

KNOCKANEAN NATIONAL SCHOOL

KNOCKANEAN, ENNIS, Co. CLARE

SCHOOL ROLL NUMBER 17583V

School self-evaluation summary report for school community

Evaluation period: Sept 2018 – June 2019

Report issue date: June 2019

1. Introduction

This is a vertical co-educational primary school. There are currently 294 pupils on roll. There are eleven mainstream classroom teachers, five support teachers and an administrative principal. We also have three full time and one part-time SNA.

Our attendance levels are excellent with an average monthly attendance is 96%.

1.1 The focus of the evaluation

Between November 2012 and June 2016 we have looked at Literacy (Spellings), Numeracy (Problem Solving)and P.E. in the school. We reviewed our programmes in each of these areas during several meetings, using a variety of data gathering techniques that would provide us with the most comprehensive view of these subjects in the school. School Self Evaluation was suspended in June 2016 following a directive from the I.N.T.O. It resumed again in May 2018. We then identified Comprehension as the area to focus on for the following school year. We reviewed our Comprehension strategies/approaches during several meetings, using a variety of data gathering techniques that would provide us with the most comprehensive view of Comprehension in the school.

This report summarises the areas that have been prioritised for improvement and the initiatives that have been put in place to date to bring about that improvement.

2. Summary of school self-evaluation findings

The data gathering tools we used were Standardised Test Results, Star Reading Tests, evidence from pre and post testing in Literacy Lift Off, a SCOT analysis among the teaching staff, teacher focus groups and interviews with pupils. We then compiled a school self-evaluation report year, which was presented to the Board of Management for approval at its meeting on June 10th. A copy of this report was also forwarded to the Parents Association and can be viewed at the school if you so wish.

2.1 We found that our school has strengths in the following areas of Literacy. (Comprehension)

- Innovative approaches Literacy stations/ LLO/Guided Reading/AR
- Motivated teachers who attend regular CPD
- Print rich environment
- Open to new ideas
- Embracing outside competitions and initiatives regarding literacy – Write a Book/ Haiku Writing/Poetry Writing
- Writing genres and class novels
- SWST
- Structural phonics programme
- Station Literacy in classes
- Phonological awareness

- Library in Rooms

2.2 We have decided to prioritise the following areas for development:

- More focus on Comprehension skills in both languages throughout the school
- Setting up a specific station to teach Comprehension strategies in L.L.O.
- Extend literacy stations to senior classes
- More Building of Understanding— whole school involvement
- Build Skills – read for or to an audience
- Readers Theatre
- More Oral presentation skills
- Develop skills in Comprehension and Oral language
- Re-introduce Reading Buddies (6th and Junior Infants)
- Encourage trips to the library – maybe a whole school initiative
- Setting up Accelerated Reader Programme
- Purchase of Comprehension Specific resources eg. Nelson Literacy Boxes, books for A.R. libraries etc.

3. Progress made on previously identified targets identified in the current School Improvement Plan (SIP)

In the 2012/2013 school year the school's Self Evaluation Process focused on Literacy and identified spellings as the area we would focus on for the following three years. Listed below are the improvements we have undertaken over the first three years, as per our S.I.P.
2012/2013

- We have implemented agreed teaching approaches based on the feedback from the pupil survey.-teachers are now using dictation as a means of testing spellings on a Friday. They now orally check the spellings every day and use a series of fun games to make spellings more interesting.
- We have developed a whole school plan for spelling and phonics based on successful teaching and learning strategies. Classes from infants to 2nd class follow the Jolly Phonics programme and classes from 3rd – 6th follow the SWST programme.
- Pupils have increased access to ICT resources following the purchase of 34 laptops which each class is timetabled for one day per week. This has enabled pupils access online spelling games which is a fun way for them to reinforce the work done in the class.
- Teachers have familiarised themselves with the SWST and teachers in classes from 2nd – 6th have tested their class using this method.
- We have produced a handbook of spelling benchmarks for each class level. This book also includes a comprehensive list of common spelling rules as well as proven useful teaching strategies

- When tested in May 2015 we found that on average, 76% of pupils in classes 3rd – 6th increased their standard score in spellings from their previous test in September 2014.

In the school year 2015/2016 the remainder of these improvements were put in place namely,

- Investigate and implement a uniform approach to correction of written work with emphasis on pupil self-correction. Classes from 1st to 6th are now using a coded approach to the correction of pupils written work
- Literacy lift Off has been introduced to 1st class. This is an intensive programme of Reading and Writing, which gives the pupils lots of opportunities to read books at their own level of competency. It gradually lifts the complexity of what they can do in both reading and writing by equipping them with the necessary problem-solving skills.
- Writing genres: We divided the writing genres up as follows to enable us to focus more clearly on each one. We will continue yearly with this rotation policy.

For the school year 2015/16 the genres of Narrative, Procedure and Persuasive were taught.

For the school year 2016/17 the genres of Narrative, Recount, Report, and Explanation were taught.

