

Coláiste an Spioraid Naoimh



Principals report to the Board of Management

on Leadership and Management

2019-2020

1. Developing Leadership Capacity

There were six AP1 positions and seven AP11 positions in our school in 19-20. All were issued the statement of roles and responsibilities associated with their post.

One teacher was acting AP11 March – May 2020 as one of our AP11 Post Holders was on illness leave.

Due to the retirement of one AP1 September 2020, there will be a vacancy arising in the 2020-2021 school year.

1. Three staff members began a training course in Instructional Leadership. This happens over a two-year period and involves 5x2 day workshops.
2. Four staff members began a teaching methodology training course by Graham Powell. Unfortunately, the second session of this was cancelled due to Covid 19.
3. A significant number of our teachers engaged in Webinars and workshops that were subject specific and arranged by subject associations.
4. All teachers attended a cluster day with subject specific CPD delivered by JCT
5. All teachers received CPD from the members of our IT Department prior to school closure, in preparation for on-line learning using Google classroom. During the period of school closure, CPD in the use of IT continued with new platforms introduced ex Loom. Further CPD was given to staff on the use of Google classroom which was the main platform used by us to continue the education of our students.
6. In house CPD took place during a staff meeting when 2 teachers gave an experiential introduction into managing group work in the classroom.

This year for the first time our school has a student well-being co-ordinator as part of an AP11 post. Among the initiatives undertaken were:

1. Positive mental health week;
2. RSA Cycling to School project - hi-vis jackets distributed and meeting with students about cycling safely to and from school;
3. Paired Reading between TY students and Junior students;
4. SPHE Growth Mindset module in second year;
5. Meeting with new teachers and PME students and introducing them to school life including pastoral care of students;
6. Checking in with new teachers and PME students informally throughout the school year;
7. Collaborating with staff in the area of student well-being: Meditation at lunch time, yoga as extra-curricular activity, visiting speaker ex psychotherapist Mr Tony Hegarty;

These activities help meet identified needs and priorities. We connected with the wider community by organising a school fundraiser for Jigsaw, the National Centre for Youth Mental Health. Through this fundraiser we were able to inform the students of the work that Jigsaw does and the support that they provide to young people. We raised over 1000€ for the charity which was a fantastic response.

A mental health student committee was established with TY students. From September to December they worked with the well-being co-ordinator on what would best represent students' interests in the area of mental health and through their work, they organised the Jigsaw fundraiser and informed the student cohort of the work Jigsaw did. They also adjudicated the winning posters from the junior classes. Other projects include our established academic mentoring programme which has been taken over by the Sixth-Year head. This offers academic support and pastoral support to our leaving Certs. It became particularly important this year during the period of school closure when there was such uncertainty around the Leaving Cert leading to much anxiety for our students.

This year also, our guidance counsellors offered an opportunity for students to attend counselling/guidance without appointment during lunch hour. It was felt that this is a time when it is less obvious to other students that a student is visiting a guidance counsellor and therefore there might be less stigma attached. It has proved to be quite popular with students.

Our TY students participated in a six-week module in 'The Bystander Intervention Programme' for senior students. This is a programme set up by UCC and adapted for use in a second level setting. Going forward, this will be extended to 5th years.

Our pastoral care team continues to meet every week at a set time to discuss pastoral issues and needs of students. This is probably one of the most important meetings of the week if not the most important.

Our Strategic Planning group met through the year and led in such areas as review of Needs and Priorities; Mobile phone policy review; Development of our new Admission Policy.

2. Leading Teaching and Learning

It was a busy year in terms of Learning and Teaching with a lot of work undertaken by our Learning and Teaching team co-led by Mr Kerins and Mr Seymour. Staff were surveyed to establish those areas in which they most needed in-service/support. Students and Parents were also surveyed and the feedback from those surveys will form the basis of the work of the group going forward.

It was agreed to focus on Enhancing Student Motivation, and Effective Group Work during 20-21 school year. It was also agreed to build a leadership model for TY students where these

students will assist in the teaching of first year students in different subject areas over the course of the next school year.

