

St. Brigid's N.S.
Drumcong
19519W

School Self-Evaluation Report

Evaluation period: *September 2014- June 2015*

Report issue date: *June 2015*

1. Introduction

1.1 The focus of the evaluation

A school self-evaluation of teaching and learning in St. Brigid's N.S. was undertaken during the period September 2014 to June 2015. During the evaluation, teaching and learning in Literacy was evaluated. We analysed evidence gathered from a pupils' literacy questionnaire (all classes), a parents' literacy questionnaire and pupils' oral language questionnaire (3rd-6th classes). All teaching staff analysed and discussed the findings from the questionnaires and completed a SCOT analysis. From discussion it was decided that all teachers would complete an SSE Review based on current practice in teaching and learning oral language skills.

This is a report on the findings of the evaluation.

1.2 School context

St. Brigid's is a mixed rural primary school with a current enrolment of 175 pupils. There are six class teachers, one resource teacher and one learning support teacher based in our school. We also receive 5 hours per week of additional learning support (shared post with a nearby school being the base for post).

2. The findings

Initial Staff discussion

- The literacy attainments of pupils in standardised tests are well above the national norm. The pupils' overall attainment in literacy is high.
- The recent WSE-MLL undertaken in the school found that pupil performance in reading and comprehension skills is good and that very good outcomes were evident in pupils' functional and creative writing skills.
- The whole school approach to the teaching of the writing genres and comprehension strategies is successful with teachers in senior classes observing an improvement in the quality of pupils' written work.
- There are a number of whole school initiatives to promote a positive attitude to literacy among the pupils e.g. Buddy reading, Book Fair, USSR time held weekly, book week activities, Book Clubs.
- There is a willingness among staff to develop teaching practices in line with current best practice and all staff avails of CPD (Continuous Professional Development).
- An extensive range of graded readers have been purchased and guided reading has begun at 1st/2nd class levels using a team-teaching approach.
- Staff agreed that there are good resources to support the teaching of literacy in the school.

SSE Review of Current Practice in teaching Oral Language

- Teachers felt that pupils display positive attitudes to listening and speaking.
- Oral language skills are developed in writing and reading activities as well as across the curriculum. However all teachers felt that a structured whole school approach to the explicit teaching of oral language skills needs to be developed to further support teaching and learning in this area.
- Discrete oral language needs to be timetabled explicitly on our class timetables for 2-3 lessons per week.
- There is a need to develop more structured methods of assessing pupils' oral language skills.
- Pupils abilities to reflect on and self- assess their skills in oral language need to be developed
- It was agreed that parents would benefit from more information on what constitutes good oral language skills for their child's age group.

Pupils' Questionnaire

- 89% of pupils said they enjoyed reading and 85% said they enjoyed being read to.
- 94% of our pupils feel that they are reading well.
- 79% of pupils say they like to write while 76% felt they write well and 72% enjoy sharing their writing with others while 94% enjoy listening to others share their writing.
- 84% of pupils report feeling comfortable speaking in front of their class.
- 22.5% of pupils say they have difficulties describing events/ activities/ hobbies.
- 59% of pupils feel they make mistakes when speaking in front of people they don't know well while only 24% feel they make mistakes when speaking in front of people they know well.
- Small percentages of pupils relate that they discuss books, television programmes, activities etc. at home or in school.

Parents Questionnaire

- 92% of parents report that their child likes to read and 88% feel that their child reads well
- 79% of parents discuss books with their children and 77% of parents report that they often listen to their child reading.
- 77% of parents report that their children like to write.
- 94% of parents felt that their child could express him/herself well and could understand instructions easily and 92% felt that their child could understand an event or story clearly.

3. Summary of school self-evaluation findings

3.1 Our school has **strengths in the following areas:**

- Pupils in St. Brigid's are performing above the national norm in standardised English tests with an overall high achievement.
- Most pupils are performing very well in reading, comprehension and writing skills.
- There is a positive attitude to literacy among pupils.
- There is strong support from parents with high percentages of parents reading to and discussing books with their children and showing understanding of the importance of fostering a positive attitude towards literacy.
- There is good use of whole school approaches to teaching many aspects of literacy e.g. writing, comprehension strategies.

3.2 The following areas **are prioritised for improvement:**

- Developing a structured whole-school approach to teaching and learning oral language skills.
- Using clear assessment of and for learning in the area of oral language skills.
- Developing pupils' abilities at self-assessment of oral language skills.
- Communicating with parents and providing information on what constitutes good oral language skills for their child's age group and providing information on how they might develop their child's oral language skills at home.

4. Legislative and regulatory requirements have been addressed.

