Looking at Our School 2016

A Quality Framework for Post-Primary Schools

A tool to support reflection, self-review and evaluation

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Purpose of session

- To understand why a quality framework for schools has been developed
- To explore some of the ways in which *Looking at Our School* could be used, especially in school self-evaluation
- To look at some of the main features of the framework
- To consider how relevant domains and standards might be used

Developing a quality framework for schools

What is in *Looking at Our School 2016*?

A quality **framework** for schools

- A basic conceptual structure
- A set of clear, definable standards in two dimensions:
  - teaching and learning
  - leadership and management
- Focuses on the practices that experience and research indicate are most effective in providing (and leading) high quality education and ultimately in improving student outcomes
- Developed after detailed consultation with partners, school leaders and teachers

Teaching & Learning

Leadership & Management

Developing a quality framework for schools

Why?

One set of standards for a range of functions

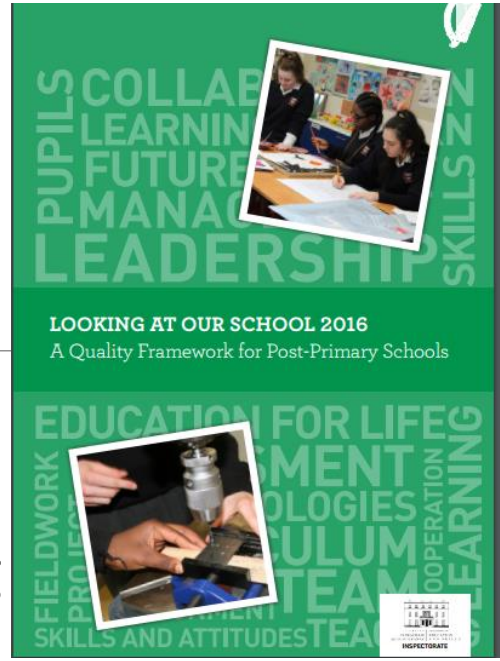
- To bring consistency – shared understanding of what effective teaching, learning, leadership and management practices look like
- To avoid duplication – for teachers, school leaders, management, patrons, inspectors, providers of ITE and CPD
- To inform SSE and external evaluation
- To be used selectively by professionals - **not** an inflexible checklist

The framework can be used in many ways…

How to use?

- Reflection – self-reflection, peer reflection and discussion as teachers, as school leaders, as members of a board of management….
- Developing and sustaining school leaders – within the system and within schools
- Recruitment and promotion – shared understanding of responsibilities
- Professional development – common understanding of needs
- Transparency, accountability and improvement

