School Self-Evaluation

PDA Conference

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Purpose of Session

1. What is SSE?

2. Rationale for SSE

3. What does the SSE process look like?

4. What is expected of schools?

5. Support for SSE

1.WHAT IS SCHOOL SELF-EVALUATION?

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What is school self-evaluation?

- SSE is a way of systematically looking at how we teach and how our students learn and making decisions about what we want to improve

Because

- We want to make learning better for students
- We want to make teaching more rewarding
- Schools are best placed to examine their own practice and to tell their own story

Put another way…

SSE is a process that allows schools and teachers to improve outcomes for learners.

- Reflect
- Collaborate
- Gather evidence
- Arrive at decisions about quality (Judgement)
- Direct school improvement
- Improve learning

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2. WHY SCHOOL SELF-EVALUATION?

Why school self-evaluation?

We know SSE works

– Research here:

- evidence from DEIS schools

- pilot project trial schools

– Research in other countries

- New Zealand, Scotland, Finland, Canada

Why school self-evaluation?

- Part of balanced and integrated approach to supporting better teaching and learning

- Supports the Literacy and Numeracy strategy

- Consistent with DEIS (Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools) (action planning)

- Gives greater autonomy to teachers

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SSE encompasses…

Over time schools will address three dimensions

- Teaching and Learning

- Management and leadership

- Support for students

We want schools to start by focusing on teaching and learning

Because…

- Teaching and learning is the core work of school

- All teachers want to improve learning for students

Building on and reframing SDP

- SDP helped focus on developing policy, promoted collaboration and dialogue

- SSE will focus more on having an impact on teaching, learning and outcomes for students

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SDP and School Self-Evaluation

