Ardscoil Rís, Dublin

Self-Evaluation Report and Improvement Plan (Differentiation, 2017 – 2020)

1. Introduction

This document records the outcomes of the findings of this self-evaluation process and our current improvement plan, including targets and the actions we will implement to meet the targets.

1.1   Outcomes of our last improvement plan from 2012 to date
- The Literacy Improvement Plan has been drafted but has yet to be implemented fully (WSE-MLL, 2017).
- The Numeracy Improvement Plan has not been completed to date (WSE-MLL, 2017).

1.2   The focus of this evaluation

We undertook self-evaluation of teaching and learning, focusing on differentiation in the classroom, in the period September 2017 to May 2018. We evaluated the following aspects of teaching and learning:
- Research was conducted into the teacher's awareness of and use of methodologies and approaches to differentiation in the class.
- Research was conducted into the parent's/guardian's awareness and understanding of differentiated teaching methods in their son's learning experience.
- Research was conducted into the student's perception of their individual learning experience in the classroom.
- The recent draft WSE-MLL report (2017) was used in our analysis of practices of differentiation within the scope of our self-evaluation.
- The above focuses were guided by the *Looking At Our Schools 2016 (LAOS, 2016)* document under Domain 3 (Teacher's Individual Practice), Standard 4: *'The teacher responds to individual learning needs and differentiates teaching and learning activities as necessary'.*

2. Findings

2.1 The following findings are evidence of effective practice in our school:

- Teachers' preparation includes preparation for the differentiation of learning intentions and learning activities and is informed by meaningful use of data.
- Teachers use a range of questioning techniques effectively for a variety of purposes including stimulating substantial student responses and facilitating deeper engagement with lesson content.
- Teachers use ICT to enable students to make meaningful links between lesson material and their learning, and to transfer their learning to unfamiliar experiences.

2.2 The following factors are evidence of highly effective practice in our school:
- Teachers strategically select and use approaches to match the learning intentions of the lesson, meet the learning needs of students and open up further learning opportunities.
- Teachers' assessment practices include not only assessment of knowledge but also assessment of skills and dispositions. Teachers tailor assessment strategies to meet individual learning needs.
- Teachers identify and thoroughly prepare in advance resources tailored to match the specific learning intentions of each lesson, or series of lessons, and individual students' learning needs.

2.3 Evidence
- Staff:
  - 94% design educational resources according to the needs of their students.
  - 94% of teachers surveyed use higher order questioning.
  - 72% make regular use of differentiated tasks for students with SEN.
  - 78% regularly use PowerPoint presentations in the classroom. 50% regularly utilise other forms of ICT (video, audio, pictures, websites).

- Parents:
  - 79% of parents surveyed agreed that their child is appropriately challenged in their school work.
  - 94% feel that their child is able to fully complete their homework.
  - 57% feel they do not need to help their son with their work.
  - 80% discuss their son's learning with them.

- Students:
  - 94% understand the questions the teacher asks in class.
  - 96% feel they can always complete the work assigned in class.
  - 95% can always complete their homework.
  - 93% always understand what is asked of them in assessments.

