

Coláiste Mhuire



Coláiste Mhuire, Buttevant.

**Nurturing Minds - Inspiring Futures**

**Learner Voice Project**

# Student Voice Engagement

## The Starting Point

- Ger O Sullivan from the NCCA delivered a student voice workshop
  - 1 day workshop
  - September 2019
  - Involving half of the student population – 220 students
  - Ger collected and analysed the data.
- The workshop focused on teaching and learning in our school - *'how you and others learn best'*.



# Student Voice Engagement - The Findings

- The main findings from this day were in relation to the following:
  1. Student/Teacher Relationships
  2. Meaningful Feedback on Student Performance
  3. Homework



# Student Voice Engagement

- Three members of staff attended a one day workshop the 'Learner Voice Project' in Mount Woolsey, Carlow – here we were exposed to the Lundi Model.



# Student Voice Engagement- informing the staff

- Following the 2 workshops, the Student Voice Team relayed the information to the whole teaching staff (teachers and SNAs) in January.
- The team worked together to create a lesson plan that would give feedback to the students regarding the workshop with Ger.



# Student Voice Lesson



- Every student in the school community was made aware of the findings from the initial workshop through a 40 minute timetabled slot.
- These findings were delivered by the class teacher, another teacher and the SNAs.
- This lesson also provided every student in the Coláiste the opportunity to **add anything** they felt had not been addressed.
- This time, **everyone** had a chance to have their voice heard.

# Student Voice Engagement – Focus Group

- Last week, through the use of student focus groups we further condensed the data collected. We selected 10% of students from each year group from 2<sup>nd</sup> years to 6<sup>th</sup> years.
- A representative sample from each year group was selected with a mix of boys and girls whilst also, capturing students from various backgrounds, abilities, special educational needs, attendance etc.



# Student Voice Engagement – Focus Group

## Objectives

- Two or three feedback strategies which the students deem as really effective to enhance and extend learning.
- Some ideas for us as teachers on how students think positive student/teacher relationships are created and fostered and also the effect they have on learning.
- To give an insight into what makes our school community safe, inviting, inclusive, etc, from a student perspective and how students think we can improve on it.





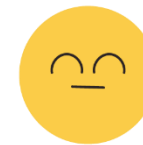
# Student Voice Wins/Success

- Students were very positive overall
- They were realistic in relation to the three headings:
  - Relationships, Feedback and Homework
- Every student and every member of the school community had the opportunity to take part in lesson – giving everyone a chance to be heard.



# Student Voice Wins/Success

- Positive feedback from **teachers**
  - They saw on a first- hand basis that for the most part, students were positive and had constructive comments.
  - Students highlighted areas that some teachers also felt needed to be addressed – affirming the importance of Student Voice.



# Student Voice Wins/Success

- The areas that students highlighted for development are all heavily interlinked with the learning outcomes, learning intentions and success criteria promoted by the NCCA.

Learning outcomes, learning intentions and success criteria – Making the connection



# Challenges

- Covid was the huge challenge
  - Teachers and students adjusting to school life and surrounding the Covid protocol.
  - Now we have started back working particularly on Feedback and what happens in our school that makes the students want to attend daily.
- Getting staff on board
  - Some concerned with student voice and worried that students will direct them in the class
  - Encouraging staff to use feedback strategies
  - Encouraging staff (including ourselves) to evaluate our presence in a class and the relationship we have with individual students and classes

# Challenges and next steps

- Narrowing down specific things to focus on and implement change - did the focus group discussions shed light on this?
- What is our next step - suggest strategies that we might use and survey students?
- How do we get students to see these changes?
- In the focus groups, we didn't address one for the areas - homework. How do we do this, another focus group/staff discussion?