

**Stratford College School**  
**Self-Evaluation Report and Improvement Plan, 2023-2024**



**Theme: 'Disconnect to Reconnect: all students, all teachers, all classes'**

**A whole school approach to explore the link between social media, sleep hygiene and behaviour for learning.**

**In the last academic year August 2022- June 2023, we looked at teaching and learning in our school to find out what we are doing well and what areas need improvement.**

**This is what we discovered:**

- **The provision of quality active teaching & learning methodologies and assessment practices:** the number of teachers implementing active methodologies into every one-hour class has increased steadily with Continuous Professional Training in Magenta Principles, Deputy Principal led Teach-Meets and sharing of pedagogy amongst staff and through subject associations since return to school post Covid. Focus Groups of Student Council and small student groups in each year group reported various types of opportunities to work with others and actively in group settings for the most part.
- **The behavioural needs of students are supported** with the Student Support Team: Teachers' identification of students in need of additional support with Behaviour for Learning led to the creation of a new appointment on the staff in 2023 to support students with behavioural challenges.
- **Student Wellbeing is affected by poor sleep hygiene and social media:** The real impact of social media and sleep hygiene on Behaviour for Learning was identified in surveys in February and May 2023 conducted by the Wellbeing Team. Students had identified these areas in May 2022 in a Wellbeing Survey.

In February 2023 a *Student Wellbeing Survey on Sleep and social media (114 students responded to this survey)* reported some of the following data:

20% of students going to bed between 12-3am; 40% reported sleeping for only 5-7 hours; 32% of students reported feeling sleep deprived regularly in classes. 63% of students reported that parents do not take their devices away at night (phones, laptop, X- box, computer and games) and 90% said that the internet/Wi Fi is not turned off at night.

In a Parents' Survey (107 parents responded, also in February 2023)

89% said they would be willing to take their child's device each school night; 85% agreed that they encourage a good routine; 71% remind their children of the importance of a good-night's sleep; 44% reported taking devices away at night and 48% are strict about bedtime. Some of these parents would welcome school and Parents' Association support with practical advice on settings and controls and to reinforce the message that sleep, and social media are stressors on student wellbeing and behaviour for learning.

In a teachers' Survey on Behaviour for Learning (May 2023)

30% of teachers surveyed agree that students arrive on time for school; 23% of teachers agree that students are organised with materials for school (books, pens, copies etc) and that 40% of students work with constant attention. Some teachers reported how most students are 'respectful, motivated and interested' in learning and some reported the behaviour of some of the First-Year cohort of 2022-23 as concerning. This survey highlighted the need for greater academic engagement and adherence to school rules

#### National Findings

Our findings that most students feel that social media and overuse of phones affects their ability to learn, and their mental health reflects the evidence of National Surveys. For example, Study Clix and The Irish Times reported in May 2023 that social media and mobile phones had an impact on teenagers. Phone-Away Boxes for Junior Year groups installed in August 2022.

#### ***3<sup>rd</sup> Year Parent-Teacher Meeting Survey October 2023***

94% of parents encourage a good home-school routine; 19% are strict about bedtime; 18% take devices away but 100% are willing to take devices away if it's a whole school Wellbeing initiative approach. Respondents suggested: Increased awareness of limiting the use of phones, encourage more time away from devices;' Many parents are supportive of whole school initiative as they feel it will effect change in their children's habits as a result.

#### **Summary of Strengths:**

- Management, teachers, parents, and students collaborate to bring about school improvement: collaboration and interaction between all stakeholders at meetings and

through digital platforms that informs, reviews and reflects on behaviour for learning, academic engagement and social media and mobile phone usage. All stakeholders evaluate and monitor progress through reporting, communications such as meetings (Parent Teacher Meetings; Parents' Association; Student Council and the Board of Management and Staff Meetings); surveys; focus groups.

- Most teachers use active learning methodologies and opportunities for inclusive learning.
- Stakeholder acknowledgement of significant data and information gathered about the link between behaviour for learning, social media & sleep hygiene which will inform 2023-2024 SIP.
- Our good practice of collaboration, we engaged with Advisory Bodies: PDST; OIDE; and Inspectorate Advisory Visits to advise on best practice.
- Student and teacher identification of students need for support with responsible mobile phone use led to the installation of Student Phone Away Boxes for the junior classes in August 2022;
- Excellent pastoral care and teacher awareness of our students in a small school community and small class sizes
- Most students feel praised for their work and connected to their school community through curricular and extra-curricular opportunities.
- School life promotes responsible digital citizenship and offers many opportunities for students to reconnect through active learning curricular and co-curricular activities.

