



INSPIRE

Highlighting the latest in learning & teaching for the school community in Presentation Secondary School, Wexford

IN THIS EDITION

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Welcome to 'Inspire'

BY JOE ROLSTON,
EDUCATION AND SCHOOL PLANNING
COORDINATOR



As the 2021-22 school year draws to a close, we take time to reflect on the school year that's been; another year that brought many challenges, due largely to the shadow of Covid-19 looming over it. However, our school continued to show great resilience in making sure that the day-to-day learning and teaching remained at the forefront of what we do. All members of our school community are to be hugely commended for this.

The author F. Scott Fitzgerald said: "And so with the sunshine and the great bursts of leaves growing on trees . . . I had that familiar conviction that life was beginning over again with the summer." I wish all students and staff the very best over the summer months: let it be a time to disconnect, recharge and revitalise ourselves. May the sun shine on us all, literally and symbolically!

Thanks to all the contributors to this second edition of 'Inspire' - see you all again for more educational adventures in 2022-23!

Memories fade with time and lessons are forgotten, but experiences shape a human being and leave a lasting mark. Teachers have the privilege of guiding early experiences and discoveries.

Our students deserve recognition for their passion & dedication for learning, as well as their sense of humour. Students give teachers a sense of joy, purpose and positivity through challenging times.

I am constantly impressed by the enthusiasm of our both our students & staff with the variety of events & initiatives in our school, a quick snapshot below since our last 'Inspire' newsletter:

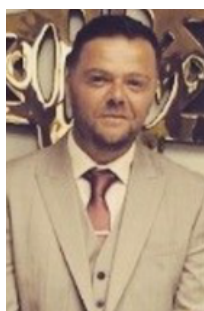
- **We recently marked College Awareness Week the following events were held with many events organised by our Guidance Dept:**
 - *Carlow IT, University of Limerick, Maynooth University, NUIG, WIT, and DCU*
 - *College facts during the morning announcements*
 - *College Pic Collage competition for Junior Cycle Students*
 - *College Awareness Stand in the Senior Social Area*
 - *Dream Job competition for all students*
 - *College prospects on display in Senior Social Area*
- **All Senior Cycle Ag Science students attended a recent trip to a farm.**
- **Our Maths Support Centre has been open Monday, Tuesday, Thursday & Friday at lunch.**
- **We held an online information evening for all 3rd years & Parents/Guardians for TY 2022.**
- **Our TL21 Group have been working Parental/Student engagement:**
 - *To bridge the disconnect between student learning in school and parental engagement in this process*
 - *As a means to bridge this disconnect, we invited students to attend the 5th year parent teacher meetings alongside their parents/guardians to open a healthy dialog about school life*

- Thanks to Stephen Comiskey for providing our Teaching, Learning & Assessment focus group with an excellent CPD session on formative feedback.
- Great work, commitment & dedication by our teacher Ms Colfer and former colleague Ms Killackey on the new publications for LCPE & Junior German.
- We welcomed our Incoming 1st Year Students for Sept 2022 & their Parents/Guardians recently.
- Our LC Subject fair was held recently, thank you to the students & Mr Nugent for organising.
- Many classes were delighted to join Fiona Forman & Wexford Education Centre for their Well-being webinar, as we look to start 2022 with optimism, positivity & wellbeing.
- Our Professional Learning Communities are now back & up and running. The first two topics we discussed were:
 - *How our students learn*
 - *Barriers to student success and achievement*
- Orals/Practicals - Well done to our 6th years who completed their Language Orals in Irish, German, French, Spanish, Lithuanian, Polish, Russian & Music Practical over the Easter holidays.
- Home Ec. Practical - well done to all 3rd year students who completed their Cookery practicals.
- Congratulations to the Junior Cycle Class of 2021, who received their certificates to recognise their fantastic achievements. Well done to Ms Leacy for her work in organising and to their year head, tutors, teachers & parents/guardians for their support.
- Science Club is up and running every Thursday led by Mr Doyle & his team of prefects.
- Our Deep Green Writing club is back in business
- A great day of learning for our 5th year Ag Students at Kildalton Teagasc thanks to Mr Doyle & Ms Kenny
- **Seachtain na Gaeilge in a measc beidh:**
 - *Tráth na gCeist > Célithe*
 - *Scóráil Sciobtha > Ceol Traidisiúnta*
- **Bhain Na daltaí an-taitneamh as an gceilí do Seachtain Na Gaeilge. Well done to all of the Irish department for arranging a week full of activities for our students**
- **Literacy week**
 - *Well done to all our Literacy week Literary Teams Kahoot Challenge class winners*
 - *Our World Book Day winners: Senior Joint winners Fiona and Kristy, Junior winner Lucy and joint staff winners Ms Kelly and Ms Conway .Bravo on the wonderful artistic creative costumes*
 - *The greatest fun during the week had to be the Teen Teachers Recommend a Read from their Teen reads Quiz*
- **Congratulations to Dara Kelly, Leah Cassidy and Rachel Furlong from Presentation Secondary School for their Glamour award winning design, Got Milk!**
- **Congratulations to the Junk Kouture class of 2022 on their incredible designs, guided by Ms L Murphy. Follow 'Get A Grip', 'Pawaful', 'Love me First', 'Every Part of Me', 'Offset' and 'Battle On'.**

On behalf of the entire Senior Leadership Team: Mary Dooley, Caroline Ryan & I, we hope that you enjoy this second edition of 'Inspire,' which shows the excellent levels of learning & teaching carried out in our school.

"Education is not the filling of a pail but the lighting of a fire."

Billy Ryan, Principal



Our Senior Leadership Team (L to R): Billy Ryan, Mary Dooley and Caroline Ryan

Reflections on our school, as a Sixth Year

by **Marykate Donohoe**, Class of 2022

Before I joined Presentation Wexford, learning, to me, was purely academic and independent. I will never forget at our Open Day, when I heard Mr Ryan speaking about “holistic learning”. I was surprised, as I had assumed that school would be purely exam focused. Yet, through spending time in a collaborative and progressive environment such as Presentation Wexford, you begin to realise that results from the Junior Cert and Leaving Cert are not everything. While academics are, of course, a priority, it is our growth and learning as people, that is such an essential aspect of our secondary school education.

The culture, that has been cultivated in our school, is one of respect and pride. We, as students, have respect not only for our teachers and management, but for other students and most importantly for ourselves. I truly feel that this begins with those at the top and resonates throughout the school. We are treated with such consideration from our teachers and from those in leadership positions, that we are, therefore, willing to work harder in our pursuit of learning. A positive and inclusive learning environment is a catalyst for achieving success. It cannot be underestimated how we, as students, feel when our time and work is appreciated and when we, as people, are valued.

Similarly, extracurricular activities provide a place for students to build a stronger connection with teachers (as nearly every teacher is involved in at least one club or society) and they also allow students to come together to create a stronger community within the school. Groups such as the Maths Support Centre, the Learning Hub and the Green Schools committee operate on the principle of students educating each other. Choir, Library, Games club and sports teams, each create a space for growth outside of structured education. Furthermore, initiatives such as Meitheal and Class Prefects allow for students to progress within leadership roles in the school. These are all important aspects of our personal development.

Of course, not every school day was easy. There were many panicked mornings before History tests, complex and confusing Maths classes, and days that felt like weeks. However, when I look back small things like getting cupcakes on a random Tuesday, having sporting competitions against the teachers, or the positivity quotes that are read out each morning, it nurtured my appreciation for school life. While, at this point, my future is still open, thanks to the qualities that Presentation Wexford has instilled in me, I have the courage to achieve ‘my best, always.’



TEACHER PROFILES



Our school in one word:

Motivating

My name is Brandon Cogley.

I teach English, History,
Religious Education and Theatre Studies.
I have been teaching here for 3 years.

*If you were Minister for Education,
what immediate change would you
bring to second-level education?*

**Reduce the pupil teacher ratio to
allow teachers and students to
have more time in class to engage
and interact, thus improving the
learning and teaching experience.**

What do you believe
is the most important
characteristic a
teacher should have?
**Kindness is definitely
one of the most
necessary traits, as
well as being patient,
adaptable and
approachable.**

*What are the main highlights for
you in your work?*

**I love learning new things from
my students. Teachers are life-
long learners so there's always
something new and each day is
never the same. Also, helping
my students to reach their full
potential and seeing them grow
into young adults.**

Where I
STUDIED
ST PATRICK'S,
DRUMCONDRA
(DCU)

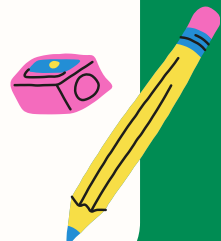
UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE,
DUBLIN

My definition of
EFFECTIVE TEACHING AND LEARNING

**Effective learning and teaching can only take place when a
student feels they are at ease in a class, hence the importance of
the teacher traits of kindness and patience etc. Collaboration,
reflection and respect are key components too.**



The Academic Council & Student Tracking



What happens

Context

Originally set up in 2009, the Academic Council aims to encourage and promote the academic success of all students by supporting students, parents/ guardians and teachers in monitoring student achievement.

