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## **Coolick National School**

### **Our Self-Evaluation Report and Improvement Plan**

### **Wellbeing Promotion in Coolick National School**

#### **Introduction:**

Coolick NS is a semi-rural co-educational primary school, located outside Killarney town. There are 111 pupils/77 families in the school. There are 5 mainstream classes, 1 full time SET, 1 part-time SET, 1 full time SNA and 1 part-time SNA. The school population has risen steadily in the last number of years, and as a result, new buildings and classrooms have been approved.

#### **Outcomes of our last improvement plan from 2018 - 2021**

- Problem Solving in Math was the focus of our last SSE process. This process was highly affected by the Covid19 pandemic and consequently the implementation of the plan and overall findings were constrained due to school closures.
- Our pupils perform consistently very well in Numeracy, with over 82% of pupils scoring above a standard Score of 90 with the national average being 75%. Our focus continues to be on word-based problem-solving tasks. This strand area remains the most challenging for pupils across all classes. It has been agreed by all staff to put a strong emphasis on mathematical language & further opportunities to work on this aspect of maths topics.

#### **Review of the Impact of COVID19 (Sept 2022-June 2023)**

COVID-19 has undeniably impacted the education system in significant ways. The closure of schools and the disruption to learning that children and young people experienced, have had, for many of them, a considerable and immediately negative impact on their learning and progress in several areas of the curriculum. In addition, there is evidence that children's and young people's social and emotional skills and wellbeing have been adversely affected, as well as the normal progression and maturing that we expect to see in their ability and motivation to engage in learning.

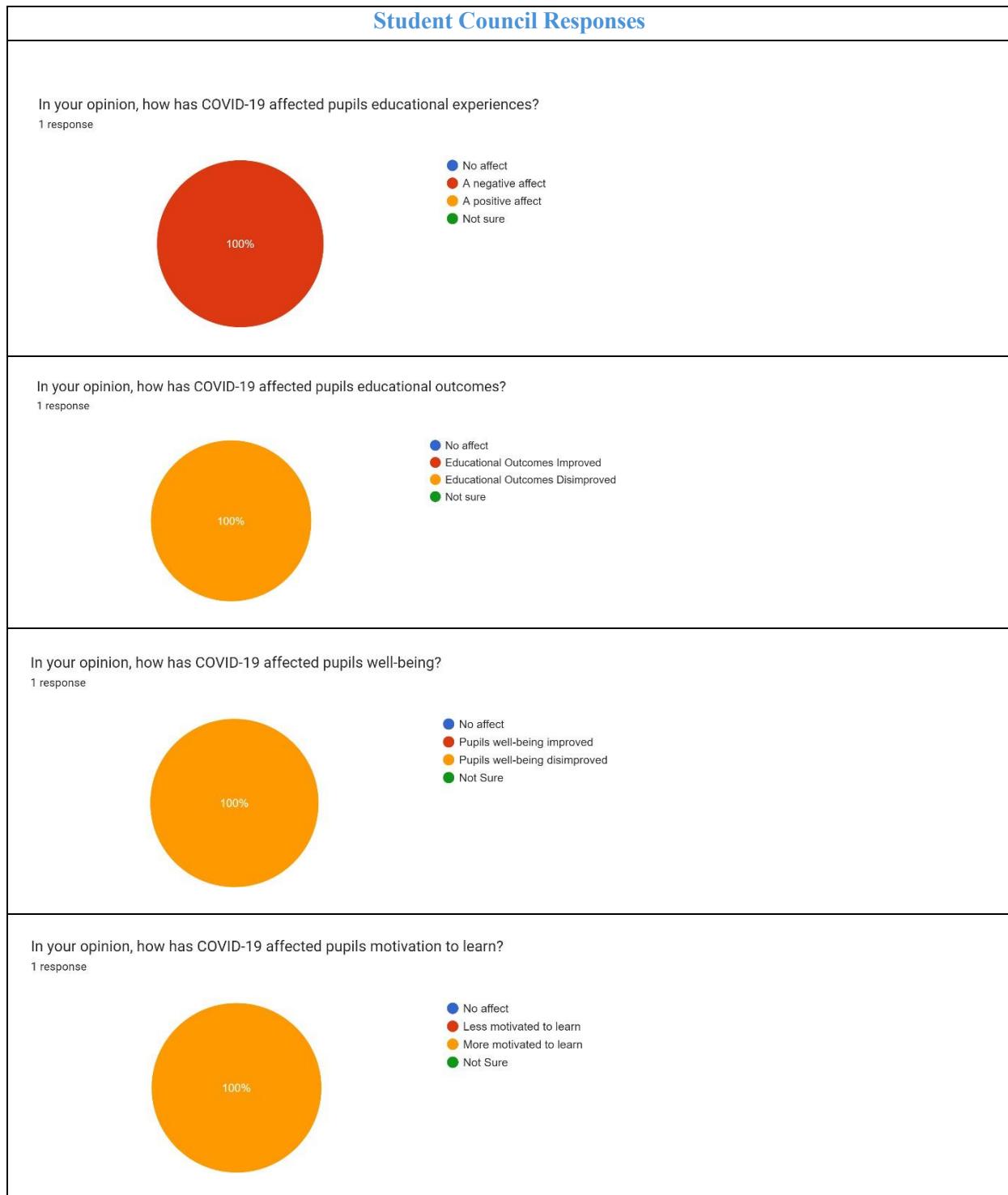
In order to ascertain the opinion of pupils, staff and parents on the impact of COVID19 on the pupils of our school, a survey using Google Forms was presented to the Student Council, parents and staff. Opinions were sought in 5 particular areas,

