# Willow Park School

# School Self Evaluation and School Improvement Plan

# 2022-2023

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# 1. Introduction

Willow Park School is a one-year school. Students engage with the first year of the Junior Cycle Curriculum before continuing their studies for a further five years in Blackrock College. This presents the unique position of having an entirely new student body every year.

As is now annual, in early September, the Additional Needs Department and Maths Department set about obtaining baseline data about the new student group at the beginning of the year. This is achieved through the administration of standardised assessments in English and mathematics. This evaluation of baseline data is imperative to establish a working understanding of where each pupil is academically upon entrance to the school.

Learner outcomes, in the context of Willow Park School as having an entirely new student body year on year, were again also assessed by formulating quantitative and qualitative data about the progress of each student in the year group, at set points during the year (Tutor feedback, Student Council, Committees, Extra-Curricular Engagement, Exit Surveys, etc). This mode of assessment, the in-tandem and ongoing evaluation of both quantitative and qualitative data about students' progress, was commended by the April 2015 report from our Whole School Evaluation – Management, Leadership and Learning (WSE-MLL) inspection as being directly beneficial to students. We have therefore maintained this mode of assessment and indeed augmented it where possible.

This document records the outcomes of our last school improvement plan (SIP) 2021 to 2022, the findings of this year's school self-evaluation (SSE), and the current improvement plan for 2022 to 2023, including targets and the actions we will implement to meet the targets.

The next section describes the outcomes of the SIP 2021 to 2022.

**1.1 Outcomes of Improvement Plan from September 2021 to June 2022**

The previous SIP focused on four targets. These were 1) Assessment, 2) Improving Self-Efficacy of Students, 3) Promotion of Active Learning Methodologies, 4) Student Self-Management Techniques. The outcomes of these targets are outlined in the next section.

1. Students and parents received formative feedback through monthly progress cards completed by teachers.

2. In line with the Junior Cycle Specification all academic assessment was categorised using descriptors, i.e., distinction, higher merit, merit, etc.

3. Christmas exams were brought forward to November and renamed as the Michaelmas Exams, and the summer exams were brought forward to May. This was done to facilitate students receiving more feedback on their academic progress.

4. Dates for students' continuous assessment were included on the school calendar.

5. Learning outcomes for each lesson were shared with students at the beginning of the lesson.

6. Students were encouraged to develop the key skills from the Junior Cycle specification during lessons and projects.

7. Students were given subject specific tasks to provide an increased opportunity to develop their physical, social, and emotional well-being.

8. Promotion of well-being techniques and coping strategies, that students learn during their weekly well-being class help students if they feel overwhelmed.

## 2. School Self Evaluation

This section describes the SSE procedures that were followed in the school. It will outline what aspects of teaching and learning were evaluated, the findings of this evaluation, and the evidence for these findings. We undertook self-evaluation of teaching and learning during the period September 2021 to June 2022. This evaluation focused on the following aspects of teaching and learning:

1. Assessment

2. Improving Self-Efficacy of Students

3. Promotion of Active Learning Methodologies

4. Student Self-Management Techniques.

### 2.1 Findings

This is section outlines the effective or very effective practice in our school in relation to the areas of teaching and learning described in the previous section.

1. Qualitative feedback given to students in class and to parents through the monthly report cards.

2. The use of ICT across the school day and the accessibility of digital resources when students are not in the school building.

3. Staff engagement in continuous online teaching and collaboration via Microsoft Teams, OneNote, and other virtual learning environments (VLE), such as Moodle.

4. A positive environment for students to learn in and for staff to work in.

5. Positive staff engagement with the new Junior Cycle framework and common methods to report on student assessment in line with the new Junior Cycle framework.

6. Positive relationships between teachers and students.

7. Support structures for students to promote their wellbeing.

8. A diverse curriculum and a wide range of subject choice for students.

9. A wide range of extra-curricular activities for students to engage in.

## 2.2. Evidence for these Findings

The evidence for the findings from section 2.1 was obtained from several different sources.

