

School Self-Evaluation Support and Improvement Plan (SIP)

End of academic Year 2023/24

1. INTRODUCTION

As mandated by the DES circular 0056/2002, St. Andrew's College has now moved into the third cycle of the SSE process. The third cycle of SSE, 2022-2026, comprises two phases:

Phase 1 - 2022-2023: Review year during which, schools are required to:

- Use/Continue to use the SSE process to identify and reflect on the impact of COVID-19 on their pupils'/students'
 - educational experiences and outcomes.
 - Wellbeing.
 - Motivation and engagement in learning.
- Consider the requirements regarding the use of the SSE process to initiate a wellbeing promotion review and development cycle by 2025 as set out in Circular 0033/2021.
- Take stock of the effectiveness of their SSE process to date, developing and consolidating it as necessary to ensure it is collaborative, inclusive and impactful.

Phase 2 – 2023-2026: during this three-year period, the school will have the autonomy to choose the focus of their SSE in conjunction with a wellbeing promotion and review cycle as follows:

- Context-specific school priorities related to teaching, learning, equity and inclusion
- National curriculum goals

Other national strategies, for example, the National Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development.

This report outlines the actions taken in the first year of the second phase.

1.1 Outcomes of Phase 1 as outlined above.

Feedback and wellbeing were chosen as themes of focus for the academic year 2023/24 as an outcome of the phase 1 review year 2022/23.

1.2 School context

St. Andrew's College is a co-educational, fee-paying secondary school under the trusteeship of St. Andrew's College, Dublin Ltd.

Founded in 1894 by the presbyterian community as a boys' school, it has grown substantially since it moved to Booterstown Avenue in 1973 and began operating as a co-educational school.

The school has a strong international dimension which creates a unique multi-cultural learning community.

2. FEEDBACK

We undertook self-evaluation of feedback during the period January – May 2024 as feedback was outlined as an advisory area of focus for the academic year 2023/24 during the review year 2022/23.

2.1 Staff Survey

A survey was conducted among staff, with 39 responses. The survey questions were constructed using the Looking at Our Schools (LAOS, 2022) indicators of highly effective practice as a scaffold. Once the survey was completed, the SSE Coordinator, the SSE committee and senior management dedicated considerable time to analysing the detailed and extensive responses. Below are some of the initial quantitative findings of the survey:

Positive Findings
69% of staff members say they always give verbal feedback on students' written work.
95% of staff members say that their students are always aware of what is expected from them.

Areas for Improvement
72% of staff members say that their feedback specifies what students have achieved and what they need to improve.
44% of staff members say that their students are given a chance to make improvements to their work based on feedback.

2.2 Student Survey

A survey was conducted among 5th year students, with 70 responses. The survey questions were constructed using the Looking at Our Schools (LAOS, 2022) indicators of highly effective practice as a scaffold. Once the survey was completed, the SSE Coordinator, the SSE committee and senior management dedicated considerable time to analysing the detailed and extensive responses. Below are some of the initial quantitative findings of the survey:

Positive Findings

77% of students said that they read feedback and reflect on what it says.

80% of students said they consider feedback for their next assignment.

Areas for improvement

50% of students said that they do not receive enough feedback from teachers.

63% of students said that they do not have a copy or somewhere to make notes/corrections on feedback.

2.3 Student focus group

A student SSE focus group of 9 5th year students was formed to ensure that student voice was central to the SSE process. A focus group was held with this committee and the SSE coordinator. This was held after the results of the surveys had been analysed. The questions were created based on the survey results, focusing on the concerns and allowing a broad discussion on feedback. Students were most emphatic about oral feedback. They feel that one to one oral feedback from teachers is extremely valuable but that they don't get enough of it. With everyone in agreement that there is not enough time in the school day for teachers to speak with students individually, the students suggested that they be able to attend parent teacher meetings. They felt that it would be more beneficial than just parents attending, as the oral feedback would be more valuable to them. Students also expressed that feedback is most valuable when specific as to what they did well in and how they can improve, opposed to a general mark or comment. Finally, students explained that there is no whole school approach to feedback in terms of what students do with it. They suggested that a blanket approach may work for younger years.

Based on the overall survey findings, three common areas regularly emerged as significant points for concentration:

- Encourage constructive and specific feedback
- Find time for Individual verbal student teacher feedback
- Implement a whole school approach to student actions re feedback in younger years.

3. WELLBEING PROMOTION

The requirements set out in Circular 0033/2021 regarding the initiation of a well-being promotion review and development cycle by 2025 were duly considered. This circular provided valuable guidelines and recommendations to enhance the overall well-being of students within the school. The SSE program has incorporated these requirements in this academic year to ensure a comprehensive and inclusive approach to student well-being.