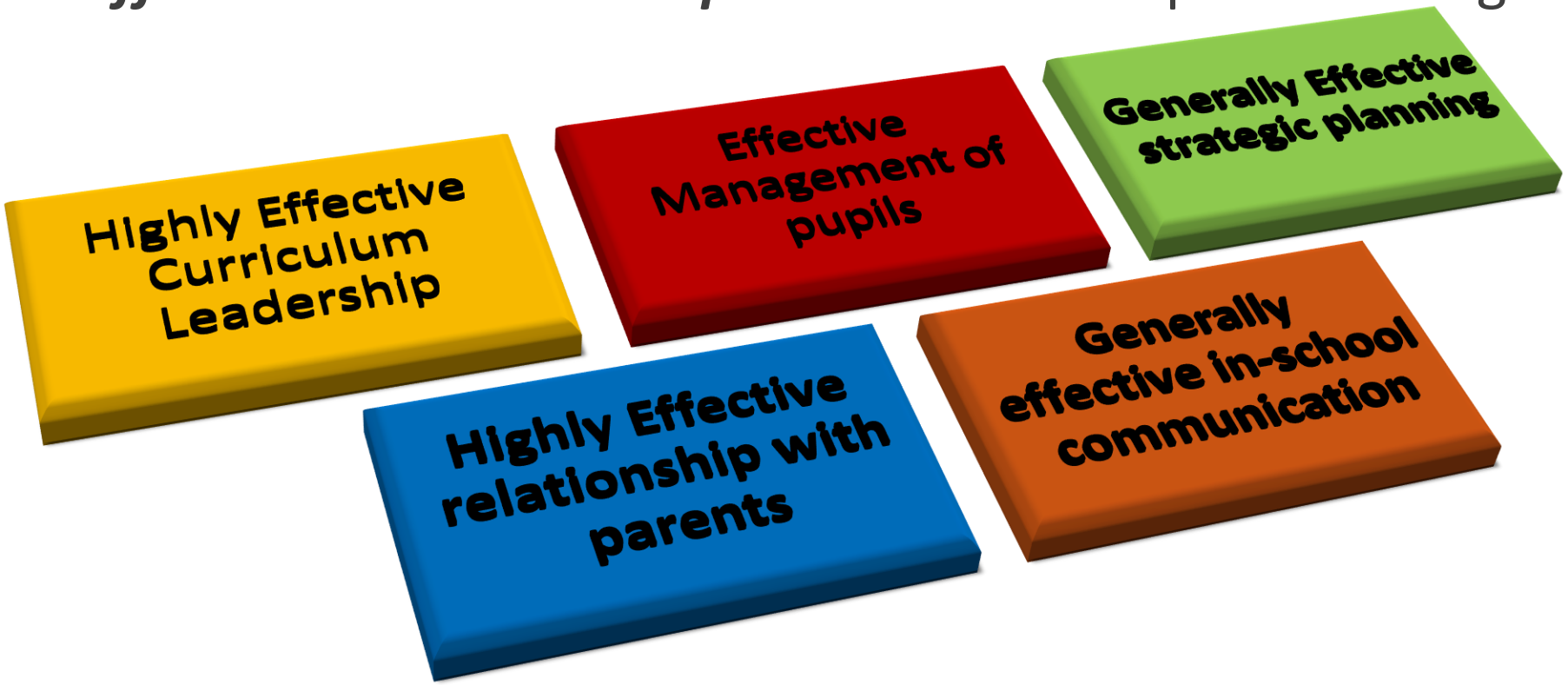
Quality Framework: Principles



- Holistic view of learning
  - Broad, balanced, challenging, responsive to learners' needs
  - Well-being intrinsic to learning – outcome and enabler of learning
- Quality teaching as a powerful influence on achievement
- Schools as dynamic learning organisations – individual and collective work to build capacity towards improvement
- Leadership and management inseparable
- Leadership – formal roles and teacher leadership
- External & internal evaluation - complementary contributors to improvement

A word about language: Thinking about effective practice

Effective leadership, for example, is not an all or nothing concept – how ***effective*** are ***various aspects*** of leadership and management?



What’s involved in leading and managing a school?

Four domains, each with four standards

Establish an orderly, secure and healthy learning environment and maintain it through effective communication

Empower staff to take on and carry out leadership roles

Lead the school’s engagement in a continuous process of self-evaluation

Leading teaching and learning – the standards

Leading learning and teaching

- Promote a culture of improvement, collaboration, innovation and creativity, and maintain it through effective communication
- Foster a commitment to inclusion, equality of opportunity and the holistic development of each student
- Manage the planning and implementation of the school curriculum
- Foster teacher professional development that enriches teachers' and students' learning

Standards and statements of quality

Standards	Statements of effective practice	Statements of highly effective practice
Promote a culture of improvement, collaboration, innovation and creativity in learning, teaching, and assessment	The principal and other leaders in the school work to promote a learning culture. They have generally high expectations for students and lead staff in striving for improved outcomes. They support reflective practice and promote a culture of improvement. The principal, with those leading the process, uses SSE to encourage teaching that is engaging and challenging, and to increase pupils' interest in learning. The principal and other leaders in the school encourage teachers to develop their teaching, learning and assessment practices, and to share their practice. They encourage innovation and creativity. They recognise the value of individual and collective contributions and achievements.	The principal and other leaders in the school foster a culture in which learning flourishes. They lead the school community to continuously strive for excellence by setting high expectations for students. They promote a culture of continuous improvement by supporting colleagues to become reflective practitioners. The principal, with those leading the process, uses SSE very effectively to encourage teaching that is engaging and challenging, and to enable all pupils to become active and motivated learners. The principal and other leaders in the school expect and encourage teachers to develop and extend their teaching, learning and assessment practices, and to share those that have proven successful at improving learning. They actively promote innovation and creativity. They welcome and celebrate individual and collective contributions and achievements.