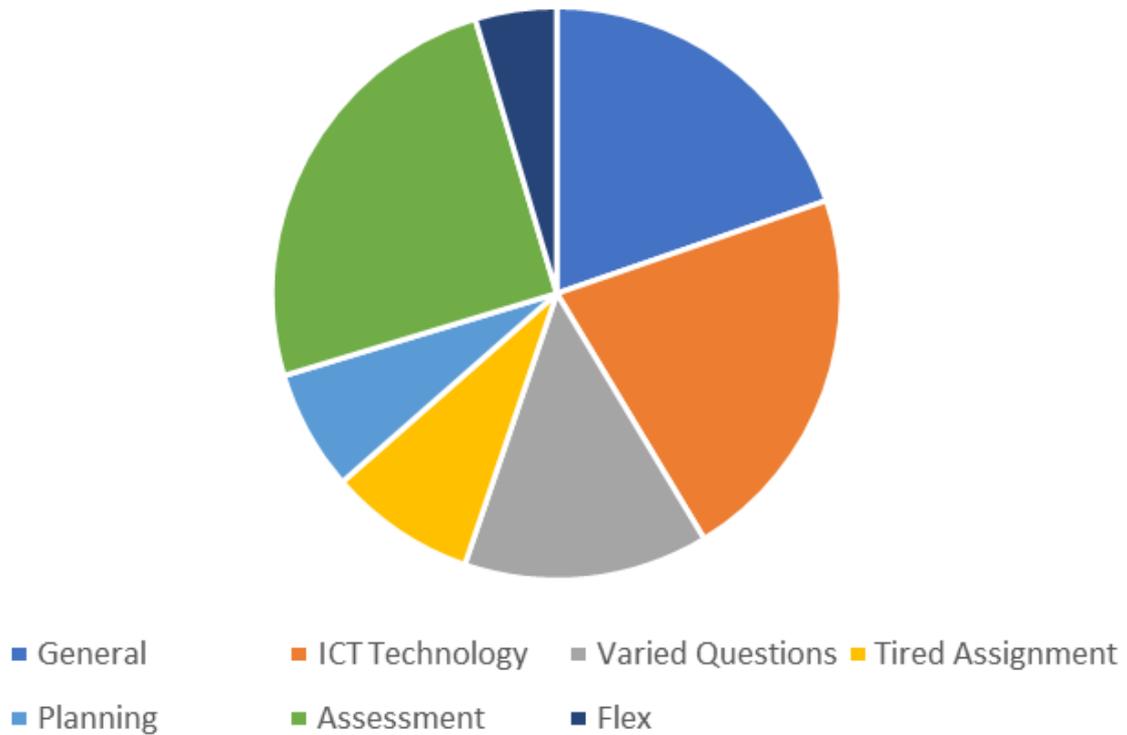**2.4 This is what we are going to focus on to improve our practice further:**
- The differentiated planning for allowing the extension of learning beyond the lesson could be improved to facilitate learners of all abilities in the classroom.
- The further integration of ICT into lessons and classroom environments.
- Further awareness of the need to increase continuous assessment, in line with Junior Cycle developments (e.g. CBAs).
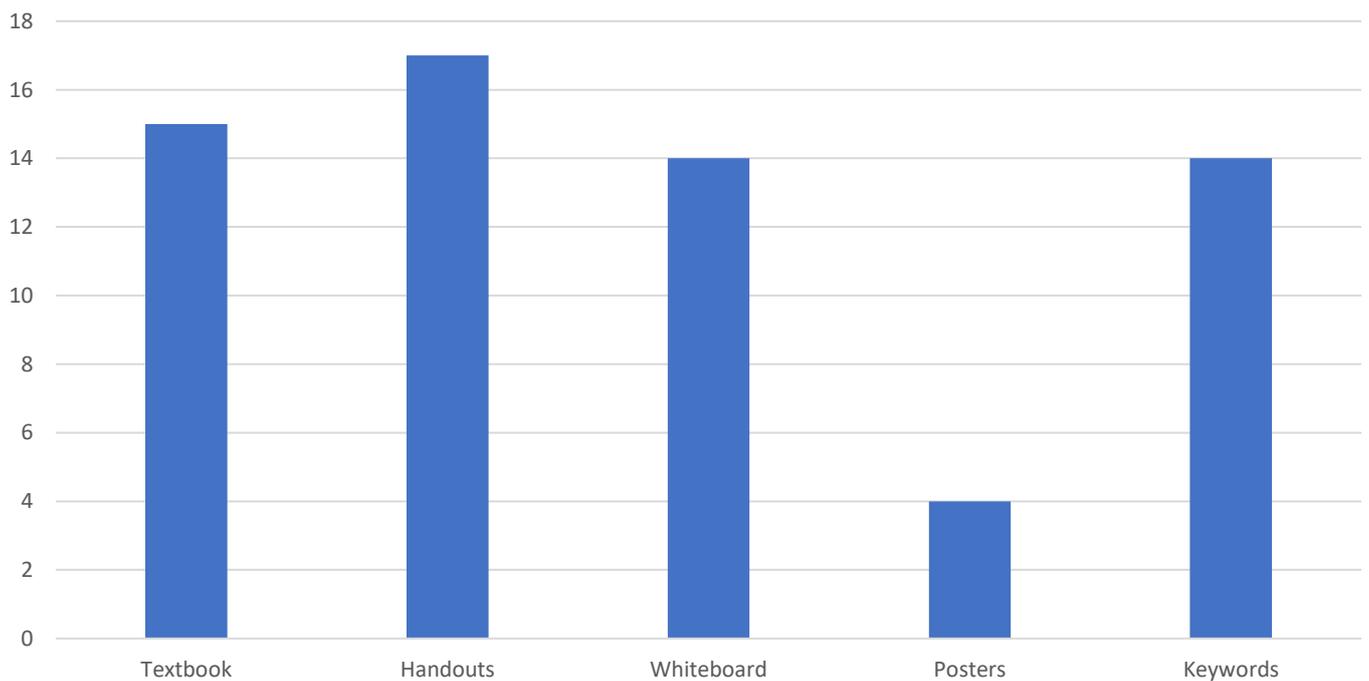
