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Our Self-Evaluation Report and Improvement Plan

1. Introduction

This document records the outcomes of our last improvement plan, the findings of this self-evaluation, and our current improvement plan, including targets and the actions we will implement to meet the targets.

1.1 Outcomes of our last improvement plan from 2018 to 2021

- Results of targeted intervention
 - Significant and measured improvements recorded in terms of performance observations e.g. appropriate pincer grip, position of paper, sitting position
 - Significant and measured improvements recorded in terms of correct letter formation
 - Significant and measured improvements recorded in terms of writing fluency e.g. smooth rather than choppy writing, even pencil pressure, writing of words as complete units
 - Significant and measured improvements recorded in terms of uniformity of letter size, slant and spacing
- Whole School Practices:
 - The development of fine motor skills is a pre-cursor to appropriate handwriting. As a result, formal handwriting lessons only begin in Junior Infants in the 2nd term. Fine motor skills are targeted in every junior infant class for the first term during morning activities. This sets the children up for success when formal lessons begin.
 - Development of the handwriting policy for the whole school, using the Go with the Flow Programme as a guide. Consistency across all streams resulted.
 - Two alphabets on display in every classroom (writing and reading alphabet)
 - Writing pals between 2nd class and junior infants began to support handwriting development in the junior classes. This was stalled as a result of Covid but will resume in the later terms of the 2022/2023 school year.
 - Teachers write in cursive writing within their classrooms
 - All displays are accompanied with a cursive caption and all signs in the classroom are written in cursive writing.
 - Increased public recognition of handwriting via competitions etc

1.2 The focus of this evaluation

We undertook self-evaluation of teaching and learning during the period September 2022 to *September 2023*. We evaluated the following aspect(s) of teaching and learning:

- Wellbeing among the staff and pupils in Lusk JNS

2. Findings of this evaluation

2.1 This is effective / very effective practice in our school

List the main strengths of the school in teaching and learning.

a) Culture and Environment

- Children and staff experience a sense of belonging within the school and a sense of connectedness to school practices
- Children and staff feel safe at school
- Voice of children and adults are listened to and valued
- Voice of parents listened to and valued

b) Curriculum (Teaching and Learning)

- All children have a chance to experience success as a result of high quality teaching and learning
- Curricular activities promote physical development
- Curricular activities promote social, emotional and behavioural development and wellbeing

c) Policy and Planning

- Use of School Self Evaluation process to develop, implement and review wellbeing promotion
- Ongoing focus on wellbeing with any review of the school plan and school policies/procedures
- Opportunities for CPD relayed and discussed with staff members

d) Relationships and Partnerships

- All staff members have an awareness of the promotion of wellbeing in both staff and pupils
- Staff members and children are involved in wellbeing promotion within the school
- Information in regard to support services disseminated among staff members

2.2. This is how we know (*List the evidence sources. Refer to pupils' dispositions, attainment, knowledge and skills.*)

a) Culture and Environment

- There is a student Council in operation.
- Regular staff meetings take place where staff members can add to the agenda.
- Whole school assemblies focus on positive whole school practices and individual/whole school accomplishments.
- A broad range of accomplishments are rewarded at a class and whole school level.
- Inclusive ethos that celebrates diversity within school, culminating in school's Inclusion Assembly in the 2nd/3rd term.
- Inclusive ethos is echoed in the school vision (see website).
- A Code of Behaviour is in place which focuses on a positive behavioural approach with care, respect and decency at its core.
- Regular input from staff in regard to whole school policies.
- School seeks input from PA in regard to whole school practices and policies.
- Regular communication between home and school.
- The website is updated regularly.
- Lusk JNS has a healthy eating policy.
- Recreational breaks allow for unstructured play among pupils.
- There is a 'quiet area' on the yard and books provided for reading.

- Structured sensory breaks are catered for within the school environment both in the class and around the school in the sensory areas which have been developed.
- Sensory movement breaks take place at a whole class level and/or at an individual or small group level.
- The school grounds have been developed to incorporate a sensory garden, biodiversity trail and forest.
- A sensory balcony has been developed which was designed and built by staff members and pupils.
- Specified sensory areas in the school have been developed for targeted sensory breaks for children in order to support their readiness to learn.
- Classrooms are bright and spacious, displaying pupil work and pupil achievements.
- Indoor and outdoor designated areas in the school allow for social interaction, physical activity, and quiet time.
- Accommodations are made (e.g. seating, space, furniture) when needed to cater for the specialised needs of pupils and staff members if needed.
- The school makes use of the Continuum of Support to target specified support for children requiring additional help with wellbeing, social, emotional and behavioural needs.
- Surveys and questionnaires that include parental and pupil responses (see appendix for responses).
- Surveys and questionnaires that include staff responses (see appendix for responses).

b) Curriculum (Teaching and Learning)

