students throughout their secondary school studies. We will review at the end of academic year '25- '26.
--	--	--	--	--	--

Our Improvement Plan

Timeframe of this improvement plan is Sept 2023 - 2026

Targets	Actions	Persons /groups responsible	Criteria for Success	Targets achieved	Progress and adjustments
Staff Wellbeing To design activities and organise speakers to promote staff wellbeing.	Organise staff Bonding activities at the beginning of academic year '23 –'24.	Ian Byrne SSE Committee Tomas Earls	Teachers will feel valued and supported in their work in the school	August 2023	We will survey staff in May '24 to review our actions on staff wellbeing and to decide on future actions.
	Organise a suggestion box in the staffroom to encourage all members of staff to suggest ideas to promote teacher wellbeing in our school.	SSE Committee Lucy Frend Denise Nolan		September 2023	Following staff feedback (survey carried out April '24) it has been decided that Staff bonding activities will happen September '24
	Organise a speaker on staff wellbeing for Jan '24 Staff Meeting	SSE Committee Niall O Muiri		January '24	A Post of Responsibility has been created in our school for staff Wellbeing '24
	To establish fund raising to improve the environment of the school and facilities within the staffroom.	SSE Committee Parent Council Tomas Earls Justin Kelly		On-going from Nov '23	Following Staff feedback (May '25) we will continue with Staff bonding

Our Improvement Plan
Timeframe of this improvement plan is Sept 2023 - 2026

					activities on first day back Aug '25
					We have also created a temporary social seating area in the staffroom from Sept '25 to facilitate greater staff wellbeing. It will be temporary for '25-26 because of on-going construction works at our school.

Our Improvement Plan
Timeframe of this improvement plan is Sept 2023 - 2026

Targets	Actions	Persons /groups responsible	Criteria for Success	Targets achieved	Progress and adjustments
Communication To improve the flow of communication in a timely manner from senior management to each member of staff to facilitate the smoother running of the school for all.	The principal will use the Dashboard facility on VShare to inform teachers about all planned events for the following week. This update will be done on the Friday of the preceding week.	Principal SSE Committee	All staff will feel fully informed and better able to plan their lessons/educational activities etc	On-going throughout the year '23 – '24	In May '24 we will survey all staff to review this action Following the successful review of this measure by staff (April 24) we have decided to continue with the measure from Sept '24 Following the review (May '25) of the strategy by staff we have decided to continue the use of the Vshare dashboard to inform all staff about upcoming events in our school .