2.5 Evidence
- Following the WSE-MLL (2017), the inspectorate recommends that teachers plan for differentiation 'upward' to cater for all ability levels.
- Teachers overwhelmingly identified the absence of Teacher-Based Classrooms as an obstacle preventing full use of ICT.
- Teachers identified the lack of relevant CPD in relation to the changes in the Junior Cycle as problematic. This has affected teacher confidence.
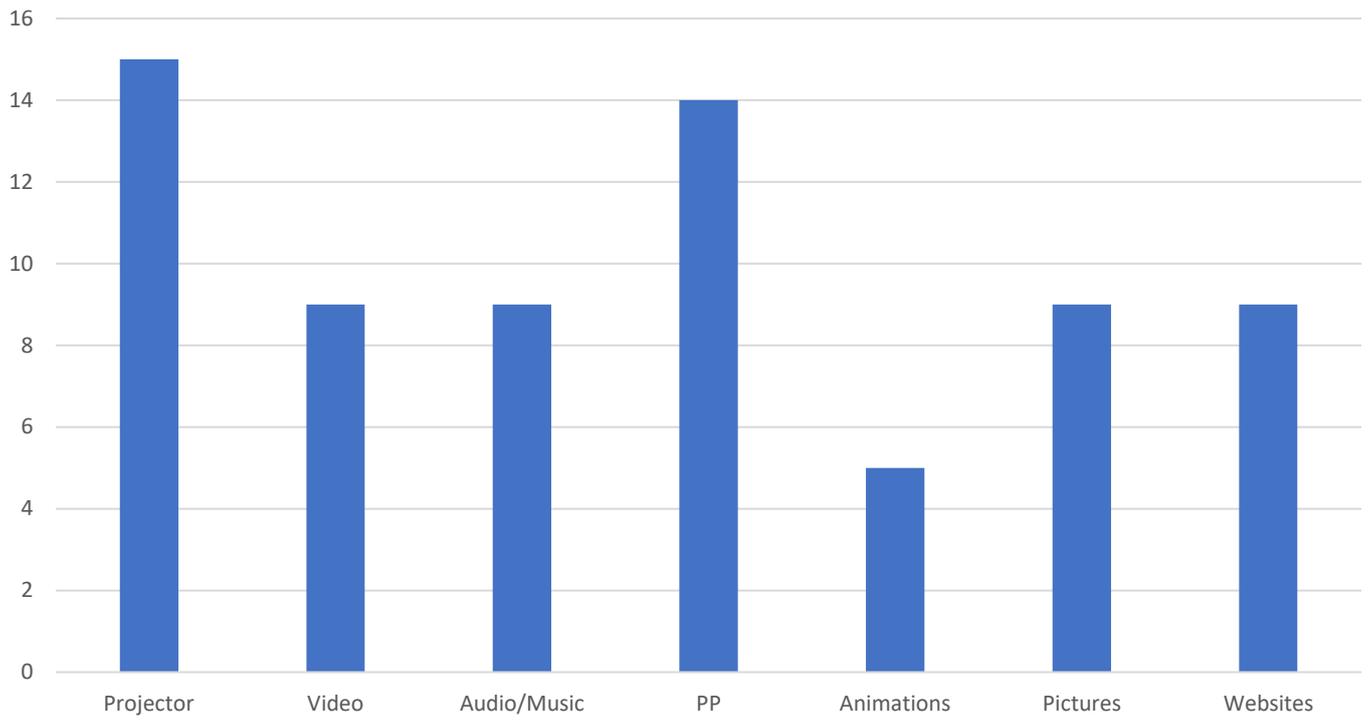
3. Graphs of Results