To aid this, the Council has set up a system of active academic tracking to monitor academic performance.

Student Tracking

Academic tracking for 2nd year students involves meeting with a member of the Academic Council fortnightly up until Christmas and then monthly from Christmas to Summer. During these meetings, we try to identify what is preventing that student from reaching their potential, put in places resources to help improve their academic performance and set realistic and achievable targets for exams.



The Council meets, in person, every fortnight to discuss *change of level* forms. The main objective of these meetings is to ensure the student is making an informed decision when choosing to change levels within a subject and that they have considered the effect it may have on them in the future.

On alternative weeks, we complete our *academic tracking*. Here, we identify students that are not achieving academically, in line with their ability, as identified by the multiple assessment, aptitude and diagnostic tests they do during their school years. In September, we review academic achievement of our current 2nd years and, with help from the staff, identify a group of students that will be tracked for the year. 5th year students are identified after the Term One exams and we work with them from January to May.



Members

Maria Kenny, Teresa Bradshaw,
Michelle Curran, Donna Marie Leacy,
Damien Nugent & William Ryan

Thanks to Maria Kenny, Academic Tracking coordinator, for providing this information.

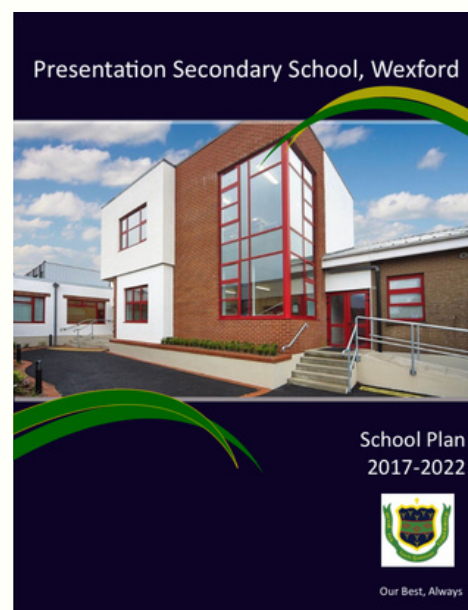
THE STRATEGIC PLAN COMMITTEE

With our school's current Strategic Plan (2017-2022) coming to the end of its cycle, a working group has been established to oversee a review of the existing plan and to undertake the research/drafting and publication of a new Strategic Plan (2022-2027).

The Strategic Plan sets out the long term goals/vision for our school over the next 5 years, not just in relation to our school focus, but taking into consideration the bigger picture and the evolving nature of our school in terms of our ethos, promotion of partnership/collaboration, learning and teaching, enrolment, our school improvement plans and our overall school profile.

The student voice will play a key part in the drafting of the new plan, with representatives from the Student Learning Hub representing the student perspective.

The aim is to have the new Strategic Plan issued in the first term of the new 2022-23 academic year. More updates will follow on this in future editions of the 'Inspire' newsletter.



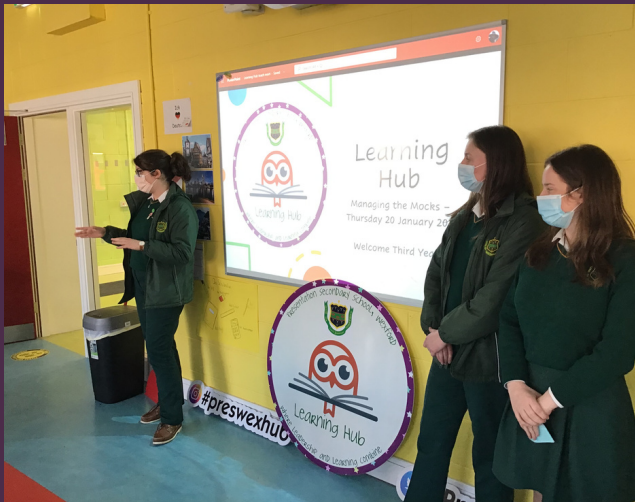
MEMBERS

WILLIAM RYAN
JOE ROLSTON
DONAL MCCARTHY
LAURA DEMPSEY
JIMMY GRANNELL

REPRESENTATIVES
FROM THE
STUDENT LEARNING
HUB



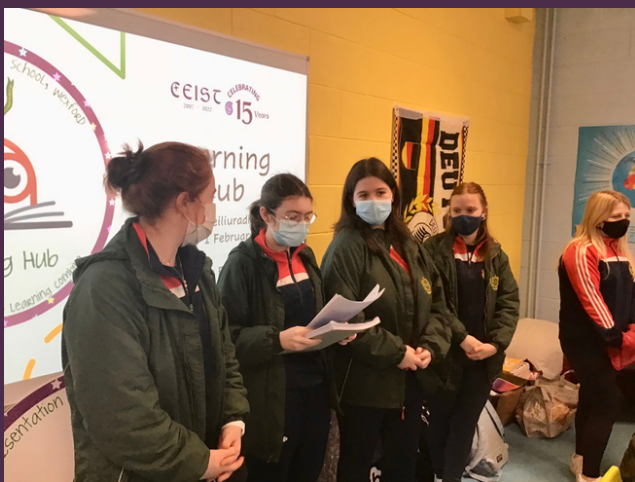
Learning Hub updates



It has been a busy time for all connected with our school's Student Learning Hub.

Many of our Learning Leaders have been involved in facilitating student teach-meets since January. So far, there have been teach-meets on:

- **Managing the Mocks** (Sixth Years giving advice to Third Years)
- **CEIST Ceiliúradh celebrations**
- **World Book Day celebrations**
- **Biodiversity** (joining with the Green Schools committee)
- **Settling into secondary school for First Years** (led by Third Year and TY Leaders)
- **Extra-curricular events promotion**
- **Introduction to self-defence** (with guest presenter Bobby O'Neill)



We organised a 'Take a Treat' **pop-up station** for Third and Sixth Years, during the mock examinations, where students shared positive messages of encouragement, while taking a sweet-treat in return!



We had a very positive meeting with some students and teachers from Ramsgrange Community School, with whom we hope to establish formal links when their Hub is set up in 2022/23. Links have also been made with St Oliver's Post-Primary School in Oldcastle, Co. Meath.

We have also been working on our branding, with continuing updates on our social media feeds on Twitter (@PresWexHub) and Instagram (#preswexhub), getting our Learning Hub noticeboards, while our logos and window stickers have been placed in our Hub Centre, Room 31, as well as special badges for our Learning Leaders.

Some images from some of the teach-meets so far this year.



Learning Hub updates



Before the end of this school year, we will be **surveying the student body** about their experiences of learning and teaching in our school and asking what students would like to see being offered by the Learning Hub in 2022/23.

In the next school year, in addition to more student teach-meets, we look forward to launching our Hub newsletter and Hub podcast, facilitating a 'Learning to Learn' themed week, inviting more guest speakers and establishing more links with other secondary schools and local community groups, amongst other things!

We are also hopeful that representatives from our Learning Hub leadership team will play an active role in various School Focus working groups. We look forward to contributing towards our school's new Strategic Plan document, which will be happening soon too.

We would like to thank all the students who attended our teach-meets so far this year and we look forward to going from strength-to-strength in the next school year. Remember, if you are interested in becoming a Learning Leader, with the Learning Hub, there will be another recruitment drive happening on the return to school in September. We look forward to seeing new faces join our team next year.



TEACHER PROFILES



Our school in one word:

Ours

My name is Valerie Redmond.
I teach Geography, Politics & Society
and CSPE.

I have been teaching for 21 years.

*If you were Minister for Education,
what immediate change would you
bring to second-level education?*

**Less subjects - less topics per
subject and allow the students to
focus and research areas they like
and might be interested in pursuing.**

Where I
STUDIED
UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE
DUBLIN

*What do you believe
is the most important
characteristic a
teacher should have?*
**Patience, humour,
understanding and
spontaneous ideas to
change the way you
teach!**

*What are the main
highlights for you in
your work?*

**No two days are the same. I love
the moments of madness,
success or students asking or
solving questions I didn't even
think of. Meeting all the students
and their own unique characters
everyday.**

My definition of

EFFECTIVE TEACHING AND LEARNING

**Finding a way to help a student to go from confusion
to understanding ... creating a room they feel
welcomed and safe.**

Rhianna Kenny,
Rang Deirdre

My Junior Cycle journey



My 3 years in Presentation, Wexford were definitely not what I imagined when I walked through the gates on my very first day but, nonetheless, they have been a great learning experience and I have benefited greatly from them. These 3 years have resulted in me meeting new people and making many new friendships throughout my whole year group. Although Covid has interrupted our school life - from our school work to our sports teams - over these 3 years, the staff and students alike worked hard to make the school a safe, welcoming environment and to show a united front during this pandemic, to show everyone that they aren't alone during this difficult time.