1. Exit surveys taken by students, parents, and staff in May 2022. These surveys provided both qualitative and quantitative data on the experiences of the school community in the academic year 2021/2022.

2. Results from a mid-year survey on the effectiveness of the SIP 2021-2022. This survey was taken by staff in December 2021.

3. Qualitative feedback from staff during staff and department meetings.

4. Qualitative feedback from cross curricular whole school activities

5. Whole campus committee meetings.

6. Quantitative data on students' academic progress during the year. Qualitative feedback from parents and guardians during meetings with teachers, management, and other correspondence with the school.

# 3. School Improvement Plan (SIP)

This section outlines aspects of teaching and learning the school has identified and prioritised for further improvement.

The targets for the SIP have been set using data obtained the sources described in section 2.2

## 3.1 Targets for Academic Year 2022 – 2023

This section will list the targets of the SIP 2022-2023. The action points for these targets will be outlined in section 3.2. The targets of the SIP 2022-2023 are

1. Assessment for Learning

2. Digital Literacy

3. Wellbeing and Student Self-Efficacy

4. Sustainable Environment

## 3.2 Actions

This section will outline the action points for the targets listed in section 3.1.

| Improvement Target | Required Actions |
|---|---|
| **Assessment for Learning** | Continue to embed/use:<br><br>• Reinforce the learning intentions at the start of the lesson and recap at the end of the lesson to check if they were achieved. These learning intentions should be visible to students during the lesson<br><br>• The comment section on the monthly report card should contain formative feedback on the students' progress. This should take the form of areas the student has done well in and areas the student needs to improve.<br><br>• In line with the Junior Cycle Specification all academic assessment will continue to be categorised using descriptors, i.e., distinction, higher merit, merit, etc instead of percentage marks. |
| **Digital Literacy** | Making the school's digital platforms more accessible and user friendly for students. This will be done by:<br><br>• Teachers only using OneNote and Microsoft Teams to share content with students.<br><br>• Training for all students on how to use these platforms at the beginning of the school year and as necessary throughout the year during wellbeing classes. |

| **Wellbeing and Student Self-Efficacy** | Improving students' self-efficacy and resilience by:<br><br>• Use of students' targets in Skilly (a digital wellbeing resource) which, reflect the key skills in the Junior Cycle Specification. These targets are outlined in the Wellbeing Scheme of Work and Subject Plan.<br><br>• Increased use of the homework journal to record homework, revision work, etc in each class. Teachers and tutors should monitor student use of this and encourage all students to fully utilise this resource.<br><br>• Study skill seminars in September to give students with the required skills to revise content in secondary school. These skills will be reviewed by tutors and reinforced by the students' teachers. |
| --- | --- |
| **Sustainable Environment** | Promoting a more sustainable environment within the school by:<br><br>• The Sustainability Committee taking responsibility for lost property.<br><br>• A reward system for class groups that take care of their physical environment (school building) and their own property. |

**3.3 Roles of Responsibility**

This section outlines who is responsible for the implementation, monitoring and review of this improvement plan. Staff responsible for teaching and learning in the school will undertake the actions described in section 3.2 to achieve the targets outlined in section 3.1 As part of his Assistant Principal role Daniel O'Neill will monitor these targets and review the improvement plan as necessary. The progress of the SIP will be discussed during staff meetings. Any changes to the SIP will be discussed with school management and communicated to staff.

**3.4 Measuring the Progress of these Targets**

This section describes how the effectiveness of the targets set out in section 3.1 will be measured.

1. SSE progress will be reported on at every staff meeting to allow staff update and discussion and included on subject department meeting agendas.

2. SSE notice board in the staffroom and SSE Staff Team Chanel.

3. Qualitative feedback from students through discussion at student committees.

4. A mid-year survey on the effectiveness of the current targets and their implementation will be distributed to staff in December 2022.

5. Exit surveys taken by students, staff, and parents/guardians.

As the SIP is implemented Daniel O'Neill will record the progress made, any adjustments made, and when the original or modified targets have been achieved.