Teacher Use of Differentiated Methodologies

- General
- ICT Technology
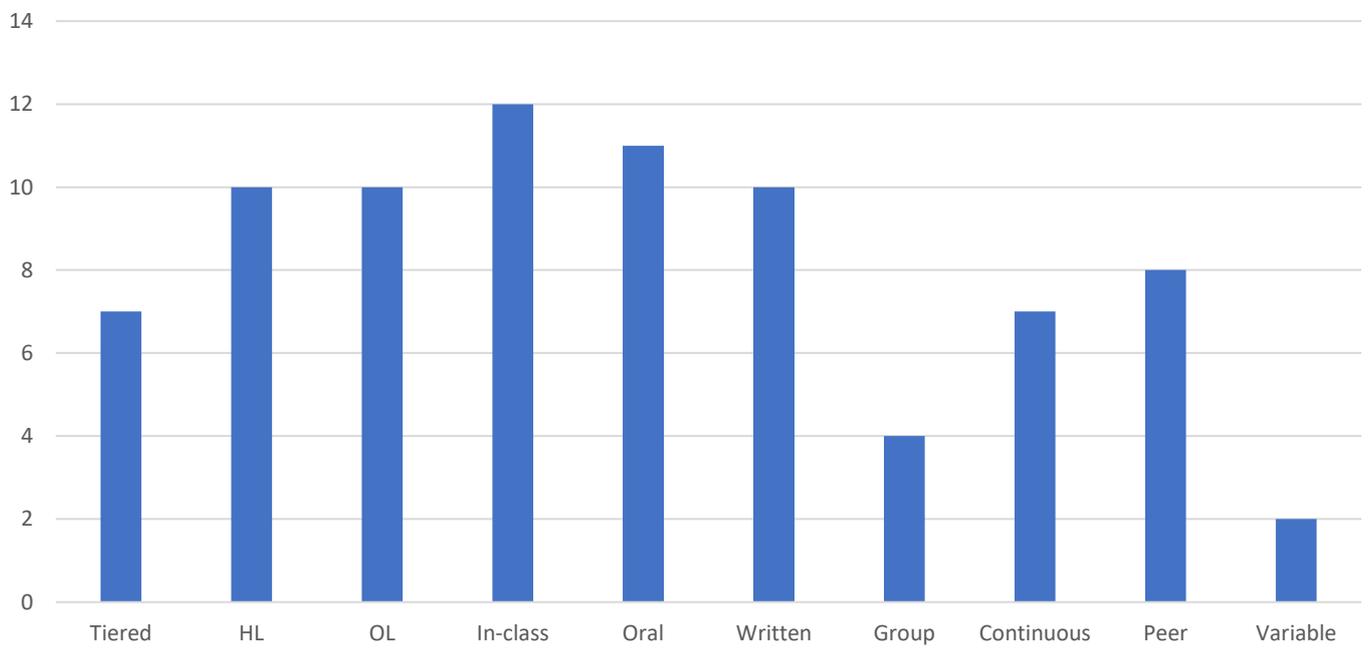- Varied Questions
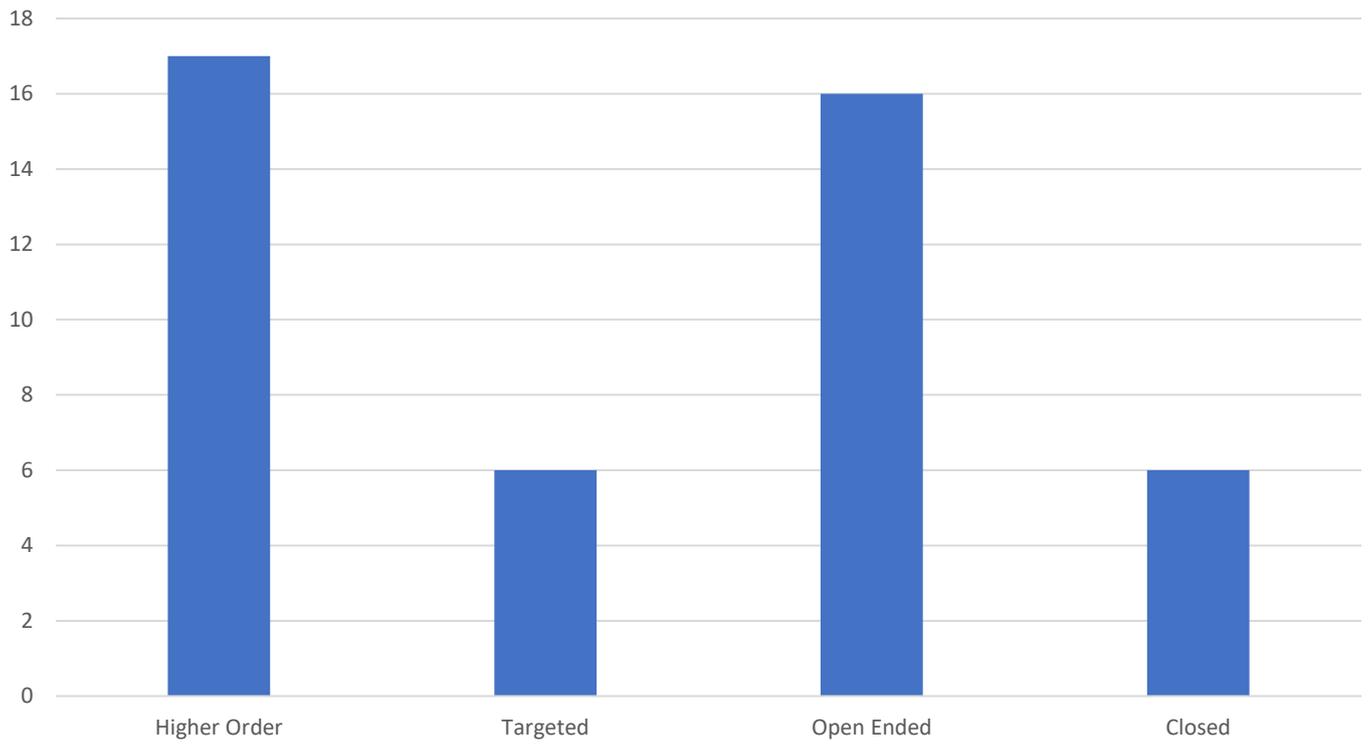- Tired Assignment
- Planning
- Assessment
- Flex