The SSE process is a reframing of the school development planning process

It places a greater focus on gathering evidence

It works best when it is integrated into the day-to-day work of the school

It leads to action for improvement

3. WHAT DOES THE SCHOOL SELF-EVALUATION PROCESS LOOK LIKE?
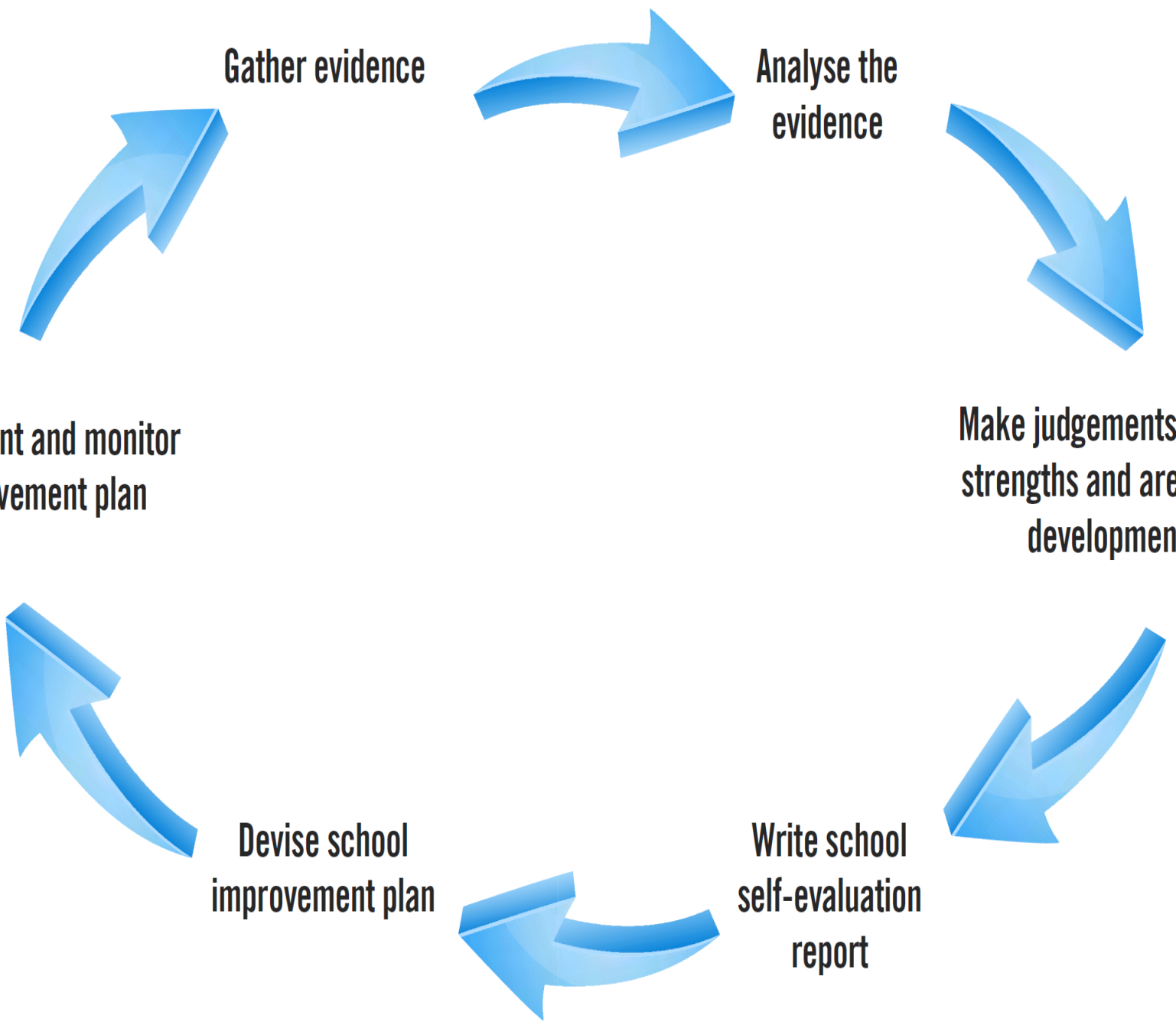
Gather evidence

Analyse the evidence

Make judgements about strengths and areas for development

Write school self-evaluation report

Devise school improvement plan

Implement and monitor improvement plan

Getting started

- **Start small – a limited aspect of teaching and learning**
- **In first four years: literacy, numeracy and one other area**
- **Ask simple questions**
  - **How well are we doing?**
  - **How do we know? What evidence do we have?**
  - **How can we find out more?**
  - **What are our strengths/areas for development?**
  - **How can we improve?**

TEACHING and LEARNING

Learner outcomes

Learning experiences

Teachers' practice

- Attainment of curriculum objectives

- Learning environment
- Engagement in learning
- Learning to learn

- Preparation for teaching
- Teaching approaches
- Management of students
- Assessment

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Overview of good practice

Figure 3.3 EVALUATION THEMES: AN OVERVIEW OF GOOD PRACTICE

Learner outcomes	Learning experiences	Teachers' practice
• Students' overall attainment, with regard to knowledge, understanding and skills in subjects and programmes, has improved significantly in line with targets; and expected outcomes have been achieved	• Learning settings are safe, well maintained, visually stimulating and supportive of literacy and numeracy	• Teachers prepare thoroughly for lessons; expected learning outcomes including literacy and numeracy development are clearly stated; and necessary resources are in place
• Students enjoy learning the subject and have developed appropriate attitudes and dispositions	• Students have access to appropriate materials, including ICT, to support learning	• Expected learning outcomes are clearly communicated; lessons are suitably paced to enable progression in development of knowledge and skills
• Students can meet the literacy and numeracy challenges of the subject	• Students are enabled to engage actively in a range of suitably challenging, relevant and interesting learning opportunities	• Teaching is focused, stimulating and relevant. All aspects of the subject, including subject-specific language, are thoroughly taught
• Students at risk of underachieving have made good progress	• Students are given support as needed	• All students are respected; high but realistic expectations are communicated; and efforts and achievements are affirmed
• Students' uptake levels and performance in state examinations compares favourably with national norms, within the school context.	• Students are equipped with tools and skills for learning now and in the future.	• A range of assessment methods is used effectively to assess progress.