These are the main areas identified in the last academic year (August 2022-June 2023) as areas in need of improvement are sleep hygiene and social media use. Therefore, *'all subjects, all teachers, all classes'* will explore the link between sleep hygiene, social media and behaviour for learning.

**This is what we plan to do:**

- (i) Encourage student engagement in extra-curricular activities e.g., lunchtime and after school clubs.
- (ii) Monitor and support patterns of student behaviour around sleep hygiene and responsible social media usage to promote 'Behaviour for Learning' and academic engagement in a student-centred environment and gather data regarding sleep hygiene, social media usage and student behaviour for learning.
- (iii) Promote student interest and participation in active teaching and learning methodologies - learning through independent and collaborative learning opportunities; clear expectations of student requirements for behaviour for learning in an inclusive, productive, creative student-centred and active learning environment.
- (iv) Enhance knowledge, attitudes, and skills required to improve sleep hygiene and responsible social media usage and their links to behaviour for learning.

**This is how we will do it:**

Following on from the progress in our targets last year, we plan to focus on the following areas to achieve effective teaching and learning, we are guided by: *Looking at Our School 2022: A Quality Framework for Post-Primary Schools (LAOS, 2022)*.

**Within Domain 2: Learner experiences, the standard we have chosen is: 'Students engage purposefully in meaningful learning activities.'**

**Statements of highly effective practice include:**

- 'Students demonstrate very high levels of interest and participation in learning.'
- 'Students are able to learn both independently and collaboratively in a very purposeful, creative and productive manner'.

(Source: *Looking at Our School 2022: A Quality Framework for Post-Primary Schools*, pg. 28).

**Within Domain 3: Teachers' individual practice, the standard we have chosen is:**

**'The teacher has the requisite subject knowledge, pedagogical knowledge and classroom management skills.'**

**Statements of highly effective practice include:**

- 'Teachers create an inclusive, purposeful, student-centred learning environment based on mutual respect, affirmation and trust, in which students regulate and monitor their own behaviour.'
- 'Teachers have high expectations of students' learning and behaviour, communicate these expectations effectively to students, and facilitate students in internalising them'.

(Source: *Looking at Our School 2022: A Quality Framework for Post-Primary Schools*, pg. 30)

## **Actions to support implementation of the School Improvement Plan, 2023-2024**

- (i) Staff will agree measures that promote 'behaviour for learning' in the classrooms in the SIP Workshop @ Staff Meeting August 2023. This will establish why we need to 'Disconnect to Reconnect' and how we can achieve it (2 x strategies that all staff can use). Focus groups such as: Staff Meetings: December 2023 & May 2024; Student Council; small class groups; and surveys will give feedback and opportunities for review and reflection on our strategies; areas done well and areas in need of improvement.
- (ii) Parent Teacher Meetings – Parents will complete surveys on Sleep Hygiene, social media usage and consider how it may impact their child's behaviour for learning.
- (iii) 'All students, all teachers, all classes':  
'Teachers have high expectations of students' learning and behaviour and will communicate these expectations effectively to students and facilitate students in internalising them.' In turn, 'students will show high levels of interest and participation in their learning' through active teaching methodologies; independent and collaborative learning opportunities. Teachers will review learning and behaviour for learning regularly.
- (iv) Senior Management Teams, SSE Co-Ordinator, Subject teachers, Transition Year Maths- Science Students with their teachers, and Dublin City University (DCU), will survey parents, teachers and students and gather data from Focus Groups to monitor progress in Behaviour for Learning, sleep hygiene and social media use.

### **This is what parents can do to help:**

- Monitor your child's screen time, sleep hygiene and social media sites
- Encourage your child to pay particular attention to Behaviour for Learning such as punctuality; absences; being organised and prepared for the school day with appropriate books, materials and homework
- Encourage your child to participate in extra-curricular school clubs and community clubs
- Participate in Parent Surveys at Parent/ Teacher Meetings
- Browse material on the school website regarding School Self-Evaluation and our School Improvement Plan for this year.
- Attend the Parents' Association Meetings
- Keep conversations open with your child regarding the benefits of sleep hygiene and responsible digital citizenship (screen time and social media)
- Remind your child to reflect regularly on their interest in and participation in learning
- Encourage your child to take greater ownership and responsibility for their learning, mobile phone habits and sleep hygiene.