General Teaching Methodologies

Textbook	Handouts	Whiteboard	Posters	Keywords
15	17	14	4	14

ICT Technology

Category	Value
Projector	15
Video	9
Audio/Music	9
PP	14
Animations	5
Pictures	9
Websites	9

Assessment Options

Category	Value
Tiered	7
HL	10
OL	10
In-class	12
Oral	11
Written	10
Group	4
Continuous	7
Peer	8
Variable	2

Varied Questioning

Category	Value
Higher Order	17
Targeted	6
Open Ended	16
Closed	6

Planning for Differentiated Learning

Category	Value
SEN	13
Stronger	6
Physical Needs	3

Group Work

10	
9	
8	
7	
6	
5	
4	
3	
2	
1	
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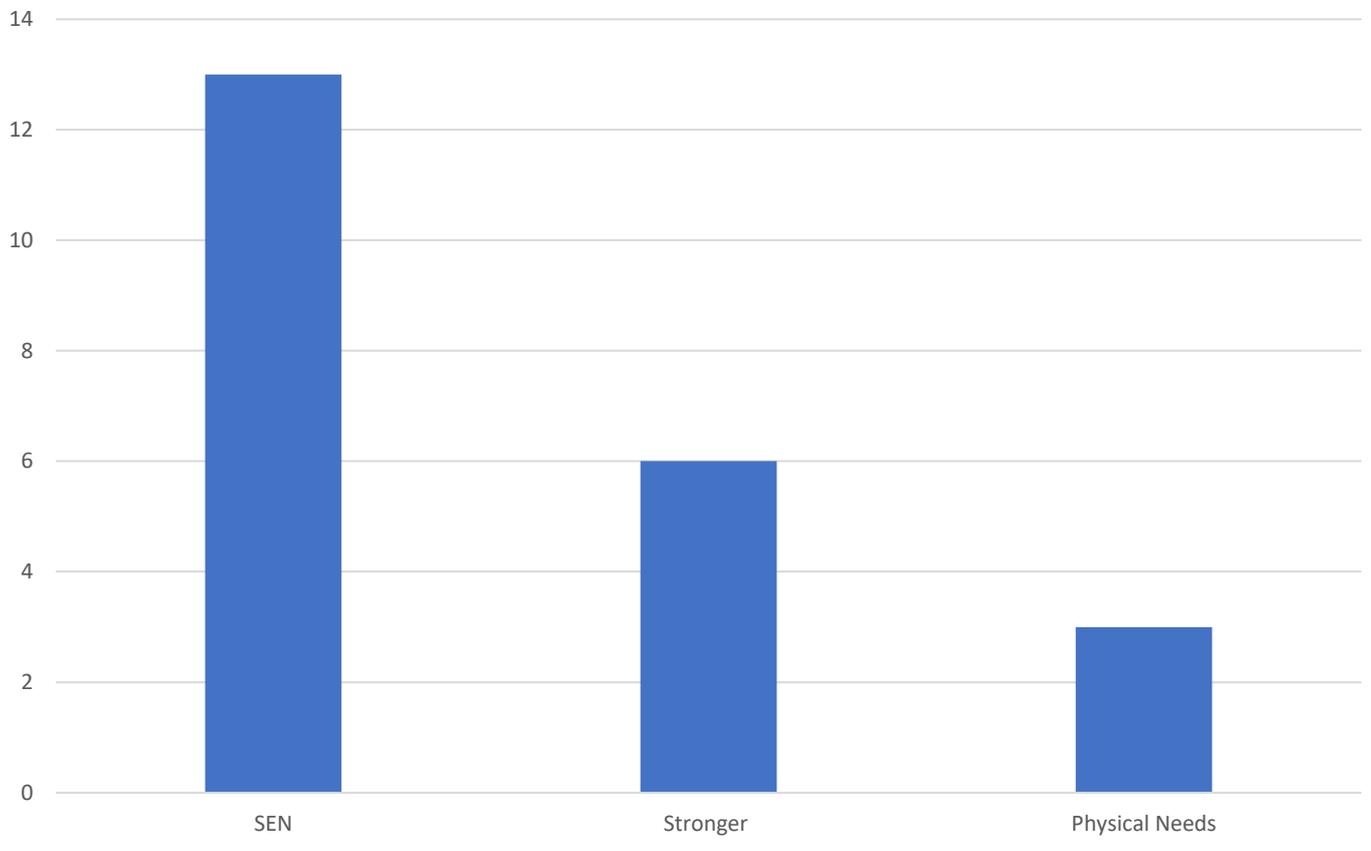
Peer mentoring   Interest Groups   Pair work
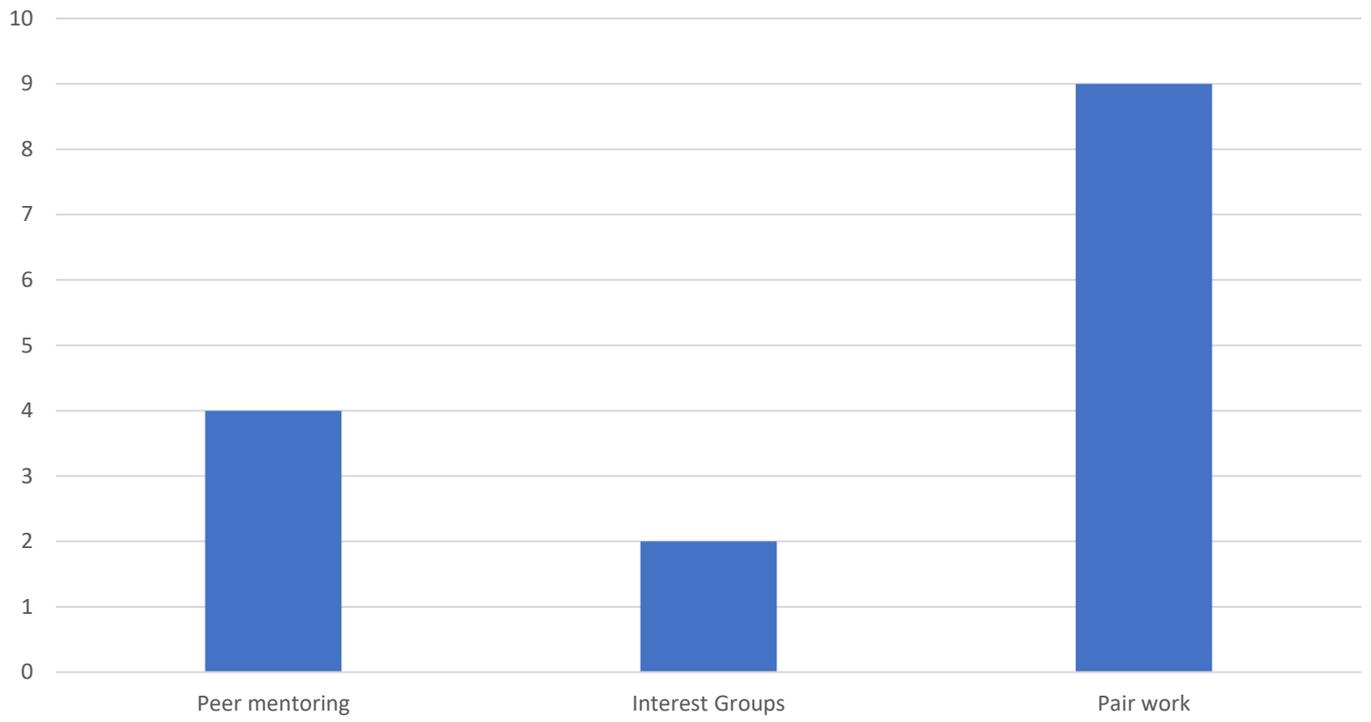
Ardscoil Rís, Dublin – School Improvement Plan