A school bank of physical resources for learning and teaching was developed for use by all staff. Ms O' Shaughnessy and Ms Garry gave professional development in the area of Group work sharing their expertise gained as a result of their training in Instructional Leadership. A booklet on Instructional Leadership strategies was produced and is available to staff. Those teachers trained in instructional leadership have opened their classrooms so that staff can visit to see various strategies in action. A number of staff attended training by Graham Powell and are trying out the various strategies that he promotes.

A. School Self Evaluation

As of December 2020, the initiatives from the first three strands of Phase 1 of SSE have become permanent features of school life in CSN. Strands 4 and 5 of Phase 2 were in operation during the school year 2019-2020.

Strand 4

Investigating how IT can promote self-directed learning in the classroom and contribute towards our students becoming more effective learners

Strand 5

Strand five's focus is to demonstrate to students how to reflect on their progress as learners. It is envisaged this will develop a sense of ownership and responsibility for their learning (from Domain 2: Learner Experiences *Looking at Our Schools* 2016:25).

1. Fostering a set of beliefs in students that:
 - a. their intelligence is not fixed
 - b. they can become smarter
 - c. improvements are always possible via hard work, good strategies and input from others.

2. Students reflect on their progress as learners and develop a sense of ownership and responsibility for their learning.

It was proposed that we would look in more detail at how students reflect on their learning and how we as teachers can develop it. A six-week Growth mindset module was delivered to all SPHE class groups.

To gather evidence, we were to survey this current second year cohort to get an insight into their attitude and behaviour towards learning and studying, however this survey did not take place due to the sudden closure of the school in March 2020.

B. Academic Results – Leaving Cert 2019

The Year began with the issuing of Leaving Cert results on Tuesday 13th August. Our sense of the group was that they were an excellent group of students, focussed, worked hard and wanted to do well. They were very supportive of each other and this was clearly seen at the time of the French and German Orals and when working on their LC projects. They realised at an early stage the importance of the guidance and support they received from their teachers. They appreciated this and it was acknowledged through their attendance which for the majority was right up to the end. Whilst being attentive to their academic studies they were very much involved in school activities. They seemed to get the balance right. Staff saw a great spirit come through during the celebrations at the end of the year - involvement and participation in the Gradam ceremony and Graduation mass.

There were 8 students over 600 points. One student was on 625 points These were fantastic results and very well deserved

The overall points average was 429, up from 389 in the previous year. This is the best average since the school has been tracking i.e. 2003. There were $\frac{1}{3}$ students on over 500 points. This represents the biggest percentage of students in this bracket in the last 10 years. This is a phenomenal statistic. Another remarkable statistic is that $\frac{2}{3}$ of our leaving certs achieved 400 points or more. The average points of the top 20 students were 582 points. This figure has not been exceeded in the last 10 years. The average points of those in the 21st - 40th place was 511 points. The average points of those in the 41st - 60th place was 448 points and for 61st - 80th place was 363. The average of the remaining students was 221 points

Coláiste an Spioraid Naoimh students were awarded 6 scholarships this year including a U.L.JP. McManus Award, Trinity College Entrance Award, three UCC Quercus entrance scholarships. One of our students achieved the Gold Medal for the highest grade in Ireland in Leaving Cert Business.

C. Results - Junior Cert 2019

The results for Junior Cert 2019 arrived on Friday 4th October. This was a departure from the traditional Wednesday distribution before they would break for their usual 1 o'clock finish. Because it was a full school day results were distributed at the start of last class. This decision was taken in the interest of health and safety and was communicated by letter to all parents in advance.

Students generally seemed happy with their results. It was noted that there was some confusion with the new descriptors. The boys wanted them to be translated into grades. The broad range of the merit descriptor. (A student who gets 55% gets the same descriptor as a student who gets 75%) is less than satisfactory and students are feeling it, particularly the good students.

Unfortunately, we did not get to celebrate our top performing students at the Annual Academic Awards Ceremony. This event was cancelled having been scheduled for the week following school closure in March due to Covid 19.

3. Managing the Organisation

A. Enrolment 2019-2020

The possibility of getting a second Deputy depended on us reaching an enrolment of 700 for the timetabling returns on September 24th 2019. Our enrolment at the time was recorded to be 710 students. So in late March 2020, we were delighted to announce the appointment of our new additional Deputy Mr Colmán Ó Tuama. We wish Colmán every success and happiness in Coláiste an Spioraid Naoimh.