- There are regular monthly team meetings between teachers at each class level.
- Teacher's individual planning caters for the needs of all children to experience success via a differentiated approach.
- The school has developed a strong Special Education Teaching team under the guidance of a SET coordinator, with clear procedures and policies in place in regard to SET practices.
- Teachers make use of a multi-sensory approach to teaching to enable access to learning for all children.
- Lusk JNS regularly updates the curricular areas of the School Plan in liaison with staff members.
- Pupils learn at a rate relative to their strengths and needs so that they can experience success.
- Children are encouraged to reflect on their own learning by use of a self-assessment folder.
- Children engage in regular PE lessons (bi-weekly).
- Children have the opportunity to engage in sports with the visiting teachers for GAA, athletics, FAI.
- Children in 1st class engage in the FRIENDS for Life programme, an evidence based programme that promotes resilience.
- Children engage in the SPHE programme incorporating the RSE programme and Stay Safe programme

c) Policy and Planning

- Lusk JNS engages in ongoing review of all areas of the school plan, with input from staff, parents and pupils.
- CPD is provided to staff members e.g. managing stress responses to behaviour, use of ABCs in functional behavioural assessment; appropriate use of sensory areas within the school etc.
- Three teachers have been trained in the FUN FRIENDS programme.

- CPD is ongoing for teachers in updated curricular areas e.g. Primary language curriculum, new curriculum framework.
- School has an Anti-Bullying policy, a Child Protection policy, Critical Incident policy and a Code of Behaviour in place, which are reviewed regularly and made available to the wider school community. School also has an attendance policy in place that promotes attendance of all pupils.
- School has a Working Together policy in place to help deal with grievances that arise in school between staff members.
- School has a Special Education teaching policy in place with clear guidelines and procedures.
- Student Support Files are used to target intellectual, physical, social, emotional and behavioural support for children where needed and to review any such support at planned intervals.
- Transition meetings in the third term are held for those with additional needs before transfer to the senior school.
- The school uses the databiz administrative system and its own school drives to store confidential information in relation to pupils and student support files respectively.

d) Relationships and Partnerships

- Lusk JNS ensures that the development of positive relationships is at the core of all approaches to behaviour, as well as teaching and learning.
- Staff members model the behaviours they wish to see in children.
- A social Committee has been established to celebrate important milestones for teachers, to plan social events etc.
- Lusk JNS and Lusk SNS have developed a close relationship which benefits all children across the campus.
- A similar ethos exists across both schools on campus
- Lusk JNS has developed practices in order to promote the transition of 2nd class children to 3rd class in the senior school e.g. class visits, meeting teachers, transfer of information between schools, transfer of assistive technology if relevant, opportunity to meet SNAs when relevant etc.
- Lusk JNS has established links with local pre-schools which helps with information sharing and pre-school visits prior to new pupils starting Junior Infants each year.
- Lusk JNS has a good relationship with the Parents Association which supports school events and activities on an ongoing basis.
- Regular newsletters are sent to parents to share school news.
- The school website posts information in regard to school news, as well as offering photos and videos of pupil activities throughout the school day. School policies are also available for download from the school website.
- Lusk JNS makes use of external supports and has developed relationships with NEPS, HSE community groups, local chaplain etc.
- All pupils have a voice and their opinions are valued.
- All staff members have a voice and their opinions are valued.
- A buddy system operates in some classes to help develop peer relationships in yard.
- Details of the Employee Assistive Service are given to staff and details posted on the walls of the staffroom.
- Droichead is in place within the school with a team of teachers offering support to the NQTs going through the process.

2.3 This is what we are going to focus on to improve our practice further (*Specify the aspects of teaching and learning the school has identified and prioritised for further improvement.*)

- a) Lusk JNS will aim to teach skills of resilience to children in order to help them to cope with difficult situations and situations that cause them worry and stress during the school day.
- b) Lusk JNS will aim to support children in their interactions with others on yard with the purpose of improving relationships.

Curriculum and Planning

- Lusk JNS will aim to improve/increase resilience in children via a whole school approach that will target the recognition of feelings and responses to those feelings, the ability to choose a positive response to adverse situations and the ability to recognise thought patterns which can be either helpful or unhelpful.

Policy and Planning

- Teachers trained in the cognitive behavioural approach will provide information to staff members at staff meetings in order to equip them with the information and resources required in order to teach the skills of resilience to the children in their classes.
- Skills that develop resilience in children will be taught by focusing on developing the children's capacity to recognise thoughts, feelings and actions.

Relationships and Partnerships

- Lusk JNS will aim to improve peer relationships during unstructured times.
- Lusk JNS will aim to improve the ability of children to have positive experiences of yard via positive peer interaction
- Lusk JNS will aim to support children in restoring friendships by teaching how to apologise in a meaningful and respectful manner.