The impact of COVID 19 on pupils'

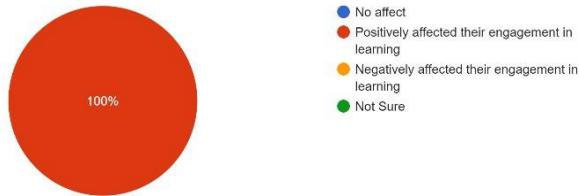
- Educational experiences
- Educational Outcomes
- Well-being
- Motivation to learn
- Engagement in learning

Opportunities were also given to the respondents to leave comments on each question.

## Results of Surveys



In your opinion, how has COVID-19 affected pupils engagement in learning?  
1 response



### **Some comments of the Student Council regarding the impact of COVID19**

Pupils reported finding it very difficult to concentrate on schoolwork at home. They reported finding they hadn't an adult always available to them to explain area they found confusing and when they did have an adult available, they sometimes found the adult couldn't explain material as competently as their teacher. Some pupils had no internet access or had a device that had to be shared among siblings which also caused problems. Younger siblings at home also made for noisy environments that weren't conducive to concentration. Pupils reported missing an encouraging, engaging teacher to motivate them.

Even though pupils felt they had caught up with a lot of the material they had missed during covid, some pupils reported finding it more difficult to speak in the classroom situation now that they had got in the habit of working alone. They felt they had lost their courage to present material to the class and even found it difficult to answer questions in the class situation. A small number of pupils reported finding it too noisy now back at school and felt the distractions interfered with their concentration

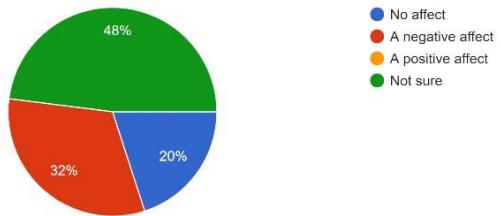
With the exception of one pupil who was very busy farming during covid and never missed school the other pupils felt their well-being had disimproved due to the enforced isolation of covid, lack of stimulation and loneliness.

Pupils reported, for the most part, that they were very happy to be back at school and they were delighted to be engaging in classroom lessons again. This joy was a huge motivating factor in their enthusiasm for learning. Two pupils reported that they lost their interest in education during covid having enjoyed the break from the pressure of school and now were not motivated to be back in school.

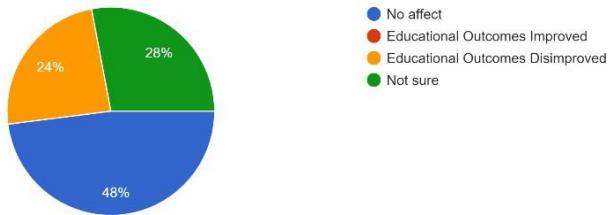
Most pupils reported being thirsty for education after the drought of covid and found they were now full of motivation to engage in class based learning with their peers. Two pupils reported missing the activities they engaged in during covid to a level that they were not motivated to engage in classroom learning.