If I had to give advice to myself, if I was starting 1st year again, I would advise myself (and anyone else starting) to get involved in extra curricular activities, as it's a great way to make new friendships and to find new hobbies that you may be interested in. I would also tell myself to complete homework and study when it is given, if possible, and not try and complete it at the next available time, so as to avoid stress the day before homework is due or if you have a class test. I would also advise myself to try different study techniques, just because something works for one of your friends doesn't mean it works for you and it may take a while for you to figure out what the best study techniques are for you.

Covid-19 had a large impact on my education. In March 2020, during my 1st year in secondary school, it was announced that schools would close. The majority of people in school, including me, presumed that this would just be for a short period of time but we would later learn that it would be a lot longer! The first months in lockdown trying to do school work was difficult, as the weather was getting better and summer tests were approaching. It was very different compared to what I expect other year groups had experienced before. In September of 2nd year, we came back to school but now we were wearing face-masks, this was very different to the start of the school year the previous year. Then again, after Christmas, we went back into lockdown and back to online learning. During these difficult times - from internet problems to health or family problems - the teachers did their best to still provide us with the best education possible, while also dealing with all of these things at home as well. While completing online learning, there were more distractions to overcome at home than there were in school and it made it more difficult to complete work.

Throughout my time in this school, I've studied a total of 14 subjects: Maths, English, Irish, Geography, History, Science, Home Economics, Music, Business, French, PE, CSPE, SPHE and Religious Education. For my Junior Cycle, I will be completing a State Exam in 10 of these subjects. Studying these wide variety of subjects has given me an insight into what subjects I may want to study for Leaving Cert. From CBAs to class presentations, throughout my time in this school, everyone has been encouraged to stand up in front of the class and speak, this is often something that may be out of people's comfort zone (including myself) but from encouragement from teachers and classmates, I've begun to develop this skill that will be very useful to me later on in life.

Over the 3 years, I've been involved in extra curricular activities such as camogie, soccer and basketball. These sports have resulted in me making new friendships with people I may have never met. While involved in extra curricular activities, you can travel to matches all around the county for soccer, basketball or camogie, Wexford's Got Talent with choir, cross-country, trips to soccer matches or even be fortunate enough to travel to New York and Boston with the camogie team. The school provides a wide variety of activities that they hope will suit everyone, whether you like reading, running, singing or playing football, the school will always try their best to facilitate to students' hobbies.

Next year, in Transition Year, I'm looking forward to many things. TY will give me the opportunity to decide what subjects I'm going to choose, through all the subjects we will study and the work experience that we will complete. I'm also looking forward to the TY show that they put on every year. This will give everyone the opportunity to make new friendships with people who have the same interests as them. We can only hope that we will all be fortunate enough to have an undisrupted year and be able to go on all these trips that the TY coordinators work hard to plan out.

"Although Covid has interrupted our school life - from our school work to our sports teams - over these 3 years, the staff and students alike worked hard to make the school a safe, welcoming environment."

FOCUS ON FEEDBACK

“The first fundamental principle of effective classroom feedback is that feedback should be more work for the recipient than the donor.”

~ Dylan William

Feedback is one of the most crucial elements in the learning process. How teachers give feedback, how it is received and, ultimately, how it is used to improve standards and performance must be at the heart of all effective learning environments. Has Covid-19 caused us to reflect on how we, as teachers, provide meaningful feedback on the work that our students are producing? For, as William states above, if feedback is creating more work for the teacher, than the student, then surely there is a real need to address the ‘how,’ ‘when’ and ‘why’ behind feedback in our respective subject areas.

effective
TEACHING
minimises the
need for
FEEDBACK

• PRINCIPLES OF

timely
FEEDBACK
to **FEED-FORWARD**
→

• EFFECTIVE

relationships
and culture
are the foundation
on which **FEEDBACK**
is built...

• FEEDBACK

pupils need
opportunities to
actually use
FEEDBACK

- high quality direct instruction
- modelling, questioning, explanation
- formative assessment
- key vocabulary

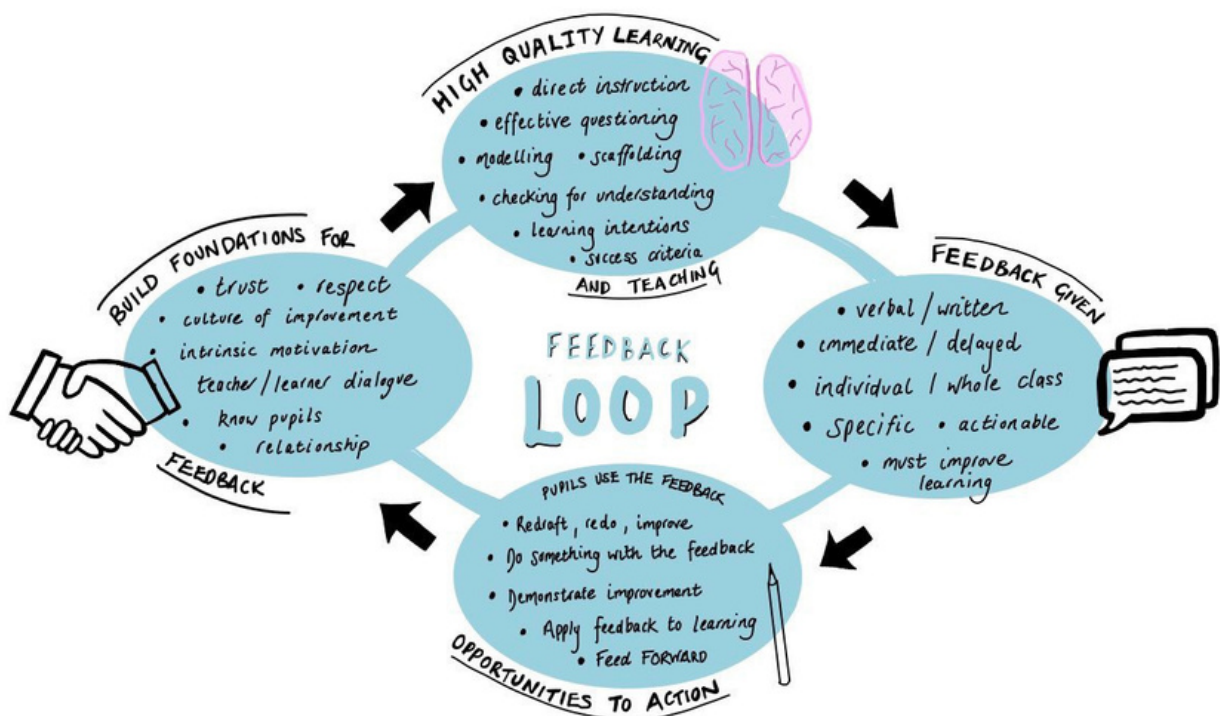
- immediate or delayed dependent on task
- specific and actionable by pupil
- not personal
- improves learning not just task

feedback

What does it look like in the classroom?

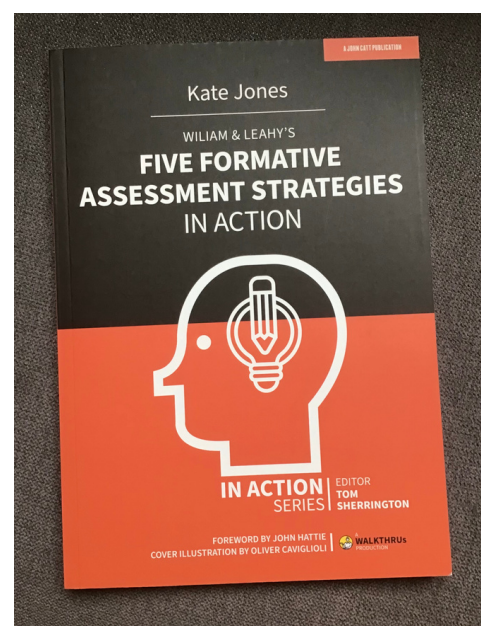
- build trust and culture of improvement
- partnership and dialogue to support
- motivation and self confidence to receive feedback

- to close the feedback loop, pupils need to ACT on the feedback
- redraft, re-do, improve
- see visible progress - intrinsic motivation



'FIVE FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES IN ACTION'

In addition to her influential work on the area of retrieval practice, Kate Jones has provided another excellent resource in educational research; this time, through her practical take on Dylan William and Siobhán Leahy's 'Embedding Formative Assessment' (2015). Based on their work, Jones focuses on five key formative assessment strategies to help embed a meaningful culture of cooperative learning in schools, with authentic feedback at the core.



WHAT ARE THE STRATEGIES?