In making decisions on the focus of SSE in the next year, the attention of schools is drawn to the Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice 2018–2025.

3.1 House Cup

Wellbeing Framework for Practice	
Key Area	Culture and environment
Indicator of success:	Children, young people and staff experience a sense of belonging and feel safe, connected and supported
Statement of effective practice for all	The wellbeing of the whole school community is central to the school’s ethos/mission statement and school leaders and management actively promote wellbeing.

In keeping with the statement of effective practice in the key area of Culture and Environment as outlined in the Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice, and as a result of the recommendation of the 2022/23 SIP recommendation that work in collaboration with the anti-bullying committee should continue to counteract bullying and other negative behaviours. The anti-bullying committee, under the leadership of the anti-bullying coordinator, ran 3 house cup events during this academic year with a themed dress-up competition at Halloween, a festive decorating competition at Christmas and the House Cup Day in April.

The core goal of the house cup is to create a sense of community while empowering senior students to be role models for junior years.

House Cup - Student Survey

A survey on the House Cup events was conducted amongst the entire student body. 321 students responded.

Positive Findings
82% of students think that we should continue to have the House Cup.
74% of students answered 3 or 4 on a scale of 1 - 4 when asked if they feel that the House Cup has helped to improve the culture of inclusivity in the school.
88% of students answered 3 or 4 out on a scale of 1 – 4 when asked if they feel that the House Cup has had a positive impact on the school.
Areas for improvement
30% of students didn’t know the House Cup Day was on.
A number of students commented on the survey that more communication and organization before and during events was required in order to let people know where they were supposed to be and when.

3.2 Amber Flag

Wellbeing Framework for Practice	
Key Area	Curriculum (Teaching and learning)
Indicator of success:	Children, young people and staff experience a sense of belonging and feel safe, connected and supported.
Statement of effective practice for all	Wellbeing promotion within the school develops children and young peoples’ awareness of mental health difficulties and information is shared about when to seek help and who to go to when distressed.

The 2022/23 SIP recommended that SSE in 2023/24 should “Enhance student confidence levels in seeking and acquiring emotional and mental wellbeing support”, and “Introduce additional mechanisms to support the emotional and mental wellbeing of students and in doing so alleviate scholastic pressures, anxiety, stress and overwhelming emotional experiences.”

In keeping with this statement of effective practice as outlined in the Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice and the 2022/23 SIP recommendation to enhance student confidence levels in seeking and acquiring emotional and mental wellbeing support, the 6th year team began work on applying for the Pieta Amber Flag. The Pieta Amber Flag initiative recognises the efforts of primary schools, secondary schools, Youthreach, third level institutions, further education and training centres, clubs and organisations to create healthy and inclusive environments that support mental wellbeing.

To begin the Amber Flag process, the committee made a wellbeing noticeboard for students which is located on the main corridor beside the nurse’s station. See Appendix 1a.

The purpose of the noticeboard is to make students aware of the supports in SAC – clearly and visually and by images show students where to go if they are upset and photographs of the guidance department staff and nurse.

Students worked on a decision tree – what to do if you are not feeling good in school- they worked closely with Guidance and SLT about wording, it is completed, printed and on the board. See Appendix 1b.

Lists of outside agencies with a synopsis of work they do was also created. QR codes were made for quick access to the information.

4. IMPROVEMENT PLAN

4.1 Feedback

The SSE process for the academic year began in January 2024. Staff were updated on the work of the SSE committee by the SSE coordinator during a staff meeting in April.

To allow for more time for individual oral feedback, the possibility of students attending a parent teacher meeting is being investigated.

The SSE is developing a feedback sheet for junior years to have a whole school approach to feedback in younger years.

A review of the feedback initiatives will be carried out.

4.2 Wellbeing – House Cup

The House Cup has been a positive and well received initiative introduced by the antibullying committee. The survey results suggest that the House Cup initiative should be maintained and continued.

To let students and teachers know it is on and details of it, more advertising of the event in the period leading up to it is suggested for next year.

To ensure that the day runs smoothly and that everyone knows the details of the day's activities, it is suggested that the running of the day is communicated clearly to both staff and students.

4.3 Wellbeing – Amber Flag

It is recommended that a committee is formed during autumn 2024. The committee should continue to work on initiatives to achieve the Pieta Amber Flag.

A survey will be carried out to review the success of the Amber Flag initiatives.

4.4 Wellbeing promotion and review cycle

Using the Wellbeing Frameworks statements of effective practice, map the Colleges wellbeing programme so that gaps can be highlighted in statements and a cycle of improvement planned.

Appendix 1

A. Wellbeing Noticeboard



B. Decision Tree