In the 2013/2014 school year the school's Self Evaluation Process focused on Numeracy and identified Problem Solving as the area we would focus on for the following three years. Listed below are the improvements we have undertaken over the first two years, as per our S.I.P. 2013/2014

- The whole staff undertook Professional Development training with a PDST facilitator on two separate occasions. All teachers got to see in class modelling in the area of Problem Solving.
- Teachers implemented agreed teaching approaches based on the feedback from the pupil and parents surveys as well as teacher focus groups. Activities such as Mangahigh, Khan Academy and Mathletes were introduced in the senior classes.
- Colour coded flash cards with the words Addition, Subtraction, Multiplication and Division written on them are now being used throughout the school to increase vocabulary around these words.

- A Croke Park hour was devoted to use of Target Boards and Number fans and now all classes are using these at least twice a week for ten minutes as a means of teaching Oral Maths and Problem Solving.
- Teachers are now focusing on two or three problems as opposed to a full page of problems. These individual problems are differentiated up or down as needs be.
- Teachers are now engaging in more paired work as a methodology to teaching Problem Solving. Pairs consist of pupils of different abilities in Numeracy.
- Class blogs have a section on Numeracy and some specifically have a “Problem of the Day” on their blog.
- Teachers are placing more emphasis on Maths across the curriculum. Eg. 6th classes have integrated Maths into their JEP programme, experiments conducted during Intel Mini Scientist competition had to have an element of Maths incorporated into them.
- Parents now receive fortnightly/ monthly information (in the form of tests undertaken) on how their child is performing in maths highlighting any areas of difficulty that needs to be worked on at home.
- An inventory of maths equipment was undertaken and new equipment purchased for all classrooms and learning support rooms.
- The school decided that the Problem Solving Strategy RUDE (Read, Underline, Draw, Estimate) would be adopted by all classes as a means of helping pupils solve maths problems.
- Maths lessons are well-planned, thematic and collaborative where possible drawing on best practice e.g. station teaching (currently on-going in 4th class), in-class support (Senior Infants, 1st and 2nd), etc.
- When tested in May 2015 we found that on average, 62% of pupils in classes 3rd – 6th increased their standard score in solving word problems in Maths, from their previous test in May 2014.

In the school year 2015/2016 the remainder of these improvements were put in place namely,

- A handbook of uniform mathematical language and terminology was started. This book will also include a list of mathematical rules and approaches used in the school.
- Practical Maths: We raised awareness of maths in the real world, station teaching, games, using maps, measuring etc

In the 2014/2015 school year the school's Self Evaluation Process focused on P.E. Our third subject area to focus on. During the school year (2015/2016) we undertook the following improvements as per our S.I.P. 2014/2015

- The school year was divided into half terms to enable each class to focus on one strand of the PE curriculum each half term
- FRIENDS for Life was introduced in 3rd and 5th classes. This is a school-based positive mental health programme. The programme helps students to develop effective strategies to deal with worry, stress and change and teaches the skills required to reduce anxiety and promote resilience.
- Super Troopers was introduced for all classes as part of our Active School initiative. This programme was successfully piloted in over 300 schools, along with teachers and a team of psychologists, nutrition, wellbeing and physical activity experts to encourage children to learn about a healthy lifestyle and increase their activity levels. It aims to help address that only 1 in 5 children are meeting the World Health Organisation recommended daily guidelines of 60 minutes by setting physical activity homework every night.
- All teachers were provided with a folder containing suitable PE activities for each strand of the curriculum relevant to their class level (ref PDST PSSI.ie)
- All classes made use of the website gonoodle.com to provide children with regular short, sharp brain breaks.
- Lunchtime activities were organised for the pupils such as circuits, basketball leagues etc
- Yard markings were provided in the front yard to encourage children to take part in activities
- A running track was repainted in the back yard to encourage pupils to make more use of it
- Encourage pupils to try and complete 1km/5km/10km/15km at their own pace and in their own time.
- An active schools week was organised between June 20th – June 24th
- David Courtney (Athletics Ireland) to provide athletics training for all classes once per month
- Antoinette Butler introduced all pupils to yoga

- We reviewed of our healthy eating policy and we raised awareness of healthy eating and in particular healthy lunches in schools.

In June 2016 the school's Self Evaluation Process focused on a review of the process to date. In early June 2016 we conducted a survey of pupils from 2nd to 6th covering the areas of Literacy, Numeracy and P.E. The objective of this survey was to compare pupils attitudes now compared to when we started out the School Self Evaluation process in 2012/2013. The results are as follows:

Results of pupil survey on Spellings / Problem Solving and P.E.

