

# Ballinamore Community School

Wellbeing Newsletter

## WHAT ARE FORMATIVE INSTRUCTIONAL & ASSESSMENT PRACTICES AND WHY ARE WE IMPLEMENTING THEM AT BCS?

In accordance with the foremost priority identified in our whole school consultation last year the wellbeing team having been working hard to embed formative instructional and assessment practices in a bid to help our students to gain a greater understanding of how they learn and how they can improve.

The school has invested in CPD for the whole staff in support of this initiative and we are committed to teaching and assessing our students in a way that enables them to become a true partner in the teaching and learning process.

By setting clear learning targets, collecting and documenting evidence and providing effective feedback for our students we enable them to take ownership of their own learning.

As we approach the end of the school year we now turn our attention to the end of term assessments and ensuring that we provide our students with feedback that will help them understand how they have achieved their progress to date and what will help them to improve and continue to develop as learners so that they can realise their true potential.

*“The most powerful single moderator that enhances achievement is feedback... providing information about how and why the student understands and misunderstands, and what directions the student must take to improve”. John Hattie.*

## FORMATIVE FEEDBACK FRIDAY

Friday 31<sup>st</sup> May will be Formative Feedback Friday at Ballinamore Community School. Teachers will be dedicating this day to providing their students with formative feedback on their end of term assessments. It is vitally important that all students attend on the day to receive their feedback when the assessments are fresh in their minds.

**“It is information rather than grades that students require in order to improve”.**  
**Geoff Petty.**

## ONLINE SAFETY

The second priority identified during the wellbeing consultation was the promotion of greater awareness and understanding among our school community of the necessity to stay safe online and the knowledge and skills required to do so.

All first and second year students are currently participating in Think B4 U Click, a programme that has been developed to allow students to explore the issues around online privacy in the context of rights and responsibilities.

We would like to express our thanks to Garda Hugh Brady for making two visits to BCS to talk to both the students and the parents about how to stay safe online. Both visits were extremely informative and addressed the expressed needs of our school community.

# School Tour

On Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> May there will be a school tour for all first and second year students. The tour will see students and teachers travel to Lough Key to participate in range of activities that will incorporate the indicators of wellbeing. The time allocated to the tour will be counted as part of the mandatory 300 hours that all school must devote to junior cycle wellbeing in accordance with the guidelines issued by the Department of Education and Skills and the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment.

Buses will leave from BCS at 9.00am and will return at 3.45pm in time for buses. During the day students will complete a 5km forest walk, enjoy the challenges in Bodaborg and receive a guided tour of the treetop canopy, tunnels and tower.

All students are required to bring a healthy packed lunch on the day.

The tour will provide students with an excellent opportunity to unwind following the end of year assessments and to take some time out to focus on their wellbeing in the company of their peers. We are looking forward to a healthy and fun filled day.

Further information and permission slips will be sent home after the Easter holidays.