<b>SMART Targets:</b>	<b>Required Actions</b>	<b>Measurable Outcomes/ Success Criteria:</b>	<b>Timeframe for Actions</b>	<b>Review dates</b>
<p><u>Target 1:</u></p> <p>Teachers will monitor students' level of interest and participation in active teaching and learning methodologies by:</p> <p>(i) Effective written feedback through the 3, 2, 1, Plan.</p> <p>(ii) Teacher observation of student participation in active teaching methodologies such as effective questioning strategies; individual &amp; collaborative work through reports on VS Ware, School Wise &amp; Parent Teacher Meetings.</p> <p>(iii) Student behaviours such as punctuality, attendance; assignment submission will be monitored and reviewed by all teachers; Year Heads &amp; Deputy Principal weekly. (VS Ware)</p>	<p><b>August 2023:</b></p> <p><b>Staff will agree</b> on a common approach / checklist to monitor and support patterns of student behaviour (at home) around sleep and social media usage. (Staff Meeting August 2023)</p> <p><b>Teaching Strategies suggested and agreed by Staff on 24 August 2023 at the Whole-Staff Meeting</b> will be conducted throughout year and reviewed:</p> <p>(i)Active teaching Methodologies that foster independent and collaborative learning opportunities for students with teacher-controlled screen time.</p> <p>Examples: Critical thinking opportunities to research, discuss and explore the impact of phone usage and sleep hygiene on Behaviour for learning.</p> <p>Student led Maths – Science Statistics TY Project that monitors phone usage and social media of young people in our school.</p> <p>TY Young Social Innovators on the effects of social media &amp; Phone Use on students.</p> <p>Effective questioning strategies that include</p>	<p>Individual Teacher observations and reports on Behaviour for Learning in their classes and with their students–</p> <p>Digital Platforms Data:</p> <p>VS Ware comments; School Wise Observations of quality of work submitted; Attendance; and student feedback re. phone usage, social media, and sleep patterns.</p> <p>Surveys of teachers – teachers will respond to questions on Behaviour for Learning in their individual classes.</p> <p>Parents will review their children’s behaviour for learning at Parent Teacher Meetings through surveys and feedback to subject teachers</p> <p>Wellbeing Team will Survey Students &amp; Parents regarding: Sleep Hygiene, Mobile Phone and Social media usage and report on their findings.</p>	<p><b>Phase 1: August–December 2023/23:</b></p> <p><b>Regular teacher observations of their classes and students.</b></p> <p><b>SSE Surveys of students, teachers and parents.</b></p> <p><b>&amp;</b></p> <p><b>Phase 2: January -May 2024</b></p> <p><b>Regular teacher observations of their classes and students. SSE Surveys</b></p>	<p>August 2023, December 2023, May 2024 @ Staff Meetings</p> <p>Senior Mgt Meetings fortnightly reviews</p> <p>Surveys in October; Feb &amp; May</p> <p>SSE Co-Ordinator's Report in May 2024 to all Stakeholders.</p>

	<p>all students and foster interest and participation in all subject classes.</p> <p><u>3; 2; 1 Feedback Plan for critical thinking and empowering written and verbal feedback:</u></p> <p>When students finish a piece of work, teachers will ask students to demonstrate their understanding by writing down 3 things that they have learned in a lesson; 2 fun things that they learned and 1 question that they still have at the end.</p> <p>KWL Strategy: What I know; would like to know and what I learnt. - Written feedback from students.</p> <p>Others – HistoryMatters365 Teaching Methodologies and PDST and others shared by SSE Co-Ordinator</p> <p>Posters (laminated posters) on doors and noticeboards where staff and students have an opportunity to share what they are doing e.g., Ms. Kenny &amp; 5<sup>th</sup> Years are doing ... to 'Disconnect to reconnect' e.g., training on a basketball team outside school; in a local drama group every Thursday evening; walking my dog every</p>				
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	<p>afternoon after school with my friends</p> <p>All subject teachers will regularly check-in with students about their sleep patterns and remind students of the benefits of healthy sleep patterns, responsible phone and social media usage.</p>				
<p><b>Target 2</b></p> <p>To use re-search collected from Dublin City University Anti Bullying Centre Surveys of our students to evaluate phone policies in schools around Dublin (eg Pouch or Phone away boxes). The findings will be used to Inform our school policy</p> <p>See below for details of the timeline of this research study</p>	<p>DCU will administer student surveys in October-November 2023 – Wellbeing and Behaviour for Learning Teams to lead.</p>	<p>SSE Co-Ordinator with Wellbeing &amp; and Behaviour for Learning Teams</p>	<p>Data from surveys will reflect student experience of mobile phone and social media use and their effects on BFL.</p>	<p>October – November 2023</p>	<p>Staff Meeting December 2023; Management Meetings Dec 2023</p>