B. Admissions 2020

There were 136 applications for 120 places in first year. It is important to note that one of our biggest feeder schools had a smaller sized group than normal in 2018-2019 and as a consequence were not able to meet their quota. This represents a dip that will be rectified next year as the numbers in 6th class in this and other feeder schools will be higher next year. This was evidenced by the large attendance at our open evening in late September and also by the 168 applications for the 120 places in first year 2020-2021.

Admissions policy review

We were obliged to write a new admissions policy in 2020, to be implemented for first years in 2021. Our draft policy worked on by the Strategic planning group before Easter was prepared. There are specific areas that had to be addressed in the new format, but the main part re numbers of students accepted from feeder schools etc remains unchanged. The draft was posted on our website for 10 days during May, so that parents could view and submit comments as part of the consultative process and also brought to the Board of Management for their comment. The new admissions policy was submitted to the PBST for their approval in May 2020.

C. Junior Cycle curriculum review

We initiated a review of the Junior Cycle curriculum in 19-20 but with the unexpected school closure in March a decision was taken to postpone the review until next year. It is hoped to distribute JC hours in line with JC guidelines so that all subjects have their minimum hours at least. It is also hoped to look at the wellbeing hours to ensure that they are in line with expectations.

D. Communication

School website/facebook/Twitter

A team of teachers met during the 19-20 school year to look at our website. It was agreed that the site needs updating and upgrading. The team broke into subgroups to examine our website: some from the perspective of current parents, others - prospective parents, past pupils and job applicants and to decide what we think is important in terms of content and accessibility. Lisa has worked throughout the year with us to find a design that is user friendly easy to work with and that we are happy with. The hope is that we will get the new website up and running early in the 2020-2021 school year.

Mr Seymour has taken over the school facebook page and it is proving very popular indeed. He has introduced 'Throwback Thursday' where he posts photos from the archives. Past pupils and parents are delighted with this.

Spiorad Signals and our website continue to be used as vehicles of communication between school and home.

Online Payment System

There has been hugely positive feedback from parents regarding way2pay. It is regarded as very convenient and the preferred method of payment for parents.

E. Finances

We are indebted to Mr. Declan O’Connell, Accountant and member of the Board of Management who guides us so that we remain in a healthy financial position. The Board has continued to invest in the school again this year most notably in the area of energy conservation as detailed earlier. We are, as always, extremely grateful to our Parents who continue to support us through voluntary contributions without which we could not continue to operate as we currently do.

F. Biennial review of needs and priorities, roles and responsibilities

Our last review was conducted in April/May 2018, so we were due to conduct a review in 2020. Initiation of this process of review was agreed at the Board of Management on Friday 28th February 2020. All staff were invited to consider the appropriate documents and to reflect on and examine the needs and priorities of Coláiste an Spioraid Naoimh. The needs and priorities identified two years previously and the roles currently undertaken by all staff which was drawn up from that list of needs and priorities was made available. The strategic planning group met on a number of occasions and considered submissions by staff. A full list of needs and priorities, roles and responsibilities was drawn up and then agreed by staff. This was presented to the Board of Management and sanctioned.

G. Spiritual development of students

1. Formal development took place in the classroom most specifically during the R.E classes. The new Junior Cycle R.E programme encourages quite a bit of Bible studies so this is done when visiting the Prayer Room as this is a special space for students.
2. All key days/dates in the Liturgical and School's calendar are marked, for example:
 - First Year Mass in Dennehy's Cross Church at the beginning of the school year, with a lot of participation from students. This includes student involvement in the welcome, readings, prayers of the faithful, communion reflection and music/singing. Our senior students accompany the First Years to the Mass and a Senior Prefect addresses the boys at the end of the Mass. We were delighted to have two of our past pupils return on this occasion to be Ministers of the Eucharist. They had trained to be Ministers of the Eucharist when they were in Sixth Year with us.
 - Presentation day/week. During this week there is a focus on the story of Blessed Edmund Rice in R.E classes and input given on the work of the Presentation Brothers/Family today. We aim to give our students a sense that 'they are part of this story'.
 - This school year we facilitated an event in the Goldie Chapel of the Nano Nagle Centre where we hoped to replicate an event we had here in November 2018. Our

senior students acted as ushers and co-ordinated the event. Ms Moriarty gave the opening address and Br. Martin interviewed four of our students (past and present) about their involvement in the Edmund Rice Camp and Lourdes projects and he asked them about their training as Ministers of the Eucharist. The four lads gave a very honest account of their experience of living out their faith as young people at this time. The reflective music was provided by our Trad. group.