3. Our improvement plan

On the next page we have recorded:

- The **targets** for improvement we have set
- The **actions** we will implement to achieve these
- **Who is responsible** for implementing, monitoring and reviewing our improvement plan
- How we will measure **progress** and check **outcomes** (criteria for success)

As we implement our improvement plan we will record:

- The **progress** made, and **adjustments** made, and **when**
- **Achievement of targets** (original and modified), and **when**

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN
Well Being: Developing Resilience and Improving Peer Relations
September 2022 to July 2024

ACTION PLAN CO ORDINATOR:

**Jenni McGovern, Brónagh Ní Dhúill,
 Órfhlaith Clarke**

TARGETS

- Children will understand and recognize basic feelings in themselves and others (happy, sad, angry, worried).
- Children will pay attention to what their body is telling them (body cues) about what they are feeling.
- Children will choose responses to their feelings that make them feel good and 'ready to go' i.e. calm (e.g. breathing, sensory trays, calm corner etc).
- Children will recognize that they can choose their actions and be able to say whether they engage in a 'thumbs up'/'thumbs down' choice (even when they feel worried, scared, sad, mad, angry).
- Children will learn how to say sorry in a meaningful way i.e. (I'm sorry for; this is wrong because.....; In the future I will
- Children will know the difference between a thought and a feeling

ACTIONS

**PERSONS / GROUPS
 RESPONSIBLE**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each staff meeting will provide input to staff members on the skills that the children will be focusing on during the month ahead, which will tie to the SPHE curriculum. An explanation of the skill along with use of language around children and teaching resources will be made available for the staff: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Month one: Recognition of feelings in self and others and paying attention to what our bodies are telling us (I can see that you are angry because your fists are clenched) b. Month 2: Thumbs up and thumbs down choices: Children will learn that all feelings are ok and everyone will feel the big feelings (e.g. angry, sad, worried etc) sometimes. However children will learn that it is what we do with those feelings that matter the most. We can choose to do something to make us feel better i.e. a thumbs up choice (read, breath, calm corner, sensory trays etc) or choose something that makes us feel worse (e.g. hit, scream, run away, say mean things etc) c. Month 3: Children will learn to recognize the choices that make them feel better and “ready to go” (i.e. calm). d. Month 4: Restorative Practice: Children will learn that when we do something that hurts someone else, that it is important to make amends by apologizing appropriately in a calm 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action Plan Coordinators • Class Teachers/SNAs • Pupils • Class teachers/SNAs • Pupils • Class Teachers/SNAs • Pupils • Class Teachers/SNAs • Pupils
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way with respect. "I am sorry for...., this was wrong because....., next time I will...."

e. Month 5: Traffic Lights- Thoughts vs Feelings (thoughts affect feelings and feelings affect actions). Children will learn how to tell the difference between a thought and a feeling using the visual of a traffic light. They will learn that positive or 'green' thoughts help us feel better. However 'red' or unhelpful thoughts make us feel worse and lead to us having negative emotions or 'big feelings'.

- Staff members will teach and reinforce points a to e above over a five month period and refer to the language of each stage when dealing with class relationships over the course of the month.
- Staff members will use drama and song to help reinforce the skill being targeted.
- Staff members will give specific praise when children show evidence of using the skills learned e.g. I like how you told me that you were sad; well done for making a thumbs up choice; you were feeling angry and you chose to go to the calm corner for your breathing- well done on making a thumbs up choice...." etc
- Skills will be reinforced at assembly

- Class Teachers/SNAs
- Pupils

- Class Teachers/SNAs/
SET
- Pupils

- Class Teachers/SNAs/
SET
- Pupils

- Class Teachers/SNAs/
SET
- Pupils

- Class Teachers/SNAs/
SET/Principal

MONITORING STRATEGIES/APPROACHES

- Class based assessments to ensure skills and targets are understood by children
- Staff observations
- Coordinators to check in with each class and give support when necessary
- Children (1st and 2nd) have the ability to self-reflect on the choices they made when responding to their feelings (in collaboration with the class teacher or in paired work with each other)
- Children will be able to report on yard news by referencing thoughts, feelings and actions
- Children’s relationships with each other and with staff members will improve

EVALUATION / CRITERIA FOR SUCCESS

(Are we making progress? / How do we know?)

- Children will start using the language that:
 - a. shows they can label their feelings and those of others,
 - b. shows they understand that they choose their actions (thumbs up/down choices)
 - c. shows they can communicate their need to regulate (e.g. I need to go to the calm corner/sensory area)
 - d. shows they can make meaningful apologies
 - e. demonstrates their ability to recognise their thoughts vs their feelings
- Children will have the tools to deal with their ‘big feelings’ by regulating themselves more easily
- Children’s relationships will develop in a more positive manner
- Children will be able to talk about the skills they have learnt
- Teachers/SNAs will model the communication they want to hear from the children

NECESSARY ADJUSTMENTS THROUGHOUT IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS

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TARGETS	ACHIEVED			
	Yes		No	
	Yes		No	
	Yes		No	
	Yes		No	

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