Timeframe of this SIP is from 2018 to 2020

Targets	Actions	Criteria for Success	Progress & Adjustments	Targets Achieved
Move to Teacher Based Classrooms (TBCs) to enhance teaching and learning and to improve access to ICT.	Previous research was used to inform the eligibility of the move to TBCs. Assign each teacher a room. Changes to physical school building to allow for greater student numbers on the corridors Surveying staff on Improvements	A successful and effective transition to TBCs Informal comments on improvement in organisation and effectiveness of teaching by staff. Teachers report an increase of at least 3 minutes extra teaching time per lesson which could increase teaching by up to 15 minutes per class group per week. An increase from 50% to 70% of teachers using forms of ICT other than PowerPoint.	A one-way system has been introduced on the corridors from Day 1 and has been adjusted as being necessary to date. Some classrooms have become available to students between lessons to reduce congestion on the corridors.	Success to be analysed at year end. Under continuous monitoring on a day-to-day basis.
Avail of CPD in Differentiation from an expert organisation	Consult with management to arrange time for whole staff CPD. Contact relevant organisations (e.g. PDST, SESS, etc.)	A broadened use of differentiated tasks from 72% to 80% of staff, while maintaining use of higher order questioning (94% of staff). An increased number of parents (79% to 85% of parents) reporting their child is appropriately challenged. Teachers reporting that the CPD conducted has been a positive addition to the differentiated teaching by a majority of responses.		Success to be analysed at year end. Under continuous monitoring on a day-to-day basis.

Create an online platform through Google Drive for all staff members of relevant resources, websites and links for information and training on differentiation in learning.	Research online for relevant resources and information for general teaching and learning. Create a shared folder on Google Drive for staff, divided into subfolders per subject. Inform staff of said platform and give staff access to upload, create and edit documents relevant to their subjects. Encourage staff to utilise this platform to create a subject-specific pool of resources to aid in differentiated teaching and learning.	In conjunction with our previous target (CPD), a broadened use of differentiated tasks from 72% to 80% of staff, while maintaining use of higher order questioning (94% of staff). An increased number of parents (79% to 85% of parents) reporting their child is appropriately challenged. Teachers reporting that the online platform has been a positive addition to the differentiated teaching by a majority of responses.		Yet to be formally assessed. Follow up surveys to follow in 2019-20.