- Success Criteria and Learning Intentions

Students are provided with a clear understanding of the end goals (intentions) and the steps (success criteria) they need to take in order to achieve that goal.

- Elicit evidence of learning

To teach well, we need to find out what students already know. It supports teachers and students to make informed decisions about the next steps in learning and teaching.

- Feedback to feed-forward

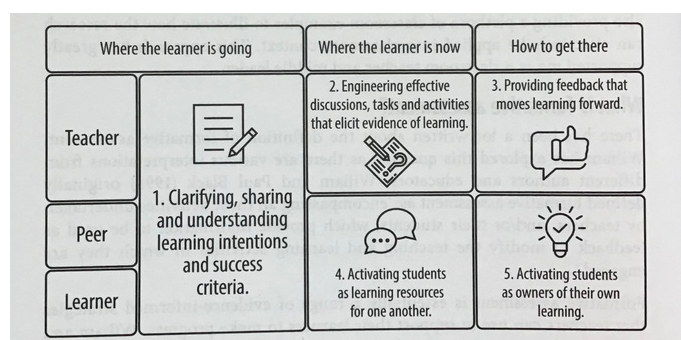
When we find out what students know and don't know, we need to provide them with feedback to get them/keep them on track. Any feedback that the student doesn't act upon is a waste of time.

- Peer learning and assessment

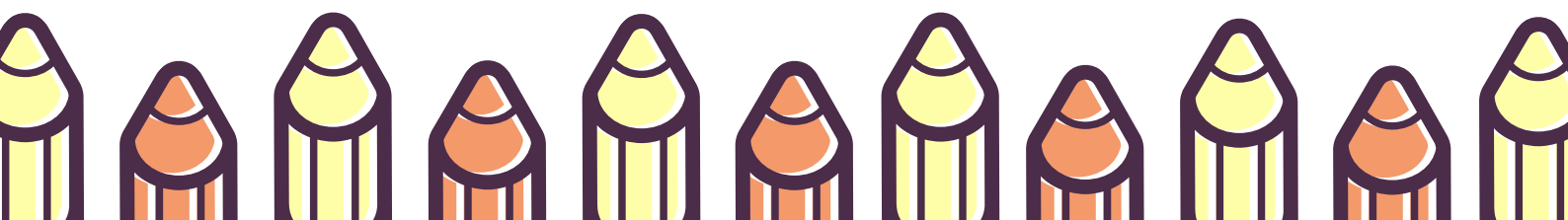
If done effectively, it can increase student achievement for those who get help and those who provide it.

- Independent learning

When students take ownership over their learning, everything else falls into place - they become life-long learners.



- Learning intentions should focus on the content, skills and concepts that need to be learned, rather than what students are doing
- Design learning intentions to be clear (language), specific (knowledge learned) and desirably difficult (but achievable for all)
- Communicate intentions and success criteria with clarity and purpose - not copying them down
 - Success criteria breaks down intentions and scaffolds the learning
- *****
- Questioning to cause thinking and/or provide information to help us teach better
 - Plan, ask and wait - when asking higher order questions
- Use a 'no hands up, except to ask a question' approach e.g. cold calling
- Use retrieval practice to effectively and efficiently provide feedback on learning
- Other techniques include elaboration, statements, discussion and exit tickets
- *****
- Build students' capacity to use feedback through modelling
- Use Leahy's four quarter marking: 25% detail, 25% skim, 25% self, 25% peer
- All feedback should be understandable, helpful and actionable
- *****
- Effective collaborative learning requires group goals and individual accountability
 - Peer assessment: focus on improving the individual being assessed
 - Peer feedback - feedback should be kind, specific and helpful
 - Peer feedback and assessment shouldn't be used for summative purposes
- *****
- Self-regulated learning: cognition, metacognition and motivation
- Model strategies for planning, monitoring and evaluating students' own learning
- Motivation and mindset play an important role - role of motivated teaching
- Provide time for modelling, sharing examples and provide feedback on self-regulation



In focus: My reflections on teaching

by **Gráinne Power,**
English and Religious Education teacher/School Librarian



I began my teaching career in 1991 in CBS, Tramore and moved the following year to Presentation, Wexford.

I really started to consider teaching as a path in Fifth Year in secondary school, where I attended Loreto, Clonmel (apologies for that).

There was a teacher there that inspired me greatly. Ms O'Sullivan was my Geography teacher and, in spite of a gruff appearance, she had a heart of gold. She loved her subject but it was her quiet care for students that impressed me the most. When kindness and understanding were required, Ms O'Sullivan provided it discreetly - while still motivating us to work through whatever obstacles we encountered. I wanted to be a Ms O'Sullivan for others.

I studied Theology and English at Maynooth University. I had intended to take Geography but it ran at the same time as Theology and I ended up with English. I look upon that as divine intervention because I love teaching English.

The best thing about this career is that you have a new 'crop' of students to grow each year, so it is never the same year twice, content may be similar but students are always different. I am really fortunate in that I still love teaching, after 31 years.

It is important to remember if you choose this path that students are not 'empty vessels' to be filled. Forming a good working relationship with your crop is vital. If you want to inspire students, you have to connect with them, get to know them and show 'kindness when kindness is what is required' and firmness when firmness is required.

Yes, the classroom has changed over three decades, I did actually use chalk and a blackboard, although thankfully the 'chalk and talk' approach was dead since the late 1980s. Technology, in those days, was a tape recorder or Betamax video, now we have internet access and iPads and can access thousands of resources instantly. However, if the internet died tomorrow, it would not be a tremendous loss, as teaching is ultimately about communication.

It is about inspiring, interest in the subject and speaking and listening with enthusiasm. It is about letting every student find their voice and assisting them in using the content explored as a springboard for original thought.

This is a hugely rewarding career (with great holidays).

I'm really glad that I chose teaching and I'm really glad I ended up in Presentation, Wexford.

TEACHER PROFILES



Our school in one word:

Inclusive

My name is Laura Dempsey.
I teach Irish and German.
I have been teaching for 3 years.

If you were Minister for Education, what immediate change would you bring to second-level education?

I would change the current oral and practical timetable for Leaving Certificate students. As a language teacher, I see the amount of work that students put into these orals and practicals and I think it is unfair that they are required to give up their Easter holidays to sit these exams.

What are the main highlights for you in your work?

Getting to work with inspiring teachers and students every day.

Where I
STUDIED
DUBLIN CITY
UNIVERSITY

What do you believe is the most important characteristic a teacher should have?
Empathy and patience.

My definition of

EFFECTIVE TEACHING AND LEARNING

When students are engaged and are enjoying learning. When students are independent, coming up with new ideas and using what they already know to learn new things.

FIVE WAYS TO BUILD CONFIDENCE IN YOUR STUDENTS

BY TOM SHERRINGTON

There's a lot to learn! Sometimes it feels overwhelming – especially to students with the least confidence; the weakest knowledge; the most tentative grasp of the ideas. Something I observe fairly often – and is worth reflecting on in your own lessons – is that the students with the most confidence dominate lessons. They get asked more questions; they get through more activities and tasks; they get more time to rehearse and develop answers. Overall, somewhat paradoxically, they are getting more practice than the students with the lowest confidence.

To a student with low confidence, lessons can sometimes feel like this:

- there's too much to learn at once, which I find overwhelming and demoralising.
- there's an assumption about my prior knowledge that is overly optimistic, so I feel like I'm behind the whole time.
- there's not enough time to practice, so I don't get a chance to do anything well.
- the tasks are too long with too many elements and I'm not sure about any of it.
- the quizzing seems random – asking me stuff I barely know so mainly I'm guessing.

With this in mind, it's worth thinking about lessons from the perspective of a student with low confidence to see what you can do to help them.

Here are five ways . . .

1 - Consolidate. Consolidate. Consolidate.

Take every possible opportunity to go over things again and again, giving students the chance to over-learn and consolidate:

- Summarise the key points (or phrases or definitions or examples) multiple times, and ask students to run through them individually and in pairs – so that every student can mentally and/or verbally restate them.
- Ask the same question to more than one student. Go over it again; check that one good answer is understood by other students, explicitly repeating the key elements that represent that good answer.
- Give lots of examples during explanations – never just one. Show how the same ideas, methods, terminology, concepts come up again and again.
- Make sure question and problem sets are often largely consolidatory: repeating ideas and methods that have already been learned, to they feel unthreatening – just practice of the known and familiar; students know what to do, it's just a case of actually doing it to consolidate.

2 - Explicit Rehearsal

Make sure all students have time to rehearse the knowledge you introduce.

- Did everyone say the new phrase?
- Can everyone explain the method?
- Can everyone explain the steps in the argument?
- Can everyone explain the key metaphor that the poet is using?
- Can everyone run through the sequence in the erosion process?