## Parent Responses

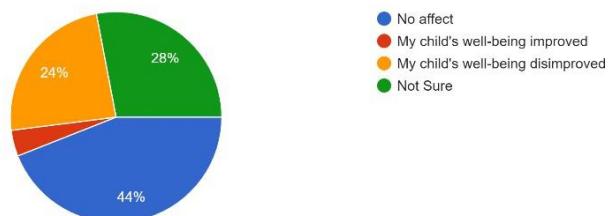
In your opinion, how has COVID-19 affected your child's educational experiences?  
25 responses



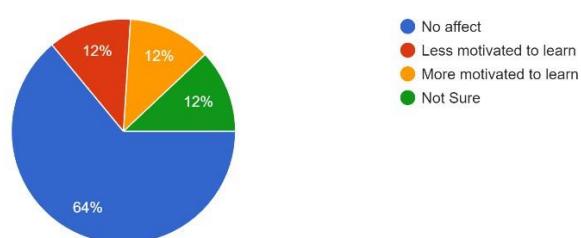
In your opinion, how has COVID-19 affected your child's educational outcomes?  
25 responses



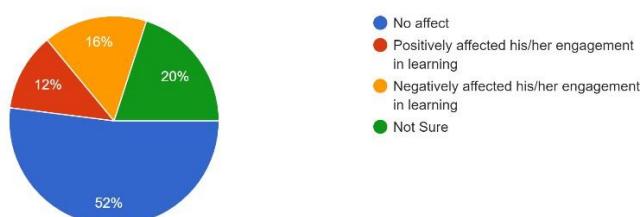
In your opinion, how has COVID-19 affected your child's well-being?  
25 responses



In your opinion, how has COVID-19 affected your child's motivation to learn?  
25 responses

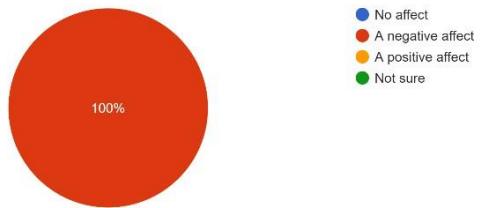


In your opinion, how has COVID-19 affected your child's engagement in learning?  
25 responses

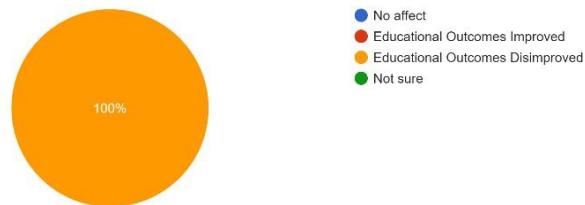


## Staff Responses

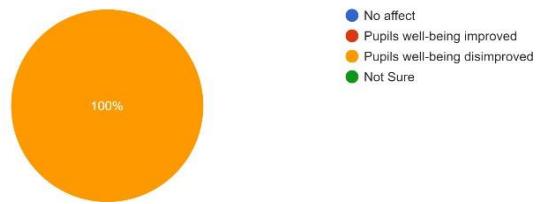
In your opinion, how has COVID-19 affected pupils educational experiences?  
4 responses



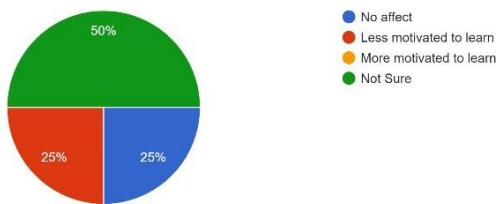
In your opinion, how has COVID-19 affected pupils educational outcomes?  
4 responses



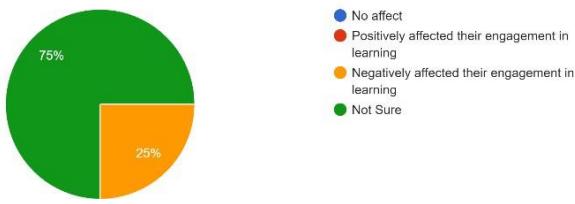
In your opinion, how has COVID-19 affected pupils well-being?  
4 responses



In your opinion, how has COVID-19 affected pupils motivation to learn?  
4 responses



In your opinion, how has COVID-19 affected pupils engagement in learning?  
4 responses



### **Outcome of the survey. (Identifying a focus)**

On return from COVID19 school closures, we implemented procedures to help pupils improve their educational experiences, outcomes, motivation and engagement with learning such as broader input of support teaching, changes to timetables, use of CLASS hours, revision of teaching and learning conducted during school closures, continued and enhanced differentiation within the classroom, more active and creative teaching and learning. Much of this work as well as our on-line teaching and learning were widely praised by those who responded to the surveys. Considering the responses to question 3 and the stark reality that all staff respondents felt that pupil wellbeing had been negatively affected, that 52% of all parent respondents either felt that pupil wellbeing had been negatively affected or were not sure and by analysing some of the comments from respondents (listed below), all staff, led by the middle-management team decided that the next stage of the SSE process should focus on Well-being promotion within the school.

