

**LORETO ABBEY SECONDARY SCHOOL**

**DALKEY, CO. DUBLIN**



**OUR SELF-EVALUATION REPORT AND IMPROVEMENT PLAN  
FOR  
ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING  
FOR THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY  
SEPTEMBER 2016**

**A school self-evaluation of teaching and learning was undertaken from November 2015 to September 2016. Teachers' practice with particular reference to teaching approaches was the focus of the evaluation.**

- There is a critical mass of teachers using key AFL\* strategies
- Lessons are guided by syllabus linked learning outcomes that for the most part are shared with students
- Active learning methodologies are a feature of lessons
- Student understanding is checked throughout the lesson in relation to the achievement of lesson outcomes
- Teachers encourage self-assessment in their lessons
- Subject specific language is taught and students are aware of key words in their subjects
- Assessment criteria are shared and feedback is given

\* AFL – Assessment for Learning

**Our findings are based on evidence gathered using the following methods:**

Interviews with two student focus groups, one of which met with the full staff to reflect on teaching and learning

A review by a staff focus group on Quality Statements on Teaching Approaches (p.41: SSE\* Guidelines)

A survey of 2nd Year students using Google Docs on AFL\* practices in the classroom

A review of the recent DES Inspection Reports and feedback during Incidental Inspections

\* SSE – School Self Evaluation

\*AFL - Assessment for Learning

**The following areas are prioritised for improvement:**

- There is a need to further develop teacher awareness and understanding of the uses of AFL\* strategies to improve teaching and learning.
- Learning outcomes should be shared for every lesson.
- Opportunities for peer assessment should be increased.
- Assessment criteria should be shared in every lesson and feedback on assessed work should indicate clearly how improvements may be made.

\* AFL – Assessment for Learning

**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 **167 school days** each year, and a **28-hour school week**.

This year we had 168 school days, from 26<sup>th</sup> August 2015 to 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2016. 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 parent/teacher meetings and 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 told all parents about them and how we follow them. YES

Our Designated Liaison Person (DLP) is Mr. Robert Dunne  
and our Deputy DLP is for 2015/2016 Mr. Bernard O'Boyle

### ***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: 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2015

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

We encourage high attendance in the following ways:

- Good attendance is promoted in Loreto Abbey by a culture of high expectations, encouraging each student to take responsibility for her own learning and achieve her full potential through regular presence in class
- Students are made aware of the incremental nature of learning and the implications for them of irregular attendance during assemblies, general classes and in SPHE.
- Posters are displayed in prominent positions highlighting that "Every Day Counts. Every Class Counts".
- The Year Head and/or Mentor(s) of the Student Support Team meet with students for whom attendance or punctuality has been identified as an issue.

- Reports to parents/guardians include a detailed breakdown of attendance for the period in question.
- Records of attendance and punctuality are available to view on VSWare by logging in using the unique password for that student.
- The school's reward system acknowledges excellent attendance and punctuality and recognises students who show significant improvements in attendance and punctuality.
- A sense of belonging and connectedness in school is developed through participation in school life and/or extra-curricular activities.

This is how you can help:

Parents/Guardians are asked:

- To support the school's Attendance Strategy in compliance with their legal responsibilities to ensure that their child is attending a recognised school on every day that the school is open. (Section 17 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000). Only absences relating to activities organised by the school or in which the school is involved can be authorised by the Principal (Section 21(9) of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000). Therefore the school cannot give 'permission' for holiday absences during term time.
- To ensure regular and punctual attendance of students and avoid unnecessary absences and where possible to arrange elective appointments outside of school time. If such appointments must take place within school hours, then students should return to school following the appointment.
- To provide a written explanation for the student's absence on the first day of return to school.
- To inform the Year Head in advance of any planned absences from school.
- To provide to the school reliable contact telephone numbers and alternative 'emergency' numbers.
- To adhere to the procedures set out in the Strategy for the withdrawal of students from school during the school day.
- To acknowledge and, where necessary, reply to communications from the school in relation to attendance issues.

### ***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