



SANDFORD PARK SCHOOL

Ranelagh, Dublin 6

60640C

School Self-Evaluation Report

Evaluation period: *September 2013 to May 2014*

Report issue date: *May 2014*

School Self Evaluation Report.

1. Introduction

1.1 The focus of the evaluation

A school self-evaluation of teaching and learning in Sandford Park School was undertaken during the period September 2013-May 2014. During the evaluation, teaching and learning of Numeracy across all subjects was evaluated with a focus as follows:

- Numeracy attainment of the current Form One group.

This is a report on the findings of the evaluation.

1.2 School Context

Sandford Park is a co-educational school of 239 students which offers Junior Certificate, Leaving Certificate and Transition Year classes. Up to September 2013, the school was a single sex boys school. Enrolment is increasing. A Whole School Evaluation took place in 2008. There was a Mathematics Subject Inspection in 2005.

A School Self Evaluation core team has been established and the Numeracy link teacher formed a committee to help with the promotion of Numeracy. The PDST tool was used to analyse results in the State Examinations in Mathematics over the last five years. This was done to indicate how we compare to national averages. Our Form One students also completed a Mathematics Competency Test (The PDST Criterion Referenced Test). The students' standardised test results and reports from the primary schools were gathered by the Guidance Counsellor and analysed.

At a staff meeting in September 2012 some background work was done when a primary school principal talked about Numeracy in primary school and the main topics covered in the subject of Mathematics at primary level. One of the challenges we face in Sandford is that we do not have one main feeder school and our Form One cohort has a wide, varying range of mathematical skills.

The staff completed a Numeracy checklist to identify strengths, weaknesses, areas for improvement and priorities for action.

In subject department meetings teachers filled out a questionnaire to highlight the main Numeracy-relevant material in their individual subject areas.

This gathering of data was fed back to staff at a subsequent staff meeting.

2 The Findings

Learner Outcomes:

- The school is performing well above national norms in the State Examinations.
- Over the last five years three out of every four students sit Higher Level Junior Certificate Mathematics within the school
- Our standardised scores for Numeracy for this Form One cohort are above national norms.
- Many Form One students perform well in various (mathematical) strands.
- Certain other strands are causing difficulties eg. 15/47 students struggle with the number strand.

Learner Experiences:

In a questionnaire administered to Form One (47 students) in September 2013:

- 37 students like Mathematics and believe it is relevant to everyday life
- 28 students think they are good at Mathematics.
- 30 students believe that Mathematics will be useful when they leave school.

Teachers' Practice:

- Initially some staff did not necessarily see a direct link between Numeracy and their subject.
- There is awareness of Numeracy among staff and they see themselves as having a role to play in developing Numeracy skills and how it links to their subject department planning. They see themselves as having a role to play in Numeracy.
- Different teaching approaches are used by some subject departments teaching basic mathematical operations.

3. Summary of school self-evaluation findings

3.1 Our school has strengths in the following areas:

- The school is performing above national norms with regard to Mathematics in the State Examinations.
- Many Form One students perform well across all syllabus strands in Mathematics.
- Standardised test scores in Numeracy of our first-year cohort are well above the national norms.

3.2 The following areas are prioritised for improvement:

- An increase in the numbers taking Junior Certificate Higher Level Mathematics.
- A more consistent approach in the teaching of Form One basic computation skills, in particular mathematical problems involving decimals, fractions and percentages.
- An improvement in students' attitudes and dispositions to Mathematics
- The creation of a Numeracy rich environment.
- The development of problem solving abilities among staff and students.