#### **Some comments by staff and parents regarding the impact of COVID19 on pupils' well-being.**

- Some children find it difficult to regulate their emotions.
- Anxiety seems to be affecting more children per classroom than before covid. I have suggested additional help to more parents, such as Play therapy for their children than I previously would have at the same level.
- More pupils are presenting with anxiety related issues post Covid. For other pupils Covid has had no affect on their well being. Our school has since implemented many activities that promote pupil well-being.
- She does appear to worry more about school but as per above she was in junior classes during covid so I'm not sure if she would just be a worrier anyway.
- I think just the lack of interaction with peers had a negative effect. But I also feel that it has mostly been reversed now.
- \* is very sociable and I know she missed interacting with her peers.
- Sometimes anxious, overwhelmed, but don't know, if covid caused it
- \* was very anxious after covid
- Increased anxiety but may have no relationship to covid
- \* kept himself busy during covid. He kept in contact with his friends through gaming.
- I feel mixing with other children and meeting people really benefits my children I think that not mixing and meeting people and not holding conversations with people face to face affected them
- Lack of interaction with school friends was very difficult as she likes social aspect
- Pressure causes anxiety prefer him to be happy and content
- They like their own company, have to make them socialise .
- Both very happy
- Got used to having her dad and I working from home and being in our company 24/7 was not good for her attachment issues
- More socially anxious

## Gathering Evidence.

In term 1, staff were asked to list what was already contributing to Well-Being Promotion in the school for staff and pupils. In term 2 of the 2023/24 school year, using Google forms, pupils, parents and staff were surveyed for their opinions on Well-being Promotion within the school. The following findings arose from the surveys.

### **The Main Strengths of the School in Well-being Promotion**

- The school is welcoming and accessible for all pupils, staff and parents.
- The school is bright and colourful.
- 96.4% of the pupil respondents describe the school as friendly and warm.
- The physical environment of the school is well maintained
- Pupils feel safe in our school.
- Staff feel well supported by management when issues arise.
- All employees and management are aware of the Employee Assistance Scheme.
- The school is committed to dealing with and prevention of bullying.
- Staff and pupils interact with each other in a calm and respectful manner
- Staff communicate with each other in a respectful manner
- The school sees health and well-being as important.
- The school promotes healthy eating and physical activity
- School members feel connected to the school community
- Staff communicate very well with parents
- Parents are encouraged to be involved in initiatives in the school
- Pupils know who to speak to if they have a worry
- Staff respect the privacy of students and their families and only share sensitive information on a need to know basis
- Space is provided to pupils for quiet time
- Staff consider and prioritise their own well-being as well as the pupils.
- There is a positive approach to behaviour management where issues are resolved with respect, fairness and consistency
- The school has an ethos of respect and acceptance of difference, where all people are valued
- Staff are encouraged to access a range of continuing professional development and involvement in professional networks as appropriate
- The school promotes positive relationships between pupils by supporting older pupils to lead in systems such as mentoring, buddy systems etc
- Pupils who have learning, social, emotional and behavioural difficulties are appropriately supported
- The school delivers the SPHE curriculum including RSE , Stay Safe and other programmes
- Staff and parents are informed about school policies such as Child Protection, Anti-Bullying
- Staff and parents' views are accessed and listened to in school planning and policy development and implementation
- There are structures in the school which allow parents to have a voice (e.g. Parents Council, parent meetings)
- Parents know who to contact if they have a concern regarding school issues or my child

### **This is how we know. (all surveyed results are available in the school office)**

All staff were asked to list instances in the school where/when well-being is promoted. Surveys were conducted and all staff, parents and pupils (3<sup>rd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> class) were asked to answer a wide range of questions regarding Well-being promotion in the school. The results of these surveys were recorded and analysed by the Middle-management team. These results were discussed in the staff

room and at staff meetings. This information was also gleaned from regular communication between staff, parents and pupils.