As principal, could you and your leadership team….

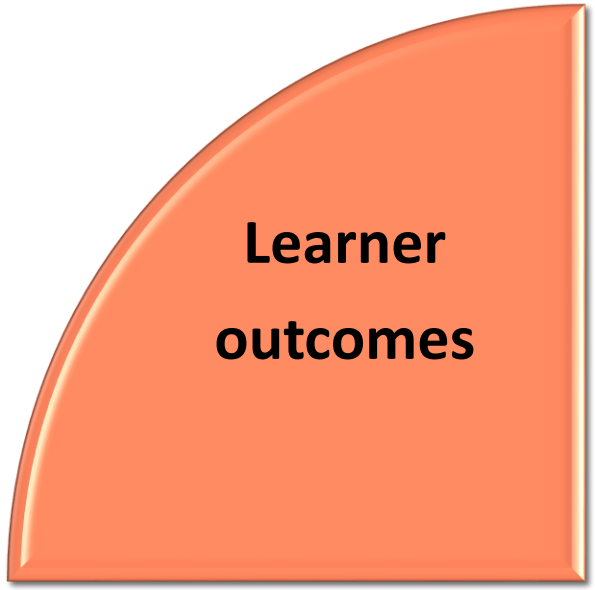
- Establish structures that promote collaboration and a culture of improvement
  - Allow time for collaboration and sharing of good practice at staff meetings
  - Ensure subject departments collaborate and plan effectively to improve practice
- Set up teacher-led groups to lead innovation and creativity in curriculum and teaching; encourage peer observation; and celebrate both successes and learning from ‘failures’
- Include students in decision making fora - contribute to staff or management meetings
- Extend CPD opportunities by promoting: sharing experiences and learning; monitoring impact on student learning

As a member of a board of management, could you ask…

- What improvements in teaching and learning are being targeted now?
- How will improvement be tracked? And celebrated when achieved?
- Who is leading this work?
- What challenges are we experiencing in advancing improvement, creativity and innovation?
- How could we support the changes/emerging needs?
- How well is teachers' collaborative practice taking place?

A closer look at teaching and learning

Standards for Learner Outcomes



Students enjoy their learning, are motivated to learn, and expect to achieve as learners

Students have the necessary knowledge and skills to understand themselves and their relationships

Students demonstrate knowledge, skills and understanding required by the post-primary curriculum

Students attain the stated learning outcomes for each subject, course and programme

Standards and statements of quality

Standards	Statements of effective practice	Statements of highly effective practice
Students demonstrate the knowledge, skills and understanding required by the post-primary curriculum	Students' subject specific skills are developed in accordance with the relevant learning outcomes for the syllabus, specification or course. Students demonstrate good subject knowledge and subject skill at an appropriate level, and demonstrate this at the relevant assessment points in the year or cycle. Junior Cycle students have generally attained proficiency in the prescribed key skills appropriate to their stage in the cycle. Senior Cycle students have generally attained proficiency in the skills required for successful learning in the programmes they are following.	Students' subject specific skills are developed in accordance with the relevant learning outcomes for the syllabus, specification or course. Students demonstrate very good subject knowledge and subject skill at an appropriate level, and demonstrate this at the relevant assessment points in the year or cycle. Junior Cycle student have attained proficiency in the prescribed key skills appropriate to their stage in the cycle. Senior Cycle students have attained proficiency in the skills required for successful learning in the programmes they are following.