Step 1
Gather evidence

| Outcomes | Learning | Teaching |

Step 2
Analyse evidence
(Evaluation criteria)

| Attainment
Knowledge
Skills
Attitude
Progress | Active
Collaborative
Challenging
Motivating | Purposeful
Pace
Approaches
Differentiation
Assessment |

Step 3
Draw conclusions
(Judge quality)

| Significant
strengths | Strengths
outweigh
weaknesses | Weaknesses
outweigh
strengths | Significant
weaknesses |

Step 4
SSE report

Focus of evaluation   Strengths
Context   Areas for improvement
Findings   Legislative requirements

Step 5
Improvement plan

Targets   Timeframe
Actions   Measurable outcomes
Responsibility   Review date

Step 6
Implement and
monitor

Actions at class level   Progress on targets
Actions at school level   Changes

SSE PROCESS

Step 1
Gather evidence

| Outcomes | Learning | Teaching |

Sources of evidence

- Assessment data – formative and summative
- Student surveys and reflection
- Parent surveys
- Focus group discussion
- Interviews

- Individual teacher reflection
- Group/subject department reflection
- Whole-school reflection
- Peer dialogue/sharing experience
- Team teaching and review

DON'T COLLECT TOO MUCH INFORMATION!

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SSE PROCESS

Step 2
Analyse evidence
(Evaluation Criteria)

Attainment	Active	Purposeful
Knowledge	Collaborative	Pace
Skills	Challenging	Approaches
Attitude	Motivating	Differentiation
Progress		Assessment

Analysing data and benchmarking against evaluation criteria

- Check learner motivation, attitudes, engagement in learning, application of knowledge and skills

- Share and compare practice – think and reflect on this

- Examine attainment levels of students: check against national norms, for in-school trends

- Use evaluation criteria to check analysed data against a set of standards

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Step 3
Draw conclusions
(Judge Quality)

| Significant Strengths | Strengths outweigh weaknesses | Weaknesses outweigh strengths | Significant weakness |

Reflect and draw conclusions

- Reflect on the information you have

- Reflect on how this compares to best practice

- Do the criteria and quality statement help to identify next steps in improvement?

- Can you place practice in this area of work on a continuum from significant strengths to significant weaknesses?

SSE PROCESS

Step 4
SSE Report

Focus of evaluation
Context
Findings

Strengths
Areas for improvement
Legislative requirments

SSE is not about paper work. However schools need to write a concise report

- Report (no more than 2/3 pages) should record

    - Theme chosen for self-evaluation

    - Brief account of school context

    - The findings

    - Summary of strengths (affirm and celebrate)

    - Summary of areas requiring improvement

    - Legislative requirements checklist (for BOM)

SSE PROCESS

Step 5
Improvement Plan

Targets
Actions
Responsibility

Timeframe
Measurable outcomes
Review date

Our School Improvement Plan	
Summary of main strengths as identified in last SSE:	
Summary of main areas requiring improvement as identified in last SSE:	
Improvement Targets	
Required actions	
Persons responsible	
Timeframe for action	
Success criteria/measurable outcomes	
Review date(s)	

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SSE PROCESS

Step 6
Implement and monitor

Actions at class level
Actions at subject department level

Actions at school level
Progress on targets
Changes

Agreed actions for improvement must be implemented

- Actions

    - At individual level

    - At subject department level

    - At whole-school level

- Monitor progress

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4. WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR SCHOOLS AND TEACHERS?

Starting the SSE process

Circular 0040/2012

- **In year one select one of the following: literacy, numeracy or one other aspect of teaching and learning**
  - **Over a 4-year period engage in SSE of three of the above**
  - **A whole-school approach to SSE to be taken with a focus on teaching and learning**
  - **All teachers engage in SSE of the aspect selected by the school**
  - **Produce a short SSE report and summary for school community**
  - **Devise school improvement plan with targets to improve outcomes for students and summary for school community**
  - **Implement and monitor SIP over three-year period**

As a school..

For example

- Select the area of focus

- Examine records/evidence

- Decide on strengths

- Identify what needs to improve

- Agree the sub-theme from the teaching and learning framework (for example teaching approaches)

As a teacher..

