



St. Mary's Secondary School

Convent of Mercy, Newport, Co. Tipperary, V94 RY18

Telephone 061-378344 Fax 061-378358

www.stmarysnewport.com

Registered Charity Number: 20148379



25th March 2023

School Self Evaluation Spring Bulletin for Parents

Each year St. Mary's Secondary School reviews and evaluates some aspect of school life. Currently our focus is on the impact COVID 19 has had on our students' educational experiences and outcomes, their wellbeing, their motivation to learn, and their engagement with learning. We gathered evidence on the above, along with feedback about what we are doing well, from students, parents, teachers, school counsellors and management.

Further to this, the following have been identified as improvement targets.

- **Target 1** – For more collaborative learning to take place in the classroom.
- **Target 2** – To normalise nervousness and disassociate it from “anxiety” and in particular to normalise nervousness associated with CBAs
- **Target 3** – To monitor and improve attendance
- **Target 4** – To embed further the concepts of peer assessment and success criteria for Junior Cycle students.

Strategies

Some of the strategies that we are using in order to achieve our targets include the following:

Changes in practice regarding group/pair work with more emphasis on pair work, in an effort to encourage effective interaction between students

Beginning practice on CBAs from 1st year onwards, beginning with very small presentations

Reassuring our students that nervousness is a normal reaction in certain situations Putting more rewards procedures in place, especially for attendance

Reviewing and evaluating our Attendance Policy Older students and a staff member are presenting to Juniors on the topic of peer assessment and success criteria for Junior Cycle.

How you can help

We appreciate your support as we try to attain all of these targets, and especially in relation to target numbers 2 and 4. We constantly reinforce to the students that, in relation to CBAs, nervousness shows that the student cares, that their CBAs matter, and that nervousness can be harnessed as a force for success.

To help you with this, we recommend a webinar “Understanding anxiety in teenagers”, which is regularly hosted by Dr. Blanaid Gavin, Consultant Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist and UCD. This talk deals with what anxiety is, why it happens, when to be concerned and how to help. If you wish



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to have access to this webinar, you must register with Alice Cherry
alice.cherry@cycleagainstsucide.com as there is no recording of this session available.

Regarding attendance, we constantly emphasise the link between achievement in school and good attendance. Strategies to support strong attendance include showing an interest in what your child is doing in school, attending parent teacher meetings, talking with the year head about any concerns that are impacting your child's attendance and especially praising your son/daughter's efforts. Your encouragement will motivate your child to continue trying. Our full SSE report is on our website.

Wishing everybody a successful final term 2023.