This isn't about having it written in their books. It's about being able to generate responses, rehearsing the words and arguments – even if prompted and heavily scaffolded. If you've explained something, can students explain it back to you? It's a form of explicit rehearsal. The least confident students will be the least likely to volunteer – and yet they are the ones who need the rehearsal most. This is where inclusive questioning comes in to support them, including a key role for pair talk.

3 - Repeated Short Feedback Loops

Often students are set a task that takes a long time to do and has many components so the process of getting feedback is complex and at a distance from the moment of doing each part. And then there's no time to re-do all of it because there's too much. As an alternative it can be very powerful to construct short tasks with the explicit aim of creating short feedback and improvement loops: *do the task; evaluate and generate feedback; do it again better; evaluate and generate feedback; do it again better... and so on.* This process builds confidence as students see how they can improve and produce something of quality rather than a series of things that are mediocre. It's more common to see this in practical pursuits like playing an instrument and PE – where the process of building physical strength and muscle memory is well understood. Other cognitive examples might include:

- Small-scale life drawings – small enough to try many times.
- The opening two sentences in an story, essay or speech
- An explanation of a process in science or geography.
- A three-sentence exchange in French

It's just so common for things to be done just once – but can you find a way to build in these repetition loops that allow a short-run improvement process to happen?

4 - Scaffold the details

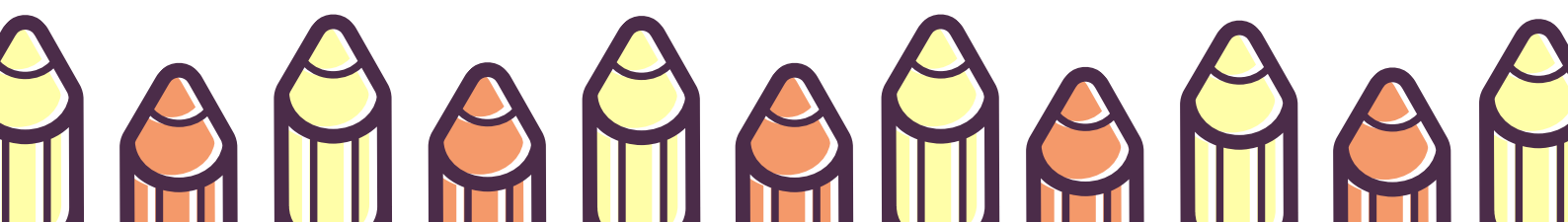
As with many ideas in teaching, everyone knows what scaffolding is in theory. But the practice can be patchy. Quite often, you can find students in the corners, floundering. My favourite examples of scaffolding, where I see confidence-building in action, are where specific structures are being taught and students are practising using them.

Often students who struggle to give detailed answers verbally or in writing are struggling because they are unsure about how to organise and express their ideas – even though they have a reasonable understanding of the concepts. Scaffolds can include frequently used subject-specific structures, introduced on at time, not just on a long list.

I saw some students using this recently to great effect: On one hand, an advantage of tourists visiting Snowdon is that..... On the other hand, a disadvantage is..... This was helping them prepare their balanced argument pieces.

I met some students learning chemistry with good scaffolding around concrete examples of metal reactions. A few common metals and non-metals were highlighted and students had to generate lots and lots of compounds, rehearsing the naming protocols e.g. oxygen → oxide. When asked for examples they had to say 'Zinc reacts with Oxygen to produce Zinc Oxide' – a good form of specific scaffolded rehearsal.

Sounds obvious doesn't it? But it's not always like that; students are just asked to get things down in the books without the confidence-building rehearsal.



5 - Retrieval with Agency

Design quizzing and other retrieval practice routines so that students can perform well to build their confidence, rather than merely reinforcing their sense of not knowing things.

Topic in advance: Tell students exactly what they need to know, supported by a study resource (booklet, knowledge organiser etc) and tell them that they'll be quizzed on a specific date on just that knowledge. This gives them a chance to properly study and get ready and do well. If quizzing tends to be across many topics at random, students develop a learned helplessness. How do study for all of that? Give them the chance to succeed.. make it tight, specific and predictable. At least at first.

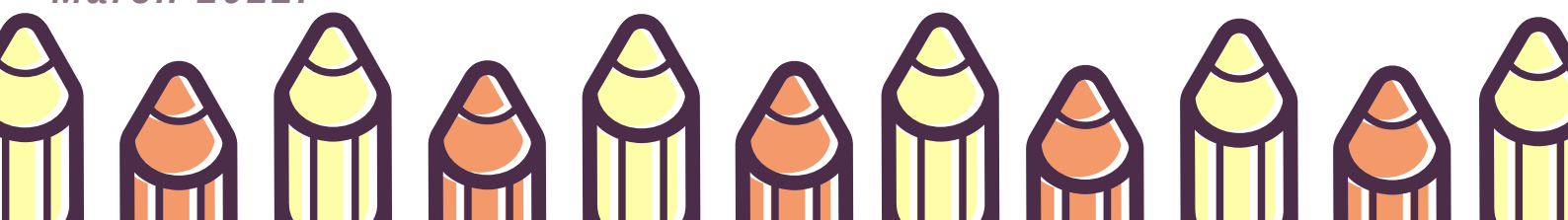
Questions in advance: If a student can't do well on a quiz they've seen in advance, they won't do well on one that is a total surprise. For students who struggle to form study habits and engage in mental rehearsal, showing them the exact questions they'll be asked can help. It really lays it out for them: *you will need to know the answers to these questions*. Discuss all the answers. Then the quiz that comes later is very much a recall of known material. This isn't trivial. e.g 'What is mitosis?' For some students, it's a big deal just to give that answer even when they know that it's coming. Try it.

Tom Sherrington is a Physics and Maths teacher, since the 1980s, based in England. This post is taken from his very popular blog on [teacherhead.com](https://www.teacherhead.com). He has written very popular educational research books on learning and teaching and is the co-author of the hugely popular 'WalkThrus' series with Oliver Caviglioli.

This blog-post was posted on 6 March 2022.

Paired-Quizzing: Here students learn to use the knowledge resources to ask each other questions. When you are asking someone questions you are also consolidating your own knowledge; you are practising using the language and thinking of possible questions to pose. It's empowering to ask and then give answers. I always find students enjoy it immensely. They take turns and both people in a pair benefit. Because it is low stakes, the pressure is off and they can do multiple cycles of swapping to build confidence.

Flash Cards: This is a superb form of self-quizzing that, done well, builds confidence. The trick is to make sure students are using them with some discipline: pose the question... think of the answer.... then turn over to check. Students can isolate the cards they find hardest to get right and can repeat the checking process over and over and over. It's in their hands; they have agency. They see that they can learn things if they commit to it with enough intensity. Model it in class so that they can do it well independently.



SUBJECT IN FOCUS: ECONOMICS

by **Aidan Hackett**,
Religious Education,
Business, Accounting and Economics teacher



While Economics is a new subject in our school, it is far from a new subject nationally, having been introduced in 1969. In our school, it was my colleague James Browne who was keen to introduce the subject, as he had a number of years teaching it in his previous school and to great success. Then, around this time last year, Mr Ryan asked me if I'd be interested in taking a 5th year group. I hadn't taught the subject since teaching practice of college but as the subject has had a revamp towards "new Senior Cycle" specification in the last few years, I would be in the same boat as those teaching it for years, so it's a challenge I was, and still am excited about.

Traditionally it was one of the "best subjects for points," as the curriculum was quite predictable and suited those who could rote learn but, as is the case with most subjects lately, that has changed.

The exam is much less predictable and there is now a project element which is worth 20%. Unlike some other subjects, you cannot do any of the project in 5th year and have quite a short window in 6th year to complete it, so that is a challenge the current 6th years faced and my group will face next year.

The subject itself is one which aims to stimulate student interest in the economic environment around them, at a local, national and global level. The majority of those taking the subject are ones who did Business Studies for Junior Cycle, so they have a good foundation in the basic economic concepts. Those who are likely to excel in the subject are most likely ones who have an interest in the daily news, what is going on in the world around us, on a daily basis, and how government spending, policy and action affects us.

It is currently a very interesting time to be studying the subject with all that has happened in the last few years; the presidential tenure of Donald Trump, Brexit, Covid, war in Ukraine. On a national level; the Celtic Tiger fallout, the political climate and everything that we can see happening in our towns and villages daily.

There is a good level of cross-curricular content with other subjects such as Business, Geography and Politics & Society, which is great for anyone doing any of these as it cuts down the amount they need to learn and increases understanding through study of interconnected topics.

Overall, the experience of taking on a new subject has been daunting but exciting. It has heightened my own interest in political matters and the daily news both nationally and internationally. It has also probably caused me to spend more time on the Economics elements of the Junior Cycle Business Studies syllabus and to attempt to foster an interest in the daily news with my students.

TEACHER PROFILES



Our school in one word:

Encouraging

My name is Fiona Kinsella.

I teach Irish, CSPE and SPHE.