My responsibility as a teacher is to:

- Reflect on my own teaching approaches
- Discuss teaching approaches with subject department/ colleagues
- Reflect on whether I need further evidence? Views of students? Others ?
- Look at the evaluation criteria for teaching approaches
- Identify strengths and areas for development
- Agree at a subject department level the teaching approaches that could be used to further develop students' learning

Evaluation Criteria

Teaching approaches	
EVALUATION CRITERIA	
Approaches	•Teaching approaches support students in engaging with the literacy and numeracy demands of the subject
•Subject-appropriate teaching and learning methodologies with a focus on active learning are used
•Lessons are well structured
•A range of subject-appropriate approaches is used including
–Guided discussion
–Collaborative and cooperative learning
–Investigative approaches
–Higher order thinking and problem solving
–Encouragement of the students' personal and creative response to the subject

As teaching staff..

Whole staff responsibility

- Subject departments share experience and results of reflection with whole staff
- Ensure evidence is balanced
- Agree further sources of evidence, if not balanced
  - Agree what tools will be used and whose views should be garnered
  - Agree who will gather, collate, analyse and feedback
- Ensure that findings from all evidence gathered and analysed helps draw conclusions/make judgement
- Write report
- Devise school improvement plan
- Implement and monitor across all subject departments

Quality Statement

QUALITY STATEMENTS ON TEACHING APPROACHES

Teaching is focused, stimulating and relevant to the students' learning needs. … Effective subject-specific learning approaches are used. Opportunities for the development of literacy and numeracy skills are well used. Subject-specific language is thoroughly taught. Lessons are well developed in a way that allows for progression of students' skills, knowledge and attitudes.

All aspects of the subject are thoroughly taught with progression apparent in the students' learning …. A broad range of activities is provided to enhance the holistic development of the student.

Draw conclusions: the quality statement will help the school to judge the quality of this aspect of practice and place its own practice on a quality continuum

| Significant Strengths | Strengths outweigh weaknesses | Weaknesses outweigh strengths | Significant weakness |

Extract from SSE report

Focus	Literacy selected (L and N strategy, STEN results for first-year)
Context	Co-ed school of 700 students. It offers the JC, TY, LCE, LCA, LCVP. Its enrolment has remained static.
Findings	Focused on literacy: identified weaknesses in oral work Identified need to change our approaches to teaching literacy across subject departments
Strengths	A large proportion of students performed well in reading tests A strong staff commitment to promotion of literacy Majority of students interested in reading
Areas for improvement	Oral skills of first-year students

Extract from school improvement plan

Target	At present X% of students demonstrate competence in oral language using school developed test. By Dec 2015, X+10% will demonstrate competence in oral language using the school developed test. …
Actions	Increased emphasis on oral work in lessons •Use of key terminology, role play, structured group work, focused discussion on topics Development of listening skills •Video/audio listening task with accompanying worksheets …
Responsible	All teachers…
Timeframe	Three years for overall target Every term for monitoring
Success criteria	Overall: X+10% of students' will demonstrate oral competence Ongoing: greater student engagement and confidence and competence in using subject specific terminology ….
Review dates	Overall: Dec 2015 Ongoing: end of each term/year

As teaching staff..

Strategies agreed in the SIP

- Implemented over a three-year period
- Embed in classroom practice
- Part of day-to-day work
- Progress monitored

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5. SUPPORTS FOR SCHOOL SELF-EVALUATION

SSE Support

Support for SSE

- Publications

- Website www.schoolself-evaluation.ie

- PDST seminars for principal

- Internal collaboration – use experience and expertise in own school

- Professional networks

AND A FINAL WORD….

Lessons from pilot schools

- School self-evaluation works

- Start small and keep it simple

- Involve all teachers

- Include the voice of students (and parents where relevant)

- Only gather relevant information

- Agree strategies and actions for improvement

SSE as part of normal and ongoing practice in the school

Go raibh maith agaibh

Thank you