**Timeline for the Pouch and Phone research study:**

Time Period	Research Activity
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Week beginning 4th September 2023	Begin Recruitment for first survey (Time point 1)
Week beginning 11th September 2023	Launch survey (time point 1) - open for 1 month
October 2023	Survey (time point 1 closes)
Middle February 2024	Send out reminders for survey (time point 2)
Late February 2024	Launch survey (time point 2) and begin recruitment for focus groups
March-April 2024	Focus groups with principals, teachers and pupils, and undertake analysis of focus groups
March-May 2024	Analysis of all survey data and produce report

\*Note: This timeline is contingent on DCU REC (Ethics) approval. The timeframe for time point 1 might be pushed back a week depending on whether Dr. Megan Reynolds receives approval from the ethics committee before the beginning of September 2023.

## Appendix to School Self-Evaluation Report: legislative and regulatory checklist (Post-Primary)

This is not an exhaustive checklist. It is intended to assist the board of management in carrying out its leadership and management responsibilities and functions, as set out in the Education Act (1998), and within the context of its own school. The completed checklist will contain sensitive information and should be treated as confidential.

Relevant area	Relevant legislation, rule or circular	Is your school fully meeting the requirements of the relevant legislation, rule or circular?	If no, indicate aspects to be developed
Time in school - Length of school year (minimum of 167 days for all year groups) - Length of school week (minimum of 28 hours for all year groups)	Circular M29/95	Yes Yes	
Standardisation of school year	Circular 0009/2017	Yes	
Procedures for submission of data returns to the Department	Circular 0038/2014 DTR returns procedures information, updated annually on education.ie  Pod and PPOD	Yes	
Repeating a year – conditions to be met	M2/95	Yes	
Annual returns to Tusla on attendance, suspension and exclusion	Section 21 Education (Welfare) Act 2000	Yes	
Implementation of national agreement regarding additional time requirement	Circular 0043/2014 Circular 0045/2016, points 21-25	Yes	
Development of school plan	Section 21 Education Act 1998	Yes	
Engagement with school self-evaluation process	Circular 0040/2016	Yes	
Whole-school guidance plan	Section 21 Education Act 1998, Section 21 Education Act 1998, Circulars 10,11,12/2017	Yes	
Guidance provision in postprimary schools	Section 9(c), Education Act 1998, Circular PPT12/05, Circulars 10,11,12/2017	Yes	
Exemption from the study of Irish	Circular M10/94	Yes	

Implementation of national literacy and numeracy strategy	Circular 25/2012, Circular 42/2015, Interim Review and New Targets (2017, DES)	Yes	
Arrangements for the Implementation of the Framework for Junior Cycle	Circular 0015/2017	Yes	
In-school management structures	Part V Education Act 1998, 0003/2018	Yes	
Approved allocation of teaching posts for 2023/24	Circulars 0007, 0008, 0009/2018	Yes	
Leadership and management posts	Circular 0003/2018	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	
Parents as partners in education	Circular M27/91	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	
Digital Strategy	Circular 0001/2017 and 0011/2018	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	
Relevant area	Relevant legislation, rule or circular	Is your school fully meeting the requirements of the relevant legislation, rule or circular?	If no, indicate aspects to be developed
and Grant Scheme for ICT Infrastructure	Digital Learning Plan Use of the Digital Learning Framework	Yes yes	
Implementation of Child Protection Procedures 2017	<b>Circular 0081/2017</b> <b>Please record the following information in relation to child protection as reported to the board</b>	Yes	
	<b>Child Protection Oversight Report presented at each board meeting</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	
	<b>Number of reports submitted by the DLP to Tusla and reported to the board</b>	2	
	<b>Number of cases where the DLP sought advice from Tusla and as a result of this advice, no report was made</b>	2	
	<b>Number of cases where a mandated person other than the DLP made a report to Tusla and notified the DLP</b>	0	
Implementation of vetting requirements	National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012 Circular 0026/2015 Circular 0016/2017: Statutory Requirements for Retrospective Vetting Child Protection Procedures 2017	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	