I have been teaching in this school since 2008. Before that, I taught in CBS Wexford, OLOL New Ross and CBS Naas.

If you were Minister for Education, what immediate change would you bring to second-level education?

In my own subject area (Irish), going forward, at Leaving Cert level, I would reduce the oral Sraith Pictiúr section from 20 to 10 pictures for all students.

My definition of effective teaching and learning

Creating a positive and inclusive learning environment, where students can creatively thrive and shine and their unique contributions and achievements are encouraged, valued and acknowledged.

Where I
STUDIED

**UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE
DUBLIN**

**NUI,
MAYNOOTH**

What do you believe is the most important characteristic a teacher should have?
Consistency, approachability, empathy.

Main highlights
FOR ME IN MY WORK

Teaching and interacting on a daily basis with a wonderful student body is such a pleasure, small gestures like 'thank you' and 'slán leat' mean so much. I have especially enjoyed working with such enthusiastic student leadership groups, peer mentors, the numeracy team and, in past years, student prefects, the innovative ideas, knowledge and dedication shown is a credit to those students.

I was fortunate enough to be TY co-ordinator with Mr Rolston, where I delighted in experiencing students embrace the spirit of Transition Year. Finally in our Irish department, I had the special privilege of working with and learning from the inspirational Sr Marie Murphy, 'ní bheidh a leithéid ann arís.'

LOOKING BACK ON FIFTH-YEAR

Written by Aoibhínn Mernagh

For those who don't know me, my name is Aoibhínn and I'm a Fifth-Year student. This is my general perspective and outlook on the year, as we approach the concluding weeks of this academic year. Commend yourself, you have persevered through an undeniably turbulent, onerous rollercoaster of a year. Ensure to give yourself the credit you deserve. I am fully aware and empathetic of the brewing stress associated with the sheer notion of the imminent summer exams, but let us not neglect the simple luxuries of life and indulge and invest in yourself!

We have experienced many trials and tribulations along the course of the last two years with the monotony and constraints of seemingly perpetual lockdowns, the taxing virtual learning and the general restriction of social interaction. I never thought that I would be so elated at a prospect of facial coverings becoming non-mandatory, but the sense of familiarity associated with seeing a person's facial expressions is so heartwarming. The endurance we have all displayed throughout this time has proven that we are capable of achieving more than we previously anticipated.

I know myself I completely acquired the TY mentality of dismissing any trace of academics and embracing the more social aspect of school life, which is what I highly recommend doing. I took the liberty of academic relief for granted, and for the initial months of Fifth Year I was reminiscing about the antics of the TY Virtual Bake-Off and Netflix binges. I believe I only truly adjusted to fifth year after the Christmas tests, a tad late, I know, but I was in complete denial. The transition from TY to Fifth Year can vary depending on the mindset of the individual. I understand that this may be interpreted as being relatively corny, but having a reasonably enthusiastic approach to commencing Fifth Year undeniably enables the change over from TY to be more fluent and attainable.



The subjects I chose to study were Biology, Physics, Chemistry and German, alongside the core subjects. Yes, you read that right, three science subjects and I can just object to the trepidation affiliated with studying three science subjects and surmise that it is not as daunting as expected and perfectly feasible to pursue. Biology is one of the most popular sciences and informs you about the intricacies of the human body and our environment. Physics gives you the opportunity to develop a better understanding of the inner workings of the world around you. Chemistry considers the chemical makeup of molecules and how they react and change in specific circumstances. Leaving Certificate German not only delves into the language itself, but also exposes you to the traditions, customs and way-of-life in Germany itself.

LOOKING BACK ON FIFTH-YEAR ~ continued

I was buzzing with joy when I heard that sport in school was being permitted again this year. Typical me, I was injured for the duration of the season, however I was delighted to be a part of the action, in whatever shape or form that was. I have always been a huge advocate for joining an organisation from the extensive and diverse array of extra curricular activities our school has to offer. I am personally heavily involved in camogie and have utilised it as an outlet from the stresses of school and life. I understand that at times it can become difficult to find a balance between study and extra curricular activities, especially in Fifth Year. A remedy to a dilemma like that is to become more organised. Make out a schedule and allocate suitable slots for both study and your hobbies. Please, I beg of you not to abandon the activities that provide that element of banter or satisfaction in your life! They are beneficial in sustaining good wellbeing and also enhance your quality of life along with your study.

I would definitely admit that I am prone to procrastination. I aspire to completing tasks earlier, yet there I am, fuelled by pure adrenaline, starting and finishing an assignment due the following morning. I am most productive and balanced in my study when I do small amounts consistently. Abiding by this method makes study more manageable and achievable. Active learning ie doing exam questions, teaching the content yourself to peers has proven to be the most useful technique for me.

My advice for future Fifth-Years is to be consistent. Complete your homework as soon as you can and do small amounts of revision persistently to relieve stress as exams approach. Retain your social connections and allow yourself to go out and have a bit of craic, in moderation now aswell! Keep up your extracurricular activities. Mind yourself and understand when you need a physical or mental break. Never abandon the other aspects of your life, as without them, you will not be able to conjure the motivation nor the desire to succeed academically. Everything in moderation, as my mother always says.

Aoibhínn Mernagh, Rang Fionnuala





Focus on: Junior Cycle

by Donna Marie Leacy,
English and French teacher/
Junior Cycle Management Support
coordinator



The introduction of the Junior Cycle began in September 2014. The vision of this revised programme is to place students at the centre of the learning process, enabling them to 'actively participate in their communities and in society and to be resourceful and confident learners in all aspects and stages of their lives.' This has led to several changes as summarised below.

Certification

Students will receive a new Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement (JCPA). The JCPA will reflect a much wider range of the student's achievements over the three years of Junior Cycle. It will report on: **Subject Levels and Grades** (State Examination 90% and Assessment Task 10%), **Classroom Based Assessments** (CBAs) and **Other Areas of Learning** (OALs).

Levels for Subjects

All subjects at Junior Cycle are taken at common level apart from English, Irish and Mathematics, which may be taken at Higher or Ordinary levels.

The Junior Cycle Grading System

The manner in which the Junior Cycle subjects are graded has changed. Traditional grades have been replaced by the following:

Student Wellbeing

Wellbeing is a core part of a student's Junior Cycle experience. This area of learning includes, amongst others, PE, CSPE, SPHE and Guidance.

Percentage	Grade Descriptor
≥ 90 to 100	Distinction
≥ 75 and < 90	Higher Merit
≥ 55 and < 75	Merit
≥ 40 and < 55	Achieved
≥ 20 and < 40	Partially Achieved
≥ 0 and < 20	Not Graded (NG)

Focus on: Junior Cycle ~ continued

Classroom Based Assessments (CBAs)

Classroom Based Assessments (CBAs) provide students with opportunities to demonstrate their learning and skills in ways that are not possible in the state exams, for example, their verbal communication and investigative skills. The possible tasks cover a broad range of activities including oral presentations, various genres of written work, practical activities, artistic performances, scientific experiments, projects or other suitable tasks. CBAs are undertaken in each subject during a defined time period within normal class contact time. Students will complete one CBA in second year and one in third year in most subjects. CBA results do not go towards their state exam result. However, the Assessment Task, which is worth 10%, is based on the CBAs. CBAs will be reported on in the JCPA using the following descriptors:

- **Exceptional**
- **Above Expectations**
- **In line with expectations**
- **Yet to meet expectations**

**These descriptors do not
equate to percentages.**

The CBAs and the Features of Quality, which support teacher judgement, are set out in Assessment Guidelines for each subject. The assessment is similar to the ongoing assessment that occurs every day in every class.

Assessment Task

Once the second CBA is completed, students in Third Year will complete a written Assessment Task on what they have learned and the skills and competencies that they have developed. This task, set by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment, is undertaken during normal class time and is marked by the State Examinations Committee (SEC). This Assessment Task will account for 10% of the overall mark for the final examination. At the end of Third Year, students will sit the final SEC examination in June, which will account for 90% of the SEC grade.

Other Areas of Learning (OALs)

An important aspect of Junior Cycle is the 'Other Areas of Learning'. This includes any extra-curricular activities or school competitions the student has taken part in over the three years of Junior Cycle.

TEACHER PROFILES



Our school in one word:

Welcoming

My name is Cian Doyle.
I teach Irish and English.
I have been teaching for 4 years.

If you were Minister for Education, what immediate change would you bring to second-level education?

I would revoke the decision to have all orals and practicals taking place over Easter break and attempt to space them out for next year's Leaving Cert.

What are the main highlights for you in your work?

Seeing students achieve to the best of their ability both academically and throughout the many extra curricular activities on offer in the school.

Where I
STUDIED

WATERFORD
I. T.

HIBERNIA
COLLEGE

What do you believe is the most important characteristic a teacher should have?
Teachers need to be hard-working.