Literacy (Spellings) :

- The number of pupils who don't like spellings has been reduced from 43% to 37%
- 58% now report that spellings is taught in a variety of different ways

Numeracy (Problem Solving):

- The number of pupils reporting they find Maths easy or very easy has increased from 36.36% to 54.8%
- The number of pupils reporting they find Maths hard or very hard has reduced from 11.11% to 6.85%
- The number of pupils reporting they find Maths Problems easy or very easy has increased from 39% to 46.58%
- The number of pupils reporting they find Maths Problems hard or very hard has reduced from 21% to 9.59%
- 83% now report that Maths is now taught in a variety of different ways.

P.E.:

Dance:

- The number of pupils reporting that Dance is now taught sometimes / often has increased from 32.58% to 68.49%
- The number of pupils reporting that Dance is now never taught has reduced from 58.43% to 30.4%

Gymnastics:

- The number of pupils reporting that Gymnastics is now taught sometimes / often has increased from 8.99% to 67.12%
- The number of pupils reporting that Gymnastics is now never taught has reduced from 87.64% to 32.88%

Outdoor and Adventure:

- The number of pupils reporting that Outdoor and Adventure is now taught sometimes / often has increased from 39.56 % to 68.49 %
- The number of pupils reporting that Outdoor and Adventure is now never taught has reduced from 49.45 % to 15.07%

Athletics:

- The number of pupils reporting that Athletics is now taught sometimes / often/ very often has increased from 70.01% to 89.05 %
- The number of pupils reporting that Athletics is now never taught has reduced from 4.12 % to 2.74%

Summary School Improvement Plan 2018-2019

1. Introduction

1.1 The focus of the evaluation

As part of our ongoing work in the school, we conducted a school self-evaluation of teaching and learning this year in the area of Comprehension. For more information on how the evaluation took place, please see our School Self-Evaluation Report attached.

Following on from this we compiled a School Improvement Plan for Comprehension. This school improvement plan sets out the actions that we will undertake in the school over the next three years in the area of Comprehension. The main purpose of these actions is to improve our pupils' learning.

Targets for improvement:

- To maintain and improve the high standard of reading within the school by continuing to use strategies already in place but also introducing new strategies
- To improve the management and monitoring of reading in the school and to engage children in this process
- To improve comprehension skills
- To improve the scores of children under the 50th percentile with regard to comprehension (Drumcondra reading Tests) by 1 percentile for each of the 3 years of the plan

Actions to be taken:

The school has identified the following **actions** which will help in achieving those targets over a three year period.

- Continue to use literacy interventions L.L.O.
- Continue to use Guided Reading
- Class novels will be used from second class upwards
- In Senior classes a minimum of two class novels will be used in each year
- Accelerated Reading will be introduced incrementally throughout the school
- Children will be assessed using Star Reading tests to accurately provide them with appropriate reading materials.

- Reading resources will be purchased
- A link to access A.R. at home will be provided for parents via the School Website.
- Dear Time/A.R. Time will be started in classes 2nd-5th to coincide with the setup of A.R.
- Children will continue this practice at home as part of homework
- Parents will be provided with ‘Top ten tips’ for reading with a child (PDST – Guided Comprehension)
- Reading Buddies will be re-introduced involving 6th class and Junior Infants
- Every child will have an annual reading record card to record books read; record card in Junior Infants.
- All other children (2nd-5th) will have a progress report attached on A.R.
- A central hub will be created in the staff room of the school for books being used for Guided Reading and LLO
- In class library books will be levelled during the first year of plan in preparation for the commencement of A.R.
- Supplementary reading material to be purchased as part of the second year roll out of A.R including high interest low ability books to facilitate differentiation .
- All teachers will check out suggestions for English and ICT and incorporate ICT as a methodology when planning reading (www.pdst.ie/node/274 - to begin with)
- Teachers will be asked to undertake CPD with regard to Guided reading/Literacy Lift-off/Running records/Accelerated Reader
- All teachers will be provided with a copy of the Guiding Comprehension booklet produced by PDST and asked to use it to support the overt teaching of comprehension strategies.
- Teaching of comprehension strategies should form part of long-term planning for reading
- Specific strategies being taught should be included in short-term planning
- Teachers from Junior Infants to Sixth class will be provided with a document outlining what Comprehension strategies they are expected to specifically teach their class grouping. These strategies will be taken from Building Bridges of Understanding.
- Comprehension strategies and corresponding C.P.M. will be colour photocopied, laminated and displayed in all classes.
- A specific “Comprehension Station” will commence as part of LLO to specifically teach Comprehension strategies to children using a Picture book/Big Book.
- Literacy Stations will commence for the first time in the Senior End of the school to further target the area of Comprehension.
- Each group will be formed according to reading ability and Comprehension reading material will be differentiated according to the level of reading of each group.
- Building Bridges of Understanding will be used.
- Nelson Comprehension Boxes will be purchased and used.(2018)
- Literacy Boxes will be purchases and used.(2019)
- From 2019/2020 - the school will change to Drumcondra Reading tests.
- Teachers will analyse the results in respect to comprehension to monitor progress over the period of this plan
- Each child will have an individual tracking sheet with regard to standardized testing

