



# DOMINICAN COLLEGE SION HILL

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## Report on the School Self Evaluation Process

June 2024

### Section A

During the academic year 2023/24, we continued to monitor the effectiveness of our SSE processes to date which we reviewed in 2022/23 as part of the review year nationally. We also continued to monitor SSE targets which arose from our 'Learning in 2023' post-Covid survey conducted in March 2023. We did this via discussion at staff meetings, discussion with senior and middle management and also via staff, parent and student surveys and focus groups. In this way, we continued to build on strengths of the school in terms of Teaching & Learning initiatives, literacy and numeracy, digital literacy and collaborative practise. We continued work on our Wellbeing Promotion Review and Development Cycle and put a number of initiatives in place in relation to wellbeing.

- The academic tracking process which was revived last year was strengthened this year and students were made aware of academic tracking colour via meetings with Year Head and Tutor (Domain 1, strand 1 and Domain 2, strand 1)
- The vast majority of students feel that ICT/ a VLE is used to support their learning (Domain 2, strand 2)
- A large number of students report that they enjoy problem solving (Domain 2, strand 3)
- The number of students who are aware of the teaching of RSE has increased slightly (Domain 2, strand 4)
- Half the student population are aware of how to improve in subjects via formative assessment (Domain 2, strand 5)
- A large number of students reported a good atmosphere in the school and very good facilities in the school (Domain 2, strand 6)
- A significant number of teachers are using a blended approach to assessment with the occasional online assessment (Domain 2, strand 7)
- A significant number of teachers co-construct revision planners with all students (Domain 3, strand 1)
- A large number of teachers use the 'estimate-calculate-check' strategy with students (Domain 3, strand 2)
- Teachers continue to provide regular, constructive feedback via the gradebook facility on Schoolwise (Domain 3, strand 3)
- Teachers continue to discuss target grades with students in academic classes (Domain 3, strand 4)
- A large number of students feel they get opportunities to work in groups (Domain 3, strand 5)

- The vast majority of teachers used shared folders on a shared platform to share resources (Domain 4, strand 1)

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

- Presentation of School Self Evaluation targets at staff meeting in September and discussion of how to proceed with SSE targets for the school year
- SSE Staff Survey in March 2024 to review effectiveness of teaching and learning, digital literacy, wellbeing and collaborative practice strategies
- Focus groups in first and second year on the effectiveness of group work
- End-of-year student, staff and parent surveys - May 2024

### **This is what we are now going to work on for 2024/2025**

- Will maintain the existing strengths of our school and continue to develop all strategies already in place
- We will continue to work on AFL strategies and encourage students to become independent and engaged learners via the quality of constructive feedback and formative feedback we give them
- We will continue to facilitate RSE lessons in the school and to make students aware of these lessons
- We will continue to work on facilitating quality group work in classes
- We will enable students to socialise and mix with peers easily at break times with our improved social spaces
- We will continue to encourage a blended approach to assessment
- We will continue our wellbeing promotion review and development cycle for 2025 and as part of this, we will continue to monitor attendance, work on formative feedback and groupwork, improve the quality of reporting to parents, continue with our SST strategy and meetings, work on our teaching of RSE and encourage involvement from even more students in extracurricular activities

## **SECTION B**

**Additional 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. 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.

The Department sets out arrangements for parent/teacher meetings and staff meetings. All meetings were held in accordance with Department of Education regulations.

### **Looking after the children in our school**

The Department requires schools to follow the Child Protection Procedures it has set down. In accordance with the requirements of the Children First Act 2015, Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017, the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2017 and Tusla Guidance on the preparation of Child Safeguarding Statements, the Board of Management of Dominican College Sion Hill has agreed a Child Safeguarding Statement. The Board of Management has

adopted and will implement fully and without modification the Department's Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2017 as part of this overall Child Safeguarding Statement. Our board of management has agreed in writing to do this. All teachers know about the Procedures and we have told all parents about them and how we follow them. Our Designated Liaison Person (DLP) is Dr Orla Condren and our Deputy DLP is Ms Ciara Reid.

### **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. We reviewed (and updated) our admissions policy on 28th of November 2022. We keep accurate attendance records and report them as required.

We encourage high attendance in the following ways:

- Good attendance is promoted in the school by a culture of high expectations, encouraging each student to take responsibility for her own learning so that she can achieve her full potential through regular presence in class.
- Throughout the curriculum, students are made aware of the incremental nature of learning and the implications for them of irregular attendance. This is also promoted through the Pastoral Care programme.
- The Year Head and/or Tutor meet with students for whom attendance or punctuality have been identified as an issue.
- Reports to Parents/Guardians include a detailed breakdown of attendance for the period in question. Interventions are made if a student presents with a large number of absences - letters are sent to parents/guardians detailing numbers of days missed.
- Records of attendance and punctuality are available to parents to view on VsWare by logging in using the unique password for that student.
- A sense of belonging and connectedness in school is developed through participation in all aspects of school life and/or extra-curricular activities and through the school's Leadership Committees

### **This is how Parents/Guardians can help:**

Parents/Guardians are asked

- To support the school's Attendance Strategy in compliance with their legal responsibilities (Education Welfare Act 2000)
- To ensure regular and punctual attendance of students and avoid unnecessary absences. Where possible, to arrange appointments outside of school time e.g. Wednesday afternoons. Records of attendance and punctuality are available to parents to view on VsWare by logging in using the unique password for that student and also in information pack at Parent/Teacher meetings
- To provide a written explanation for the student's absence on the first day of return to school.
- To inform the school 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 this 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.
- To arrange, where possible, all elective appointments for after school or during school holidays.
- Signing in and out of school: Any student arriving late must sign in at the Office. Any student who needs to leave school early must sign out before departure. And sign in again if returning to school

on the same day

**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. Our code of behaviour describes and supports positive behaviour. We have a very clear and high-profile anti-bullying policy in our school.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Dr Orla Condren  
Secretary, Board of Management  
June 2024