My definition of
EFFECTIVE TEACHING AND LEARNING

Positive and respectful learning environments lead to positive results.

HEAD-GIRL TEAM REFLECTIONS

Q & A WITH RIBH SEXTON, CLODAGH WHELAN, JODY BOYLE AND FIONA COUSINS

Looking back on your six years in the school, how do you think our school promotes learning throughout the school community?

RS: Our school engages students in active learning by providing us with opportunities to collaborate imaginatively, creatively and positively with each other in clubs, committees, teams and to participate in group activities and pair work during lessons. By encouraging students to become actively involved, from participating in lessons, to taking part in any of the innumerable school activities that occur in Pres each year, the school facilitates valuable autonomous learning.

CW: While learning is a personal experience for all, our teachers support this individual undertaking by altering our classes to best for the needs of each and every student.

JB: I think that Presentation takes an individual approach to each and every student here. Our individuality is expressed through our work and the outlets we are provided with are supported by the whole school.

FC: Active learning is really promoted in our classes. There's never a class where only the teacher is talking, everyone is encouraged to get involved. This not only livens up the classes but ensures the class is your focus.

How do you find the standard of teaching in our school?

RS: My experience has been that the teachers in our school go above and beyond what you would imagine their role to be. They are experts in, and are passionate about, their subjects and are impressive role models for their students. In my opinion, the standard of teaching in Pres, Wexford is second to none and the teaching methods that our teachers use are cutting edge, well-researched and very effective.

CW: The standard of teaching is exceptional in our school, which merely comes down to how passionate, friendly and approachable our teachers are. The teachers' interest in their students allow the students to feel respected and heard which allows for a better teacher-student relationship.

JB: The teachers here are a passionate, caring group of people, who clearly take a lot of pride in our school and its name.

FC: The teachers in our school are not only extremely passionate but also approachable. Any teacher in our school would go above and beyond to help a student who is struggling, whether it be a few minutes after class or even during their break.

How would you describe our school to someone who didn't know anything about it?

RS: Pres students, teachers and management form part of an extended family. Pres is a partnership. Both staff and students support and influence each other emotionally, intellectually, physically, morally – all accompanied by a great sense of fun and good humour. Creativity and imagination are nurtured, excellent facilities are provided and our enthusiastic teachers deliver purposeful and stimulating lessons.

CW: Our school is more than just a building, it is a community where everyone is respected, heard and included.

JB: Presentation is a hub, full of unique and diverse people, who manage to create a warm and caring atmosphere, inclusive of everyone

FC: Our school is like a pack where everyone has a role to play and nobody is left behind.

HEAD-GIRL TEAM REFLECTIONS

Q & A WITH RIBH SEXTON, CLODAGH WHELAN, JODY BOYLE AND FIONA COUSINS

If you had to focus on just one, central thing that you've learned from your time in our school, what would it be?

RS: Without a shadow of doubt, the most important thing that Pres has taught me is the importance of acts of kindness. This school community is unique, as far as I'm concerned. From my very first day in Pres, I have been impressed by the welcome that is extended to all who attend here on a daily basis and to those visitors who spend just a brief amount of time with us. During my time at Pres, I have witnessed countless occasions on which students and teachers alike have shown warmth and kindness to others and it is this compassion for others that will be an enduring memory for me.

CW: My time in school has taught me the importance and power of a friendly, positive atmosphere. The energy when you walk in the doors, whether it is the songs played at reception, to the chatter and giggles of students in the corridors, the environment created enables all students to feel comfortable and always accepted.

JB: Presentation taught me how to believe in myself and my abilities. I have learned to trust myself and so many other positive qualities in my time here, that I know I will carry with me as I continue my educational journey.

FC: My time here in school has taught me the value of respect. Respect for oneself, those around you and the building itself. The respect shown in our school creates an excellent environment and relationships.

What are your hopes/aspirations after the Leaving Certificate?

RS: My dream is to study medicine in Dublin but I also hope to travel to lots of different countries to experience new cultures, languages, cuisines and traditions and to gain some valuable life experiences.

CW: I am hoping to go to DCU and go on to become a primary school teacher.

JB: My goal is to go to Maynooth University to go on to become a German and English secondary school teacher.

FC: I'm hoping to become an Irish and P.E teacher.

What will you miss the most about our school community?

RS: Out of all of these questions, I struggled most to find an answer to this one. I think that's because there is no one answer. This school is more than just a place for academic learning – it's where we grow up. Where we turn from lost first years to tired sixth years – it's an environment where we spend the best years of our lives. I am going to miss everything and everyone. Pres is a lifestyle that is going to be hard to let go of.

CW: I think I'll miss the environment created in school the most, the chatter and giggles heard on the corridor and the positive atmosphere created in the school that instills a sense of home and comfort.

JB: I will miss the atmosphere here, the relationship in this school, between all of its members, is one unparalleled to any other place I have been, and I know it is going to be something I miss dearly about this place.

FC: I think I'll miss the smiles and giggles on the corridor the most. It is very seldom a day goes by when you don't hear at least one chuckle. Laughter is contagious after all.



THE HEAD-GIRL TEAM, 2021-22
L TO R - RIBH SEXTON, CLODAGH WHELAN,
JODY BOYLE, FIONA COUSINS

STUDY TIPS

Highlighting a practical strategy that can be used to develop and support active study and revision.

RETRIEVAL PRACTICE STRATEGIES



Brain dump

Choose a topic and write down as much as you can remember, without referring to your notes. Check your notes and see what you missed then try to fill the gaps without the notes. Check your notes a third time and add the missing information.



Flash cards

Write flashcards for each topic, in all subjects, then mix them up for the most effective revision. Check out the Leitner System for effective spacing and interleaving. Keep your flashcards simple – one question, one answer per card.



Map it out

Take an essay question or writing question and map out your answer, without writing a full response. Look at the mark scheme and decide if your plan meets the criteria. Do this for a number of questions, then choose one and write the full response.



Past papers

Ask your teacher for practice questions or exam papers. Complete them without notes in exam conditions, then check your answers and identify the gaps in your knowledge, so you can target your revision.



Quizzes

Write a set of questions and answers and ask someone else to test you. It's important to either write or say your answers aloud. Reading through quizzes in your head can give you a false sense of security.



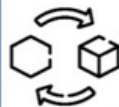
Practise introductions

For essay subjects, take a past exam question and practise writing effective introductions and conclusions. Look back at your notes and remind yourself of the important things to remember. Practise for different topics, texts and papers.



Thinking hard: reduce

Read a section of your notes then put them aside and reduce what you read to 3 bullet points, each one no more than 10 words. Look back at the notes and decide if you missed anything important. Hide the notes and write a fourth bullet point.



Thinking hard: transform

Read a paragraph from your notes or a text book and transform it into a diagram, chart or sketch – no words allowed. Look at a diagram in Science, for example, and transform it into a paragraph of explanation.



Thinking hard: connect

For each subject, consider the exam papers and group together questions that require the same technique to answer. Write down the requirements of each type. Find a previous example you've completed and identify where you've met the criteria.



Key vocabulary

For a particular topic, make a list of key vocabulary, then do the following: define each word; use each term in a sentence; create a question where the key word is the answer; identify other words which connect to each of the words in your list.

STUDY TIPS

Highlighting a practical strategy that can be used to develop and support active study and revision.

THE FIVE-STEP STUDY PLAN



Make a list

What do you need to know? Break it down into topics and units. When you can retrieve it without effort, cross it off the list. It might help with motivation and organisation to have a 'to do' and 'have done' list.



Timetable a spaced schedule

Study each topic little and often and mix up subjects and topics so you are revising a mixture each day. Be sure to leave yourself enough time to cover everything.



Use effective study strategies

Keep re-reading and highlighting to a minimum. Highlight what you need to learn – but that won't make you learn it. Test yourself, using retrieval strategies. Think twice before loading up your favourite playlist!



Identify the gaps in your knowledge

Having used the retrieval strategies, where are the gaps? What are you confident with? What do you need to go back to? What do you need to study more? Be honest with yourself – don't just focus on what you *do* know.



Close the gaps

Repeat the third and fourth steps of the plan until you are confident with everything. Some parts will be difficult, but don't give up. The harder you have to think, the more likely you are to remember in the end. 'Memory is the residue of thought.' (*Dan Willingham*)

STUDY TIPS

Highlighting a practical strategy that can be used to develop and support active study and revision.

