

# School Self-evaluation Report



## Scoil Naomh Cholmcille

### 1. Introduction

#### 1.1 The focus of the evaluation

A school self-evaluation of teaching and learning in literacy was undertaken during the period 1/09/13 to 30/09/13.

#### This is a report on the finding of the evaluation

#### 1.2 School context

- This is a vertical co-educational primary school
- There are currently 177 pupils
- There are 8 teachers and two part time teachers including an Administrative principal

### 2. The Findings

- Standardized test results in English reading show that on average most pupils are performing at or above the national norm, with 42% scoring above 80% and 5% scoring below 20%.
- Throughout all classes students display a good grasp of grammar, write in a range of genres and have neat legible handwriting, however their writing shows a consistent lack of care with spelling and grammar despite all reminders and reinforcement by teachers.
- Children in all classes are able to recite, recall and sequence stories. There is ample opportunity for pair work and group work and children will respond responsibly and appropriately to this for short intervals. Our school is lacking the resources to have sufficient supervision of various groups in order to keep children on task and interested for an entire lesson.
- Responses from a survey of parents show that the majority of parents agree or strongly agree that their child likes and is good at reading and writing. A few parents requested more written feedback from teachers in relation to homework and classwork in order to

motivate child to reach a higher standard of work and for parents to have a greater insight into their child's progress.

- Focus groups revealed that across all classes' students have a positive attitude toward reading and that they enjoyed the discussion and analysis of the text with the teacher and the class.
- Assessment of children's progress was recorded but the records were generally based on Summative Assessment throughout the year. Formative assessment while certainly carried out was not recorded.

### **3. Progress made on previously identified targets identified in the current SIP N/A for year one as SIP not in place yet.**

## **4. Summary of school self-evaluation findings**

### **4.1 Our school has strengths in the following areas:**

- Standardized test results are generally very good in the school.
- Children report liking and enjoying reading and writing and feel that they are good at it. Many children report reading for pleasure at home
- Children are generally able to recite, recall and sequence stories orally and in written form.
- Children are able to confidently speak and write about a topic of personal interest
- Children write in a small variety of genres, have a good grasp of grammar and neat handwriting.
- 89% of parents reported that their children like to read and 95% of parents reported that their child was doing well at writing. This was also reflected in the pupil focus group.
- 85% of parents agreed or strongly agreed that they are well informed by the school as to their child's progress.
- Teachers report that they use a variety of teaching approaches including talk and discussion and teacher questioning.
- Teachers concurred that the Early Intervention Program at the beginning of 1<sup>st</sup> Class for assessment and intervention in English was a strength in our school.
- There are strong communicative links between school and home with the reading record books and daily formative assessment of reading, monitoring progress and daily reporting to parents especially at the junior end of the school.
- Staged shared reading system in place.
- New Library with colour coded levels for various age groups.
- New Comprehension resources in place.
- Efficient system of diagnostic testing and assessing.

### **4.2 The following areas are prioritized for improvement**

- While reflecting on the areas that required attention in the English curriculum it came to our notice that although all teachers felt that the text books for English spelling, phonics and writing activities were good, there was an insufficient link between the various classes and the continuity and progression from one year to

another was questionable and at worst there were gaps or inconsistencies from year to year. It was agreed by all staff members to approach this by finding a common thread. This common thread will be the oral language program which has common themes that run from junior infants to 6<sup>th</sup> class and each year links with the previous and following years providing continuity and progression through the school.

- We would then use the framework for the oral language program and build the various elements of the English curriculum around it using these common themes as our focus, thus providing repetition and reinforcement in the areas of spelling, reading, writing and oral language. Each year group will focus on the themes for that month and will be reinforced in a continual and progressive method from juniors to 6<sup>th</sup>. Each teacher would compile the content for their class over the year.
- While almost all children had a very good grasp of the rules of grammar and were attaining high marks in their spelling tests, they are inconsistent with putting this knowledge into practice on a daily basis. This will be addressed by sending home a note to parents for further reinforcement after three mistakes that have been pointed out by the teacher to no avail with a particular spelling or grammar rule.
- While parents were happy in general about the feedback given by teachers some parents felt that further written feedback would be beneficial in order to motivate child to reach a higher standard of work and for parents to have a greater insight into their child's progress. This is an area that will be addressed in the coming year with an aim for a more consistent approach to feedback across all class groups.
- Formative assessment although carried out informally was not recorded. There will be assessment folders for each class which will contain recorded summative records, formative assessment records and behavioral assessment records.
- In order to provide continuity and to provide a detailed handover from year to year, each teacher will fill out a transition document recording standardized test results, exemptions, resource/learning support allocation and any other notes of interest.

#### **4.3 The following legislative and regulatory requirements have been addressed:**

- We have increased our time allocation for the teaching of English by one hour overall for language (6.5 hours per week Infant day & 8.5 hours per week full day.)
- We administer standardized tests from 1<sup>st</sup> class to 6<sup>th</sup> Class covering the three classes as stipulated in the month of May.
- We send the results of these tests to the DES and incorporate these results into the standardized report card as is required by legislation.

**Checklist attached addressing the legislative and regulatory requirements.**