3. Religious Symbolism in our school included the Advent Wreath and Crib. T.Y students help to assemble our Advent Wreath and the Crib. They are focal points in our foyer during Advent and in the lead up to Christmas.

TY students, with the support of Staff, launched the 2019 Christmas Food Appeal. This is one of the central events in our school calendar and is a testimony to the enormous support our staff, students and parents give to the Society of St Vincent de Paul.

4. Catholic Schools Week has become a very important focus for spiritual development here. A programme of events was put in place in 2019 to ensure we marked this week.
 - The banner presented by the P.B.S.T is placed on the railings outside the school to inform parents and other people in the Community.
 - First Year students participate in quizzes and poster competitions with a specific theme.
 - Second Year students, along with their R.E and class teacher, visit the Nano Nagle Centre. On this occasion, Br. Bede Minihane gives our students input on the history of the Presentation Brothers.
 - Third Year students work on their J.C R.E. Projects. This year's input was given by Br Martin Kenneally and Fr. Bertie O'Mahony.
 - Fourth Year students go on a guided tour of the Honan Chapel led by Br. Martin Kenneally.
 - Fifth and Sixth- Year students attend a talk with the focus on: living out your faith at this time.
5. Lent 2019: Distribution of ashes was by senior students and supported by Fr Bertie O'Mahony.
6. Retreats 2019: Retreats were organised for all First-Year students and they participated in them at Ennismore Retreat Centre. Retreats were optional for T.Y students and a Retreat day was booked in Ennismore for them but school had closed due to Covid 19.

H. Leadership development of students

We endeavour at all times to empower our students to take leadership roles in the school. Students are encouraged by staff, past and present pupils to take responsibility for organising lunchtime activities and other extra - curricular activities for Junior Students. Some examples are given below:

- T.Y and 5th Year students ran the T.E.D Talks and Drama groups for interested students.
- Senior students organised inter - school debating competitions and supported all our lads involved in debating competitions in U.C.C etc.
- We appointed Senior Prefects, in a ceremonial role, to represent us at all important events in the school. Their first, and perhaps one of their most important roles, is when they along with our Fifth-Year mentors, welcomed First Year students to our school. Their next task was to oversee the students' involvement in our Open Night 2019. They co-ordinated the Fifth and T.Y students as they showed prospective parents/students around the school. One of the Senior Prefects acted as M.C when parents and students moved to the hall to hear the addresses from the CEO of the P.B.S.T, the Principal, Deputy Principals, First Year Head and a Senior Prefect. They were present at official events such as the visit of the Lord Mayor and in 2020 and the visit of past pupil, Ciaran Madden, the Irish Consul in New York.
- T.Y students participated in a Leadership Training Programme led by Anne Cleary at Mardyke House. They are empowered to recognise their leadership qualities and share them with students in our school. They assisted the Senior Prefects in welcoming new students to our school. They organised activities on First Year fun day and co-ordinated events during Well Being/Positive mental health week, Presentation day/week, Catholic Schools and Internet Safety weeks. They organised fundraising coffee morning and other fundraising events including collecting for charitable organisations in Wilton Shopping Centre. Two of our T.Y students represented the school on the S.H.A.R.E. executive and each week three of the lads work in the Br. Jerome day-care centre.
- Over the past year, 25 T.Y students have been involved in a G.A.A ' Future Leaders Programme' led by Anthony Seymour. This is a fixed module in the T.Y programme and students have a number of training days. Some of these are run by past pupils. Students then take responsibility for coaching and running leagues for First Years in hurling and football. They accompany staff and students to matches.

