

Scoil Mhuire NS

Bornacoola

Co. Leitrim

19554B

School Self Evaluation Report

Literacy

June 2014

1. Introduction

1.1. Focus of the Evaluation:

Our Evaluation focussed on an analysis of the previous three years Drumcondra standardised tests results. We surveyed the pupils from Junior Infants to Sixth Classes and also conducted a Parents' Questionnaire. Class and Learning Support teachers engaged in a questionnaire and were fully engaged in the process from the collection of data to the analysis of returns.

1.2. School Context:

Scoil Mhuire NS is a rural school of Catholic Patronage. It currently has 76 pupils (39 boys and 37 girls), three mainstream class teachers, including a teaching principal, one shared resource and one shared learning support teacher. One pupil has low incidence special education needs and he is allocated resource hours based on these needs. There are two SNAs to cater for his needs and they share his allocation of SNA support. The pupils are generally from an excellent family background and there is excellent parental support for the work of the school. It is normal that there would be a 100% turnout at the annual parent teacher meetings. 7 of the pupils are non-nationals and the first language of the home is non English.

2. Findings:

Learner Outcomes:

- Pupil standardised test scores for literacy indicate that STen scores for reading for the three years 2012 to 2014 are above the national norm with 52% of pupils in the Sten 8-10 and 8% in Sten 1-3 in 2014.
- Vocabulary scores in standardised tests are lower than comprehension scores in larger number of higher achieving pupils than might be expected.
- Teachers report that reading fluency is at a generally high level.
- Pupil questionnaires showed that 90% of pupils enjoy reading while parent questionnaire backs this up with a 92% rating.
- All teachers report that pupils use their literacy skills competently in their learning of all curriculum areas.
- All teachers report that pupils do not communicate clearly and confidently in writing.

Learner Experiences:

- Pupil questionnaire results show 65% of pupils assessed themselves as being a good reader with the majority of the remainder being undecided as to their ability to read.
- 37% of pupils in 1st to 3rd Classes reported that word meanings was the most difficult part of reading.
- 93% of pupils from 4th to 6th Classes reported that they often/sometimes read books at home
- 28% of pupils in the same classes reported that they never read newspapers.
- Parents' Questionnaires report that 63% of pupils like to write stories but 37% of pupils do not like learning spellings.

- 93% of parents reported that their child is doing well but 37% would like better information as to how their child is doing in literacy.
- 100% of parents reported that their children had access to age appropriate books at home which accounts for the fact that 50% report not visiting a public library.

Teacher Practices:

- All teachers report that pupils read a variety of print text with fluency.
- Digital media is an area for greater exposure to literacy.
- All teachers agreed that spelling, grammar, syntax and punctuation need to be addressed.
- Vocabulary skills require more attention in order to increase pupils' knowledge of words.

3. Progress made in previously-identified improvement targets:

N/A as this is the first year of the process

4. Summary of school self-evaluation findings:

4.1 Strengths:

- Attainment levels in literacy are above national norms.
- Pupils display very positive attitudes towards all aspects of literacy.
- Pupils use their literacy skills competently in their learning of all curriculum areas.
- Pupils read with fluency.

4.2 Areas for Improvement:

- Pupils need greater exposure to oral language.
- Dictionaries to be made available to all pupils and pupils to be encouraged to use these regularly to build up a list of new words.
- In order to better access digital media school to purchase iPads as an aid to class work.
- To get involved in Newspapers for Schools in order to ensure that pupils are guaranteed access to print media.
- Emphasis on improvement of writing skills regarding punctuation, syntax, grammar and spelling.

4.3 The following legislative and regulatory requirements need to be addressed:

- The Anti-Bullying Policy for the school needs to be updated following the publication of the DES revised Anti Bullying Procedures and Circular 0045/2013. See appended checklist:

School Improvement Plan Literacy 2014-2017

Summary of main strengths	• Pupil standardised test scores for literacy indicate that Sten scores in English for the three years 2012 to 2014 are above the national norm with 52% of pupils in the Sten 8-10 • 90% of Pupils in general reported that they liked reading and this was backed up by Parents with a 92% rating. • 93% of Pupils report that they often/sometimes read books at home. • 100% of Parents report that their children have access to age appropriate books at home. • All teachers report a generally high reading fluency level.
Summary of main areas requiring improvement.	• Vocabulary work to be focussed on in reading in general. • Pupils need greater exposure to oral language activities. • Pupils to be provided with greater access to digital media as resource. • Pupils report low (28%) newspaper reading in the home. School to get involved in the Irish Independent Newspapers for Schools scheme 2nd to 6th Classes. • Increased emphasis on presentation of written work with regard to punctuation, syntax, grammar and spelling. • Formal teaching of the writing genres should have commenced by the end of this planning period.

Priority	Improvement Target	Required Action	Planning Activities	Timescale	Responsibility
1	Increase Pupil percentile scores by 1% in Vocabulary	Strategies to improve pupils' vocabulary skills to be implemented at whole school level.	Pupils from 1 st to 3 rd Classes to have a personal book for new words. All pupils from 4 th to 6 th Classes have an individual English Dictionary.	2014/15	Teachers First to Sixth Classes.

Priority	Improvement Target	Required Action	Planning Activities	Timescale	Responsibility
2	Improved Expression and Oral Language Skills.	Emphasis on the use of full sentence answers while delivering in all classes.	Conscious attention to the requirement for only accepting full sentence answers. Use of discretionary curriculum time for oral activities.	2014/15 ongoing	All Class Teachers and LS Team
3	Digital Media richer environment. Greater access to information in relation to research on topics explored in Class Reader.	Purchase of Class iPads to a desired classroom ratio of 1 in 2 for all Classes.	To be approved by BOM	2014/15 and ongoing.	Principal/LS Teacher
4	Greater access to print media for pupils.	Involvement in Irish Independent Newspapers for Schools Scheme.	English Literacy time to be devoted each Wednesday for perusal of Irish Independent Newspaper from late September to early June.	Ongoing 2014/17	1 st to 6 th Class Teachers.
5	Increase Pupil Percentile scores in Vocabulary scores by 2%	Continuing emphasis on the use of dictionaries in senior classes leading to independent use of dictionary to search unknown words. Building on personal dictionaries in classes 1 st to 3 rd .	Independent use of dictionary to be encouraged and use of personal dictionary to be similarly encouraged.	2015/16	1 st to 6 th Class Teachers.

Priority	Improvement Target	Required Action	Planning Activities	Timescale	Responsibility
6	Pupils to become more aware of writing skills regarding punctuation, grammar, syntax and spellings.	Increased emphasis on presentation skills in writing.	Pupils to be encouraged in the considered acceptable presentation of written work.	2015/16	All Class Teachers.
7	To improve pupils writing in the Genres of Narrative and Report.	Pupils to be formally taught the both genres over the first and second terms. Free	Teachers to be upskilled and resources to be sourced during last term 2015/16	2016/17 Terms 1 and 2	All Class Teachers
8	To challenge the pupils to take increasing responsibility for their own writing and to take pride in what they write for themselves.	Pupils to have a personal free writing journal	All Class Teachers to timetable free writing for one period per week.	2016/17	All Class Teachers

