

# School Self Evaluation Report

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*Cabinteely Community School*

**Literacy for September 2013 to May 2016**

## Focus of the evaluation

A self-evaluation of teaching and learning in this school was undertaken during Autumn and Spring term 2013-2014 Literacy in English and how the teaching and learning in all other subjects support the acquisition of literacy skills were reviewed in 1st Year.

## School Context

Cabinteely Community School is a DEIS school in an urban setting. It is co-educational and multi-denominational. We are a mixed school with 520 pupils under the trusteeship of the Ursuline order, Archbishop's house and local ETB. Transition Year and Leaving Certificate Applied are well established. We have 12 feeder schools in our catchment area. There is a strong culture of Continual Professional Development in Cabinteely Community School

An SSE core group is established with representatives from a variety of subject subjects and disciplines. This core group was formed in August 2013 by requesting volunteers. At present there are representatives from Maths and Science, History and Geography, English, Languages, Practical subjects and Learning support. Each volunteer agreed to act as a liaison person for the development of literacy in their area.

## The Findings

### Learner Outcomes

- Students standardised test results were analysed and compared with the national norms
- Leaving Cert and Junior Cert result were analysed by the subject departments using the PDST tool and the school based questionnaire see appendix. This was carried out in order to use it as an indicator of existing standards. Findings and targets are to be recorded in respective subject department plans

### Learner Experience

- SSE group designed a questionnaire on attitudes to literacy and engagement in learning
- Parents of First Years were surveyed to establish attitudes to literacy in the home
- Questionnaire results were received from 95% of First Year pupils and 65% of First Year parents
- Results were analysed

### Sample Findings

- 100% of all parents surveyed felt that reading was important / very important while 64% of the student cohort felt it was important/very important
- The most popular reading materials among first years are digital media e.g. Wikipedia, Facebook and Twitter.

- There is a huge awareness among parents and students of the fact that there is a book club in the school
- A large majority ( 82%) of students liked working in pairs and small groups
- 92% of parents felt that their children were comfortable working in pairs
- 73% of all First Years surveyed felt comfortable asking questions in class
- 38% felt comfortable reading aloud in class. Parents surveys agree with this statistic
- 43% would like to take part in debates
- 19% of our First years read for more than one hour per day for enjoyment
- 46% of our First Year pupils do not read for enjoyment
- 45% of parents stated that their children had read some books from our recommended summer booklist while 18% of First Years stated that they had done so.
- When students come across word or phrases that they don't understand 43% read on to try to get better understanding while 5% will use a dictionary
- 50% of First Years like writing
- 49% check their writing for mistakes
- 31% of First years feel that their writing is neat and easy to understand

## Teacher Practice

### Sample findings

- 100% of Teachers focus on the systematic development and application of knowledge/content during their classes
- Learning outcomes are syllabus linked in 100% of lessons.
- A large majority of staff (80%) focus on the development and application of literacy during their lessons
- A significant majority of teachers differentiate regularly by varying content, activities methodologies and assessment
- Questions in class are varied and answered in subject specific language in the majority of lessons
- 20% of respondents state that attention is given to *staying well skills* while 30% of teachers give attention to the development of *managing myself skills*.
- 70% of teachers provide opportunities for students to learn in pairs
- 50 % of respondents regularly provide opportunities for students to learn by making their own notes or by investigative /self-directed learning
- 88%of teachers use comprehension strategies regularly in their lessons .
- Peer teaching and student presentations to class are used in 30% of lessons
- According to the survey results online resources are used in 76% of lessons while editing checklists are used regularly in 26% of lessons
- Learning outcomes are shared with students at the start of classes in 50% of classes

## Summary of School evaluation findings on Literacy

Our school has **strengths** in the following areas of teaching and learning in relation to numeracy

- Parents in our school recognise the importance of reading in the development of literacy in our school.
- Teachers focus on the systematic development and application of knowledge/content during their classes
- Learning outcomes are syllabus linked in 100% of lessons.
- A large majority of staff (80%) focus on the development and application of literacy during their lessons
- A large majority of teachers provide opportunities for students to learn in pairs or small groups.
- Most of the students surveyed like working in pairs and small groups.
- A significant majority of students surveyed feel comfortable asking questions in class
- There is a critical mass of teachers already using comprehension strategies

The following areas are **prioritised for improvement** in relation to literacy (see School Improvement Plan for details in SMART TARGETS)

- Teachers to continue to focus on the development of literacy as well as knowledge and skills
- To increase the percentage of pupils reading for pleasure
- To increase the number of pupils using dictionaries
- To increase the number of students taking higher level at Junior and Leaving Certificate
- To develop oral literacy through debating
- To introduce editing check list for literacy