3.3 The following legislative and regulatory requirements need to be addressed:

- A review of the data protection policy
- A review of the enrolment policy in line with the new Admissions Bill
- A review of in-school management structures



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School Improvement Plan

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| <p><i>A 10% improvement in the ability of Form One students who have difficulty with basic computation skills when retested using the CRT test</i></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To administer tests. • To discuss the findings and put in place strategies to improve identified areas for improvement. • To re-administer tests. | <p>Numeracy Link Teacher Mathematics Department</p> | <p>Sept 2013- May 2014</p> | <p>The 10% improvement will be met.</p> | <p>May 2014</p> |
| <p><i>A consistent approach in methodology to be used by staff in teaching: Fractions/Decimals/Percentages</i></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mathematics Department to agree on common approaches using PDST guidelines. • Demonstrations by Mathematics Department on best practice. • Agreement among staff on their implementation | <p>Mathematics Department Whole staff</p> | <p>Sept 2013- May 2014</p> | <p>Students are taught the three identified basic computational skills across all subject areas in a consistent manner</p> <p>At an end of year staff meeting staff will be asked to report on progress in this area.</p> | <p>Sept 2013- May 2014.</p> |
| <p><i>Students' attitude to Mathematics will improve during their first year in the school and they will have a greater appreciation of its everyday use.</i></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers to promote the IMTA (Irish Mathematics Teacher's Association) Form One Mathematics Competition. • To administer a questionnaire. • To celebrate Pi Day. | <p>Mathematics Department</p> | <p>Sept 2013- May 2014</p> | <p>The questionnaire will be re-administered and will show a more positive attitude to Mathematics among Form One students</p> | <p>May 2014 May 2015 May 2016</p> |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To participate in the Manga High competition. • To celebrate Mathematics Week. • To engage in a Numeracy Day • To produce a guide for parents on how they can support the Numeracy Plan at home with their son/daughter. | <p>All Teachers</p> <p>Link Teacher</p> | <p>May 2014</p> | <p>Guide will be sent to parents.</p> | |
| <p><i>Students will see the relevance of Numeracy in all subject areas not just in Mathematics</i></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers to highlight both Numeracy and Literacy in individual subject class plans using N and L notation. • Teachers to identify a 'Numeracy Moment' in their subject. This is to be incorporated explicitly into subject department plans. • To administer a traffic light questionnaire at the end of Form One. | <p>All Teachers</p> <p>Mathematics Department.</p> | <p>Sept 2013- May 2014</p> | <p>The N and L will be visible in class plans</p> <p>Students will have experienced many 'Numeracy Moments'</p> <p>Majority of students will indicate a green light</p> | <p>May 2014</p> <p>May 2015</p> <p>May 2016</p> |

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| <i>Creating a Numeracy rich environment among students:</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To create a Numeracy notice board outside the library.• To display students' work in the Mathematics classrooms.• To display posters with a mathematical theme in Mathematics classrooms | Mathematics Department. | May 2014 | Visibility of Mathematics to increase around the school Visibility of Mathematics to increase in Mathematics classrooms | May 2014 May 2015 May 2016 |
| <i>To improve the awareness of techniques of problem solving among students:</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To demonstrate at a staff meeting the system of Estimate/ Calculate/ Check as identified at the Numeracy Link Day• To incorporate 'Brainsnack' into Mathematics classes | Link Teacher Mathematics Department | Sept 2013- May 2014 | Staff will share examples of this technique in use at a later staff meeting Feedback at the final subject meeting of the year | May 2014 May 2014 May 2015 |

As a parent you can help us by:

- encouraging your son/daughter at Mathematics. Identifying problems and solving them can help your son/daughter to develop mathematics skills. If you see him/her puzzling over something, talk about the problem and try to work out the solution together
- talking about Mathematics in a positive way
- discussing household finances with your son/daughter
- helping with and showing an interest in your son/daughter's Mathematics homework
- using Mathematics with your son/daughter in everyday life eg. weighing and timing in cooking and baking, time/distance/speed when travelling, currency exchange, estimating and measuring quantities in DIY
- using information gathered from reading newspapers, using the internet and watching TV to draw conclusions and make choices that involve numeracy
- demonstrating that Mathematics can be fun and finding ways to enjoy Mathematics through games/sport, jigsaws and puzzles