



Summary of DEIS Plan

DEIS stands for *Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Irish Schools*. It is a national programme, aimed at addressing the educational needs of all young people. Coláiste Bríde became part of the DEIS programme for the first time in 2022. The 2022/2023 academic year was spent gathering data from all stakeholders and using that to devise a plan with targets and actions that we felt would best meet the needs of our students. All teachers are part of one of the planning groups for each of the eight themes of DEIS, which are explained separately below. Groups meet throughout the year to monitor and review actions and to determine whether we are on course to reach our targets. The information below is a broad overview of the targets for each theme and a summary of the main new actions.

Theme 1: Literacy includes the capacity to read, understand and critically appreciate various forms of communication including spoken language, printed text, broadcast media and digital media.

Our actions in this section aim to improve students' vocabulary and their reading comprehension skills. We aim to achieve this by reading high quality academic texts, modelling reading comprehension strategies, and conducting word explorations with students to help them understand key vocabulary.

The Accelerated Reader programme is targeted at first years and struggling readers, in their English and/or learning support classes. First years will be encouraged to always have their library book in their bag and to read, not only during library class, but in supervised study and for 15 minutes every night. This is our second year trialling AR and the feedback from first years last year was very positive.

Literacy can be supported at home by encouraging time spent reading for pleasure, helping with revision of new words encountered in class, reading aloud difficult sections of text so your child can hear it being read accurately.

Theme 2: Numeracy encompasses the ability to use mathematical understanding and skills to solve problems and to meet the demands of day-to-day living in complex social settings.

Our actions in this section aim to improve students' problem-solving skills, data-handling abilities and time management. Students are being trained in time management skills as it applies to completing homework and tests. They have also begun to set targets in each subject and to plot their progress on a graph in their journals. This can be supported at home by going through the targets your child has set for themselves and discussing *how* they can achieve them. Helping them to make out a realistic study plan, which incorporates some of the study skills they have been learning about, will help with this.

Theme 3: Attendance is fundamental to students' progress and attainment in school. When dealing with this theme, schools need to look at patterns of full-day absences, part-day absences, late arrival at school, and the rate of suspensions.

Theme 4: Retention

The theme of retention focuses on the importance of keeping children in school, identifying those at risk of early leaving, and taking action to reduce or eliminate factors that cause students to drop out.

Theme 5: Attainment

Examination attainment focuses on attainment in the certificate examinations, and also includes target-setting, strategies and monitoring of progress with regard to students' outcomes in school-based assessments and examinations.

Theme 6: Transitions

Transitions is very closely linked to attendance and retention. It puts a spotlight on the key moves from one stage of education to the next: from primary to post-primary; from junior cycle to senior cycle; and from post-primary to continuing education and the world of work.

Our actions in these 4 sections (**themes 3-6**) aim to reduce overall absenteeism throughout the school so that students can do better in exams and transition into each stage of their education more easily. Teachers have found that regular absenteeism has a snowball effect on students where they often struggle to catch up on what they have missed and then begin to feel overwhelmed. This, in turn, negatively effects how well they do in their subjects. In the most severe cases this can lead to more frequent absenteeism and risk of leaving school. Oftentimes students struggle most when transitioning to a new stage of their education, for example, first years entering second-level, 5th years entering senior cycle, and so on.

To help avoid these problems, teachers are aiming to make the learning intentions of the class clear, to provide success criteria for assignments, and to use formative feedback to show students where they are going wrong and what they can do to improve. Our actions also aim to try and help students in class by using low-stakes forms of assessment whereby students can see themselves what they know and where the gaps in their learning are. This is called retrieval practice and all students have been introduced to this in study skills workshops or in their Science of Learning module in Junior Cycle wellbeing. Teachers are using OneNote and Teams to log classwork and homework so that students can find out what they have missed and know where to go to catch up. All of these actions aim to make the learning environment a more supportive one for students, but also one which promotes more independent learning on their part. This can be supported at home by asking your child about what they are learning, using retrieval practice strategies to help them revise, asking them to show you how Teams and OneNote class notebook works, and going through any feedback they are struggling with. At all times students should be encouraged to ask their teachers for clarity if they have not understood something.

Other whole school actions are also being run this year to support these aims, including: breakfast club, homework club and a selection of 15 different lunch-time clubs and activities.

Theme 7 & 8: Partnership with Parents and Others

The DEIS action plan supports schools to develop partnerships with parents and with the community.

Our actions in this section aim to increase the number of interactions parents have with the school and to improve communication between school and home. Teachers will aim to make further use of VShare as a means of communication with parents. The home-school community liaison (HSCL) was appointed when we were designated a DEIS school and she is an invaluable link between home and school.