I. Ski Trip 2020

Regrettably due to the Covid 19 pandemic, ski trip 2020 was cancelled. It was disappointing but parents understood the seriousness of the situation and the reasons why the decision was taken not to travel to northern Italy. The second year students were treated to a day out in the Cool Planet Experience, Powerscourt Co Wicklow during what would have been the ski trip week and staff made pancakes for them on another day.

J. Extra-Curricular Activities

As usual we had a busy year with many extracurricular involvements including trad group, debating, chess, basketball, hurling, football, soccer, Ted talks, science quizzes, science club

and whilst we had many successes, because of closure in March many competitions were brought to a sudden halt.

Inter-class leagues proved very popular especially with the younger students while school teams and individuals representing the school participated in competitions in hurling, football, soccer, basketball, debating, chess, athletics and golf among others. It was a great year for mini-company activities with several important victories in that area, while non-competitive activities such as hill walking and 'Cloud of Think' creative writing continued to be very popular with a select but very dedicated following.

K. Google classroom/Communication

A letter was given to each student prior to closure informing parents that Google classroom was available to all students during the period of school closure to continue Learning and Teaching.

All students were issued with a school email address which they share with their parents. This meant that parents could access information sent out by the school and visit Google Classroom to check in on their son's participation and progress.

4. Leading School Development

A. Building projects

Energy Efficiency Project

In 2019, Crowley, Carbon did an energy audit of the school and proposed a number of initiatives that could be undertaken to make our building more energy efficient and improve our carbon footprint. Work on these initiatives was undertaken during June and July 2020.

- The oil boilers were replaced in by gas condensing boilers. This involved a lot more associated work also.
- Asbestos found in the boiler room was removed
- Substantial electrical work was done in the boiler room.
- Heating zones were created in the school building
- TRVs were attached to existing radiators,
- Photovoltaic solar panels were installed on the roof of the H Building
- A Clarity energy management system was installed. This is a computerised measurement of energy loss, input and output in various areas of school and will be

displayed on screens at central locations in the school. The information from this system can also be accessed in each classroom by logging into the clarity system.

- A new control panel for the heating system was built.
- A gas detection panel, sensors and a fire detection system was installed.
- A report was produced by the Alcam Group to document the risk assessment & outline the basis of protection and safety from explosion hazards of the Boiler house, at Coláiste an Spioraid Naoimh. This report is included in our Health and Safety Statement.

1. Suitable signs are highlighted on the entrance door.
2. LEL Gas detectors were installed to detect any gas leaks before they reach the critical LEL level.
3. The Gas Slam Shut valve will close on gas detection and all electrics will be turned off.
4. Category 3 ATEX lighting for a Zone 2 was installed.
5. The Electrical switch board room will be kept closed and the door and frame had a draft excluder installed.

B. Alarm upgrade

Following assessment of our application for Fire Safety Works under the Emergency Works Scheme 2020, the Department approved an all in grant for our school. Therefore, a new alarm system to cover the whole school was installed in August 2020.

C. Cleaning/Maintenance

The north facing end of the Sports hall roof was cleaned professionally in July 2020 as were the covers on the yards at the back of the school. These had become unsightly and the build-up of algae on the hall is potentially damaging to the fabric of the building. The internal walls of the sports hall were cleaned and painted. This area is very important to us as it is where we host some very important events in our school calendar, ex the Open Evening address, Graduation Mass, TY Graduation and information meeting with parents of incoming first years. The General Purpose room was also given a face lift by painting the brown brick giving it a brighter fresher look and this is where host guest speakers and meet with smaller groups of parents during the year as well.

D. Website Development

See E communication

E. Health and Safety Audit

Our school underwent a comprehensive Health and Safety audit in Summer 2020 and a new Health and Safety Statement will be issued.

F. Class room development to facilitate group-work

New desks have been installed in other rooms during the year to facilitate group work. This is in line with Learning and Teaching strategies being developed by staff, in particular for the Junior Cycle Course.

The relationships between staff and pupils remain relaxed and respectful and student discipline is generally excellent. We can look forward with great confidence to embracing the challenges that lie ahead.

Brenda Moriarty

Secretary to the Board of Management

July 2020