Implementation of complaints procedure as appropriate	Section 28 Education Act 1998		Yes	
	Please record the following information in relation to complaints made by parents during this school year			
	Number of formal parental complaints received	0		
	Number of formal complaints processed	0		
Refusal to enrol	Section 29 Education Act 1998		Yes	
	Please record information in relation to appeals taken in accordance with Section 29 against the school during this school year			
	Number of section 29 cases taken against the school	0		
	Number of cases processed at informal stage	0		
	Number of cases heard	0		
	Number of appeals upheld	0		
Suspension of students	Section 29 Education Act 1998		Yes	
	Please record information in relation to appeals taken in accordance with Section 29 against the school during this school year			
	Number of section 29 cases taken against the school	0		
	Number of cases processed at informal stage	0		
	Number of cases heard	0		
	Number of appeals upheld	0		
Expulsion of students	Section 29 Education Act 1998		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	
	Relevant area	Relevant legislation, rule or circular	Is your school fully meeting the requirements of the relevant legislation, rule or circular?	If no, indicate aspects to be developed
	Please record information in relation to a taken in accordance with Section 29 against school during this school year			

	Number of section 29 cases taken against the school	1		
	Number of cases processed at informal stage	0		
	Number of cases heard	1		
	Number of appeals upheld	0		
	Number of appeals dismissed	1		

## APPENDIX TO SCHOOL SELF-EVALUATION REPORT: POLICY CHECKLIST (POST-PRIMARY)

Policy	Relevant legislation, circulars, guidelines	Has the policy been approved by the Board of Management?	If no, indicate aspects to be developed
Enrolment policy	Section 15(2)(d) of Education Act Equal Status Acts 2000-2011 Circular M51/93	Yes	
Attendance and participation strategy <sup>1</sup>	Circular M51/93 Section 22, Education (Welfare) Act 2000	Yes	
Code of behaviour, including anti-bullying policy <sup>2</sup> Dignity in the Workplace Charter	Circular M33/91 NEWB guidelines <i>Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools</i> Section 23, Education (Welfare) Act 2000 Equal Status Acts 2000-2011 <i>Anti-bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-primary schools</i> 2013, and Circular 45/13 Section 8(2)(b), Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005	Yes	
Child Protection Procedures and Child Safeguarding Statement	Circular 00036/2023	Yes	
Annual attendance report to Tusla and Parents' Association	Section 21, Education (Welfare) Act 2000	Yes	

<sup>1</sup> Under the provisions of the Education (Welfare) Act (2000) (section 22) the school's attendance strategy should conform to the provisions stipulated.

<sup>2</sup> Under the provisions of the Education (Welfare) Act (2000) (section 23) the school's code of behaviour should conform to the specifications stated. <sup>3</sup> Section 9 of the Education Act (1998) requires a school to "use its available resources" to identify and provide for the educational needs of those "with a disability or other special educational needs."

Health and Safety Statement	Health and Safety Act 2005 Section 20	Yes	
Critical Incident Management policy	Responding to Critical Incidents: Guidelines and Resource Materials, NEPS 2016	Yes	
Data protection	General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) May 2018: see <a href="http://www.dataprotectionschools.ie">www.dataprotectionschools.ie</a>	Yes	
Special educational needs / Inclusion policy <sup>3</sup>	Education Act (1998) Equal Status Acts (2000 to 2011), Education (Welfare) Act (2000), Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act (EPSEN) <sup>3</sup> (2004) Disability Act (2005)) Circular 0014/2017	Yes	
Relationships and sexuality education (RSE) policy	Circulars 37/2010, 23/2010, 0027/08	Yes	
Substance use policy	Department of Education and Skills Directive; guidelines issued to schools in 2002	Yes	
Internet acceptable use policy	National Council for Technology in Education (NCTE) Guidelines, 2012 ( <a href="http://www.webwise.ie">www.webwise.ie</a> )	Yes	

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<sup>3</sup> The EPSEN Act requires that schools be inclusive of and provide an appropriate education for students with special educational needs.