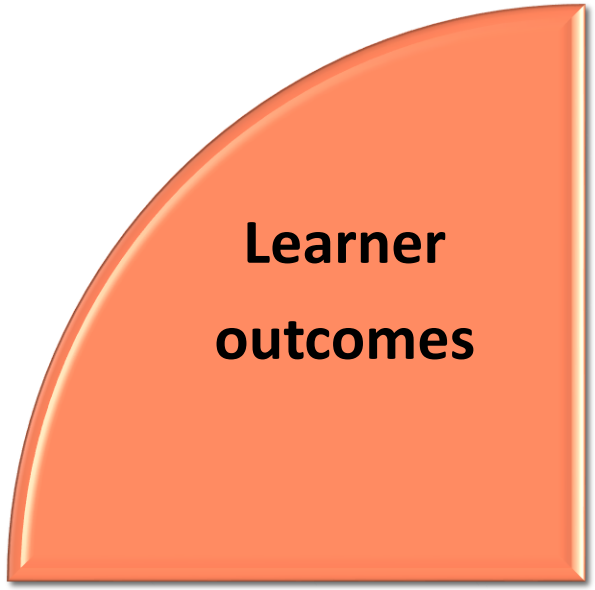
Could you and your teachers…

- Take subjects that are being introduced in Junior Cycle roll-out
  - What knowledge and skills are being nurtured currently in those subjects?
  - Look at a sample of students' homework/projects/tests. To what extent can you see students demonstrating relevant knowledge/skills?
  - Are we over-emphasising or under-representing any aspect?

Could you and your teachers…

- Discuss the students' experiences with new specifications in Junior Cycle
  - What have we learned about students' knowledge and skills?
  - How can we build on this?
- Think about the parts of teaching and learning in the subjects that you feel are "highly effective", "effective", etc.
- How might you improve? How could you share your learning with others?
- Plan how you can improve from "effective" to "highly effective"

Standards for Learner Outcomes



- Students enjoy their learning, are motivated to learn, and expect to achieve as learners
- Students have the necessary knowledge and skills to understand themselves and their relationships
- Students demonstrate knowledge, skills and understanding required by the post-primary curriculum
- Students attain the stated learning outcomes for each subject, course and programme

Standards and statements of quality

Standards	Statements of effective practice	Statements of highly effective practice
Students enjoy their learning, are motivated to learn and expect to achieve as learners	Students' enjoyment in learning is evident and is often linked to a sense of making progress and of achievement. Their engagement with learning contributes to their sense of well being.	Students' enjoyment in learning is evident and arises from a sense of making progress and of achievement. Their engagement with learning contributes to their sense of well being.
	Students are motivated to learn, and this is often linked to having a clear sense of attainable learning outcomes.	Students are motivated to learn through having a clear sense of attainable and challenging learning outcomes.
	Students see themselves as learners and demonstrate this in their positive approach to classwork and homework.	Students see themselves as learners and demonstrate this in their positive and reflective approach to classwork and homework.

Could you and your teachers…

- Survey a sample of students about their attitudes to their learning?
  - Their enjoyment of lessons?
  - In lessons, the times that I learn best are when …….?
  - The types of feedback on their work that they find most useful?
  - How well the structure of the timetable works for them? First years???
  - What other questions might you ask?

- After a unit of work, how well do students think they have progressed?
  - Could a number of teachers build in a short activity at the end of a unit or lessons asking students to reflect on their learning? Could teachers discuss the outcomes?

- What does this tell you about “effective” and “highly effective” outcomes?

Standards for
Teachers' collective/collaborative practice

Teachers' collective/ collaborative practice

- Teacher value and engage in professional development and professional collaboration
- Teachers work together to devise learning opportunities for students across and beyond the curriculum
- Teachers collectively develop and implement consistent and dependable formative and summative assessment practices
- Teachers contribute to building whole-staff capacity by sharing their expertise