IS YOUR REVISION "FLAT"? (IDEA FROM @KKNTEACHLEARN ON TWITTER)



FOCUSED

- Put your phone away
- Turn the music off
- Avoid distractions
- Be in the right physical place to revise
- Be in the right frame of mind to revise



LONG-TERM

- Start early to cut down on stress later in the year
- Make a revision timetable and commit to it
- Plan for 3 - 4 hours a week
- Interleave different topics



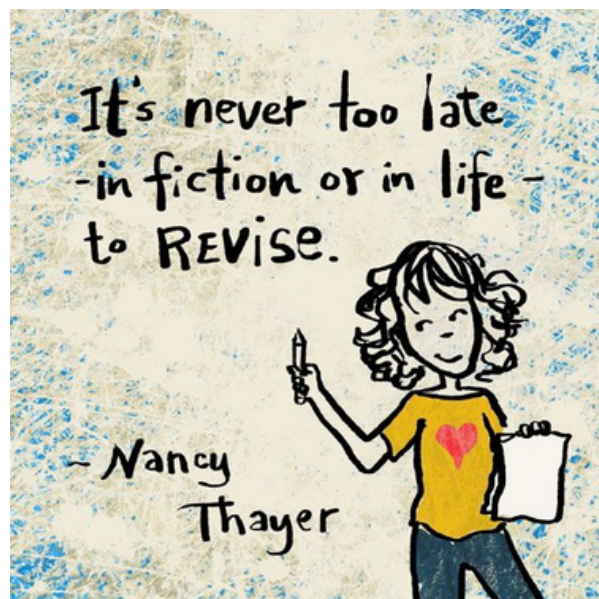
ACTIVE

- Engage your brain by actively creating revision resources
- Test yourself, get others to test you
- Practise exam technique by writing or planning answers
- Revise what you struggle with



TRANSFORMED

- Transform the knowledge you want to learn into a different format
- Make flashcards
- Produce a timeline
- Record a podcast
- Invent a mnemonic
- Take Cornell notes
- Create a mindmap
- Design a flowchart
- Make a powerpoint
- Teach it



The CPD corner



News and updates for teachers

A 'Winning Formula' for Leaving Cert P. E.

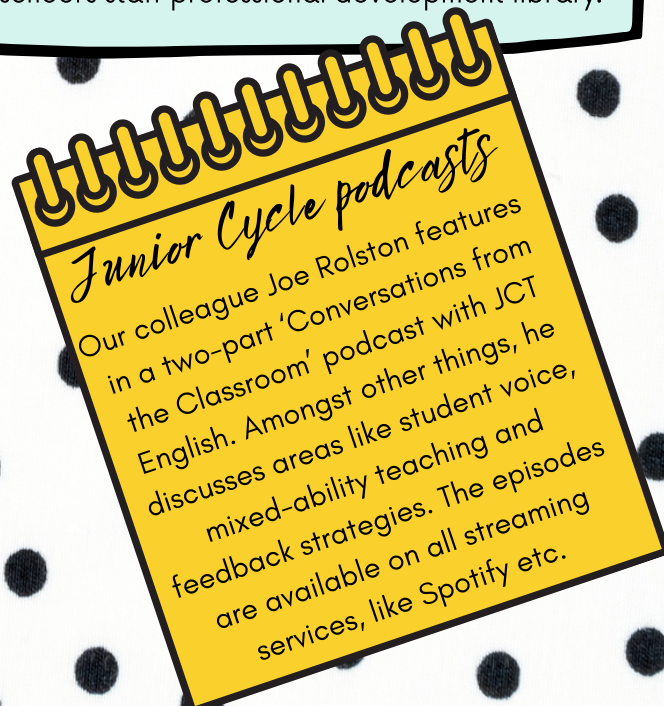
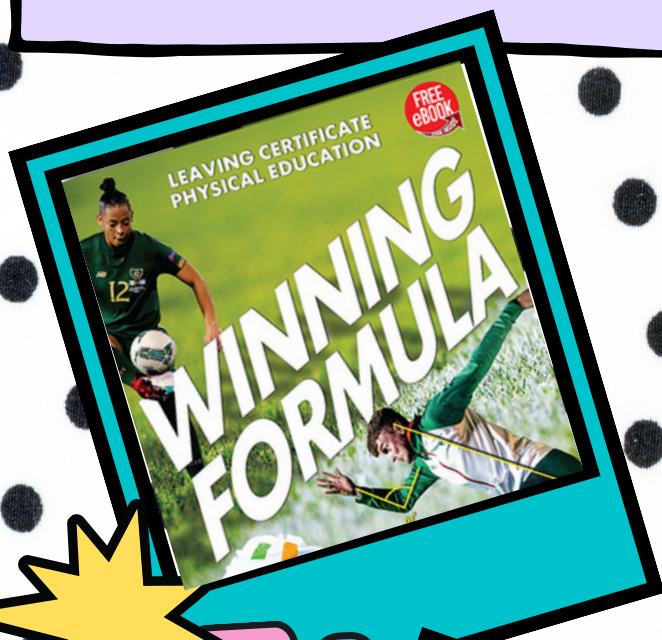
Congratulations to our colleague Deirdre Colfer, who has co-authored a new textbook for Leaving Certificate Physical Education. Published by Gill, it is sure to be a winning formula for schools. Well done to Deirdre for all the hard work!

The Recommended Read



'Stop Talking About Wellbeing: A Pragmatic Approach to Teacher Workload' by Kat Howard is a hugely engaging and critical read for teachers and school leaders. In a refreshingly honest and accessible style, the book tackles, head on, the all-too-often tokenistic approach that schools take when it comes to matters of teacher wellbeing. Using research from inside and outside education, Howard outlines the key factors of a teacher's role within the school setting and outlines numerous strategies to help teachers take ownership over their workload and achieving wellbeing through purposeful job fulfilment. This is further supplemented by practical solutions and real-life experiences from practicing teachers. Howard brilliantly flips the narrative on wellbeing on its head.

All in all, this book should be a staple presence in any school's staff professional development library.



Junior Cycle podcasts

Our colleague Joe Rolston features in a two-part 'Conversations from the Classroom' podcast with JCT English. Amongst other things, he discusses areas like student voice, mixed-ability teaching and feedback strategies. The episodes are available on all streaming services, like Spotify etc.

The CPD corner



News and updates for teachers

The learning & teaching survey

Teachers will be invited to take this attitudinal survey on teaching, learning and assessment practices before the end of this school year - the findings will be presented to staff on the return to school.

Finishing a lesson - practical tips

The last few minutes of your class are crucial for student engagement and classroom management. Don't let the day's activity just fade off into nothing - that's when distracting behavior can start. Besides, it's the perfect time to remind your students of the purpose of the lesson and to give them next steps.



Restate the purpose/outcome of the lesson, and explain how the activity that they completed during the class helped them achieve that outcome. Tell them what you want them to do next, whether that's homework or the use of the skill they learned in upcoming work



Have a Short Discussion: rather than you telling the kids what they need to remember from the lesson, ask them. Bring their attention back to you, and then ask for volunteers to summarize what they learned and how it related to the learning outcome. Then, conclude by asking them how they will use the information or skill in the future.



Slicky Notes are the most versatile tool for student engagement and for formative assessment. At the end of class, ask students to record one of the following on a sticky and leave it on the board or wall on their way out of the classroom: what was your biggest learning today? What question(s) do you have about today's lesson? What are you struggling with? These will give you valuable information about what your students have learned - or not.



21st Century Wrap Up: ask the kids to write a tweet or Instagram comment, complete with hashtags, that captures what they learned during the class. They could also refer to any questions or confusions that they still have at the end of the lesson - again giving you valuable information on your students' learning.



Written Reflections: give the kids some quiet time to write a reflection about what they have learned and how they will use it. If you like, you can follow this with a turn-and-talk so students can share their learning with each other. Reflections can also be paired with the sticky note or tweet exit tickets above.

WHEN WORKING WITH YOUNG PEOPLE THERE ARE TIMES WHEN YOU WILL SEE RESULTS IN 10 SECONDS AND THERE ARE TIMES YOU WON'T SEE IT FOR 10 YEARS. EITHER WAY, KEEP PLANTING THOSE SEEDS OF CHARACTER. EVENTUALLY THEY BLOOM.

TEACHER TAKES A HAND AND TOUCHES MIND AND HEART

Coming soon . . .
A new cooperative learning 'Check and Connect' initiative for staff is to be launched in September, with the aim of promoting **collaborative practice** in relation to learning and teaching - watch this space!

The CPD corner



News and updates for teachers

The Teaching, Learning and Assessment 'Take-Away' noticeboard

Conveniently located beside the photocopiers in the staff-room, is the new Teaching, Learning and Assessment 'Take-Away' noticeboard, with practical resources and strategies that teachers can take away to use/embed within their own classroom setting.

There will be a mix of the latest in educational research to cross-circular strategies that can be used to good effect with students. At the moment, there are resources on retrieval practice, effective feedback, questioning and modelling.

More resources will be added in time but if any colleagues have any helpful resources that they think would benefit the wider staff, please feel free to add them to the noticeboard.





"The capacity to learn is a gift, the ability to learn is a skill, the willingness to learn is a choice."

**THE NEXT EDITION OF
'INSPIRE' WILL BE ISSUED IN
JANUARY 2023.**