**This is what we are going to focus on to improve our practice further.**

The focus of this Improvement Plan is on the key areas of '*Curriculum*' and '*Relationships and Partnerships*' in Well-Being: We have looked at the statements of Effective Practice for all & the Statements for Some and Few. The following Statements will be the focus of our improvement plan, so that all members of our school have a “sense of belonging, feel safe, connected & supported”

**1. Curriculum;**

- a) A broad range of children’s success is rewarded and celebrated to demonstrate the value the school places on all types of achievement. (*Effective Practice for all*)
- b) Where an extra-curricular programme is provided, the school links with community-based clubs and organisations to ensure that it is broad, accessible and inclusive. (*Effective Practice for all*)
- c) Where extra -curricular activities are planned, children with additional and/or complex needs and their parents are actively involved in planning and evaluating the programme. (*Effective Practice for Some and Few*)

**2. Relationships and Partnerships;**

- a) Relationships and partnerships are supported through a range of agreed and informal structures such as, student councils, buddy systems, mentoring systems, assemblies, family notes, student journals and through teaching and learning. (*Effective Practice for all*)
- b) Opportunities are provided to pupils to have an active voice in decisions relating to school improvement. (*Effective Practice for all*)
- c) The school has good links with the Department support services, community-based statutory and voluntary support services and other external agencies to support the needs of students with additional and/or complex needs. (*Effective Practice for Some and Few*)

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## Our School Improvement Plan (Completed version, June 2025)

Timeframe of this improvement plan is from September 2023 to June 2026

Target Reference	Targets	Actions	Persons / groups responsible	Criteria for success	Progress and adjustments	Targets achieved
2.b)	Increase pupil participation in writing school policies.	Refer draft school policies to the Student Council for their input.	Fiona O Donoghue, & Student Council	Feedback from staff, pupils and parents.  In June 2025, all will be re-surveyed on the specific questions which provided us with issues that we believed required addressing.	See Progressions Reports attached.	Target achieved as per feedback from pupils, staff and parents, June 2025

<b>1.a)</b> <b>2.a)</b>	Staff to acknowledge to parents when their child(ren) is/are doing well in school	Use Homework Journals more consistency. Homework Journals to be signed each night. Pupils to take great care writing their homework into their Homework Journals. Teachers to use stampers to mark signs of commendation in the Homework Journals for pupils when they are doing well in class  SET team to contact parents when child(ren) is progressing well  Hold bi-monthly assemblies where pupils work and achievements are acknowledged.	All staff and parents	Feedback from staff, pupils and parents.  In June 2025, all will be re-surveyed on the specific questions which provided us with issues that we believed required addressing.	See Progressions Reports attached.	Target achieved as per feedback from pupils, staff and parents, June 2025
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1.b)	Maintain our status as a highly physically active school	<p>Formalise and timetable external coaches on an annual basis ensuring equity of visits for each class, ensuring a variety of activities/games/sports, incorporating well-being and healthy eating in their lessons.</p> <p>Formalise and timetable field trips on an annual basis and link to the review of our SESE plan ensuring the development of a spiral and cyclical curriculum</p>	All staff.	<p>Feedback from staff, pupils and parents.</p> <p>In June 2025, all will be re-surveyed on the specific questions which provided us with issues that we believed required addressing.</p>	See Progressions Reports attached.	Target achieved as per feedback from pupils, staff and parents, June 2025
1.c)	Encourage the full participation of all pupils.	Ensure sufficient planning and consultation between all relevant parties occurs to facilitate the active participation of pupils with additional and/or complex needs	All staff.	<p>Feedback from staff, pupils and parents.</p> <p>In June 2025, all will be re-surveyed on the specific questions which provided us with issues that we believed required addressing.</p>	See Progressions Reports attached.	Target achieved as per feedback from pupils, staff and parents, June 2025

<b>2.a) 2.c)</b>	Inform parents of the links between the school and external organisations	Send note via Aladdin to all parents explaining our links to external organisations such as NEPS and CAMHS with information links explaining the work of these organisations.  Continue to inform parents of these links at the new Junior Infants parents' meetings.	Principal	Feedback from staff, pupils and parents.  In June 2025, all will be re-surveyed on the specific questions which provided us with issues that we believed required addressing	See Progressions Reports attached.	Target achieved as per feedback from pupils, staff and parents, June 2025
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