

Saint Mary's CBS  
Enniscorthy

Roll Number: 63560T

**School Self-Evaluation Report for**  
**Post-Primary Literacy**

Evaluation period: October 2013 - May 2014

Report issue date: 8<sup>th</sup> May 2014

## **Introduction**

### **1.1 The focus of the evaluation**

A school self-evaluation of literacy and teaching & learning in Saint Mary's CBS Enniscorthy was undertaken from October-May of 2014. Literacy in first year and the teaching and learning experience of second years were analysed as part of our review process.

Two student questionnaires were designed based on the PDST model on attitudes to literacy & engagement in learning. These were trialled with TY students. The surveys were conducted in February/March as an online Google survey. A total of 107 first year and 123 second year responses were received. By using an on-line tool, results were instantly collated and analysis began immediately.

These were later triangulated with findings from a teacher's questionnaire. One objective of our self evaluation is democracy hence the views of all stakeholders in the school community will be garnered.

### **1.2 School Context**

Saint Mary's CBS is a voluntary secondary school for boys with a Catholic ethos. It is under the trusteeship of the Edmund Rice School's Trust (ERST). Saint Mary's has been providing second-level education for boys in Enniscorthy since 1857 and has a current enrolment of 652.

## 2. The following are the main findings of the evaluation:

### Literacy: First Years

#### Mechanics of Writing

- There are four mixed ability classes in first year. Samples of written work from each class were gathered and analysed by teachers using the following headings; Date, Title, Capital Letters & Full Stops.

80% use both titles & full stops, 85% use capitals and 60% use dates.

#### Reading

- 81% of students think that they are proficient readers.
- There is a correlation between those who read for enjoyment (34%) and those who read two or more books per month (29%).
- 22% read from a digital format though not specified.
- Again a significant minority (30%) of students do not enjoy reading, 47% read less than one book per month.
- Two-thirds of students have reading ages above their chronological age on entering the school in first year.
- A sizeable minority of students (3% - 19% range for the past four years) have a reading age of more than two years behind their chronological age.

#### Reading in School

- 75% feel they do not get the opportunity to read in school
- They like teacher input prior to reading text.
- During reading in class students like to pause and talk about the text content. Teacher input is also welcome at this stage.
- Most feel they are able to comprehend most subject specific text.

## **Learning Experience:      Second Year Students**

### Students enjoy learning when;

There is plenty of activity (emphasis on kinaesthetic learning), pair and group work, project work.

Teacher cares, is passionate about subject, pacing and sequencing correct and explains thoroughly.

### Students do not enjoy learning when;

There is copious note taking, too much teacher talk (monotonous), incorrect pacing and sequencing, poor explanations and learning irrelevant information.

### Learning is fun when;

Teacher is good humoured, there is lots of activity based learning, pair & group work, we watch relevant video clips and have less homework.

### In class I know I am good at;

Listening, asking questions, writing (taking down notes), reading, absorbing and understanding information,

### I would like to become better at;

Listening, absorbing information, answering questions, speaking with confidence,

writing (creatively and presentation).

## **Staff Questionnaire**

Staff were given a presentation on School Self Evaluation guidelines on 24<sup>th</sup> March 2014. Subsequently 44 colleagues completed an on line survey on their experience of teaching and Learning. A summary of findings;

### Teachers on Literacy

- 35% rarely focus on literacy or numeracy and 10% say they never attend to literacy
- 53% attend to cross curricular elements of the course.
- Quite a high proportion of the staff never use ICT in their teaching?

### Teaching and Learning

- 55% teach values and 87% think they teach skills.
- 83% encourage some form of independent learning.
- A significant minority rarely use pair or group work.
- 28% would rarely use peer teaching
- Most teachers ask students to record information.
- 76% use youtube as a teaching tool whereas only 5% are familiar with moodle or other web instruments.
- The majority of staff would use active teaching methodologies of one kind or another, for example brain-storming and visual stimuli.
- 98% say that they differentiate in almost all of their lessons.

Staff are amenable to departmental work on developing literacy with questioning and elaboration being the main focus of our targets.

**Active teaching methodologies are also an area of work on next year;**

Literacy initiatives that must be implemented in 2014/15;

- The Mechanics of writing (4 specific areas)
- Expansion of D.E.A.R to the whole school twice weekly.
- Book in a bag
- Spelling competitions
- A re[a]d wall.
- Literacy week

- Word of the week (subject specific for each year)
- Paired reading with Transition Years.
- Formal links with the local library
- The establishment of a school library

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

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

- According to our MLL teaching in our school varies from good to excellent.
- The Incidental Inspection of September told us that teaching though traditional was very good in most classes visited.
- Teacher's surveyed use differentiated teaching methods.
- Most teachers use visual stimuli to aid their teaching
- All teachers use discussion as a teaching tool.
- Most students can use subject specific language in their answering.
- Students agree that most teachers' classes are enjoyable.