Standards and statements of quality

Standards	Statements of effective practice	Statements of highly effective practice
Teachers contribute to building whole-staff capacity by sharing their expertise	Teachers recognise the value of building whole-staff capacity and are willing to share their expertise with other teachers in the school.	Teachers value their role within a professional learning organisation, and as a matter of course share their expertise with other teachers in the school.
	Teachers are willing to share their expertise with teachers from other schools, for example through education centres, online forums, and school visits.	Teachers share their expertise with teachers from other schools, for example through education centres, online forums, and school visits.
	Teachers engage regularly in professional collaborative review of teaching and learning practices.	Teachers engage regularly in professional collaborative review of teaching and learning practices and use it to identify and build on effective approaches.
	Teachers are open to building collective expertise in the skills and approaches necessary to facilitate student learning for the future.	Teachers are proactive in building collective expertise in the skills and approaches necessary to facilitate student learning for the future.

Could teachers, individually and collectively,….

- Think about how often they share expertise…… for example….
  - When we share experiences and CPD learning with colleagues
  - Mentor newly qualified teachers
  - Develop common units of work/programmes/assessments with colleagues
  - Participate in Subject Learning and Assessment Review (SLARs) meetings
- Think about the degree to which this sharing is impacting on how I teach
- Do we think our collective practice in this standard is “effective” or “highly effective”? Could we build on or strengthen existing practice?
- Ask: “Am I willing (within my subject group, for example) to use some professional time for occasional colleague-to-colleague observation?”

In summary…

- *Looking at Our School* is a framework that allows us to recognise, affirm, discuss, and think about how we could improve practice.
- It's designed to be used flexibly for different purposes.
- Take a <u>part of a domain</u> or even <u>one or two standards</u> to begin with in SSE.
- Can you get some information about this standard in your school?
- Is your practice in this standard "effective" or "highly effective"? Could you build on your strengths in this area? How?
- Plan and review how your practice changes and improvement happens.

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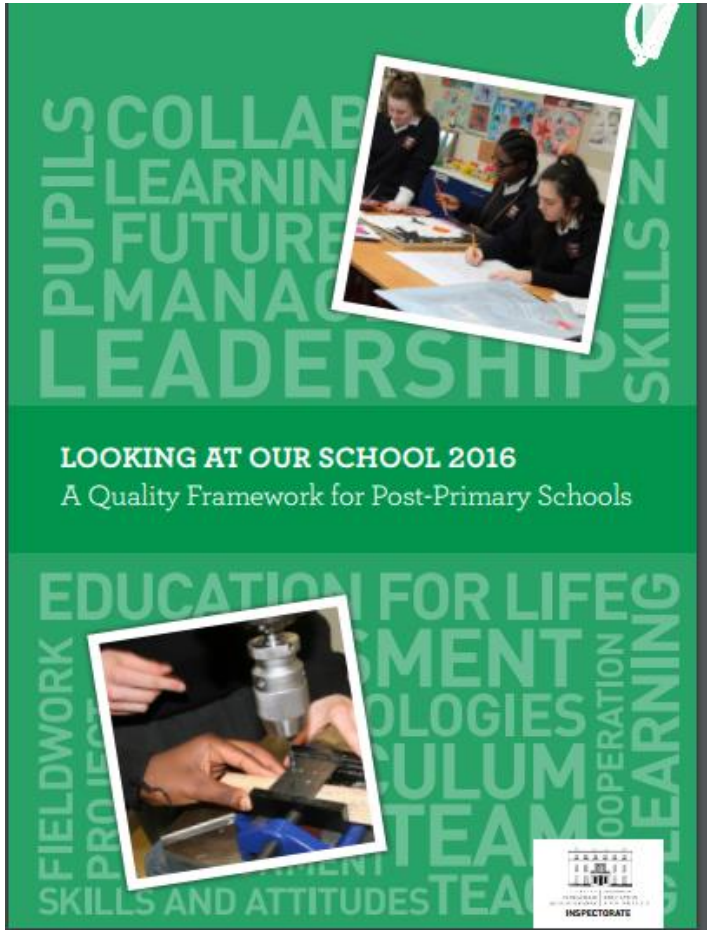

Questions?

Míle buíochas

www.schoolself-evaluation.ie

www.education.ie

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