##### 4.2 The following areas are prioritised for improvement

#### **Literacy**

##### Subject Specific Key Words

- Paragraphing (structure and clarity)
- Clear use of language
- Interpretation of higher order questions
- Elaboration
- Spelling

## Teaching and Learning

### Promotion of Active teaching methods including:

- Pair work (think pair share, place mats)
- Group work (graphic organisers)
- Student presentation
- Self directed learning strategies (writing wheel)

### The extension of ICT in lessons and for homework:

- Power point presentation
- Moodle
- Blackboard
- Office365
- Youtube

4.3 Legislative and regulatory Checklist. See Below.

**Appendix to Post-primary School Self-Evaluation Report:**

**legislative and regulatory checklist – reporting to the school community**

Which area of school life is involved?	What is the relevant legislation, rule or circular?	Is the school fully meeting the requirements of the relevant legislation, rule or circular?
<b>Valid enrolment of students</b>	Sections of the Education Act 1998 and the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, and Circular M51/93 set out the conditions for students to be validly enrolled in a school	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>The school calendar and the school timetable</b>	Circular M29/95 sets down the length of the school year - minimum of 167 days for all year groups  Circular M29/95 sets down the length of the school week - minimum of 28 hours for all year groups	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Standardisation of school year</b>	Circular 034/2011 gives the dates for school holidays	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Parent/teacher meetings and staff meetings</b>	Circular M58/04 sets out the arrangements for these meetings	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Implementation of national literacy and numeracy strategy</b>	Circular 25/12 describes the whole-school approach required by the strategy, and the implications for timetabling, assessment and reporting students' progress	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Implementation of agreement regarding additional time in school for teachers</b>	Circular 025/2011 requires teachers to do an additional 33 hours of out-of-class work each year, so as not to reduce teaching time	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Development of school plan</b>	Section 21 Education Act 1998 requires all schools to have a school plan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Engagement with school self-evaluation process</b>	Circular 40/2012 outlines the SSE process and what it requires of schools	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Guidance provision in secondary schools and whole-school guidance plan</b>	Circular 09/2012 sets out the current arrangements for guidance planning and provision and refers to Section 9 of the Education Act 1998	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Delivery of CSPE to all junior cycle classes</b>	Circular M12/01 Circular M13/05 set out the required provision for Civic, Social and Political Education	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Exemption from the study of Irish</b>	Circular M10/94 sets out the conditions necessary for students to be exempt from studying Irish	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Implementation of child protection procedures</b>	Circular 65/11 and the Child Protection Guidelines oblige schools to ensure that: liaison persons have been appointed ; the procedures have been communicated to the whole school community; and the procedures are being followed	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

<b>Implementation of complaints procedure as appropriate</b>	Section 28 Education Act 1998 provides for procedures to address complaints about a school	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Complaints have been resolved or are being resolved <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>Appeals in the case of refusal to enrol students, suspension and expulsion (permanent exclusion)</b>	Section 29 Education Act 1998 provides for appeals procedures in these cases, which are dealt with first of all by the school. Where cases are not resolved at school level, an external appeals committee hears the appeal and makes a decision.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Appeals have been dealt with or are being dealt with <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

<b>Policy</b>	<b>Source</b>	<b>Has the policy been approved by the Board of Management?</b>
<b>Enrolment policy</b>	Section 15 of the Education Act 1998 obliges schools to have and publish an enrolment policy that respects the principles of equality and parental choice	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Code of behaviour, including anti-bullying policy</b>	Section 23, Education (Welfare) Act 2000, and the 2008 National Educational Welfare Board Guidelines set out regulations and good practice for schools to follow in drawing up and implementing a code of behaviour and an anti-bullying policy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Attendance and participation strategy</b>	Section 22 Education Welfare Act 2000 requires schools to develop a strategy to support high levels of student attendance and participation in school life	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Health and Safety Statement</b>	All schools should have a health and safety statement that is regularly reviewed (see Section 20 Health and Safety Act 2005)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Data protection</b>	School procedures relating to gathering, storing and sharing data on pupils should comply with data protection legislation - Data Protection Act 1988  Data Protection (Amendment Act) 2003	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Special education needs policy</b>	Various pieces of equality and education legislation, especially the Education for Persons with Special Education Needs Act (EPSEN) 2004, require schools to be inclusive of students with special educational needs and to provide for them appropriately using the resources available	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Social, personal and health education(SPHE)/Relationships and</b>	Schools are required by various circulars to provide SPHE in the junior cycle and RSE throughout the school, and to have policies to	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

<b>sexuality education (RSE) policy</b>	support this provision.	
<b>Substance use policy</b>	A Department directive and guidelines issued to schools in 2002 require schools to develop and implement a substance use policy in consultation with parents and students	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Internet acceptable use policy</b>	Schools should have and implement a policy to instruct students on safe and responsible use of the internet	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Child protection policy</b>	Circular 0065/2011 sets out requirements (see above for details of policy and implementation)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Parents as partners in education</b>	Circular M27/91 requests schools to set up a parents' association, and promotes partnership between home and school	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Deployment of special needs assistants</b>	Circular 71/11 allows for SNAs to be deployed flexibly to respond to the needs of schools	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

