



SANDFORD PARK SCHOOL

Ranelagh, Dublin 6

60640C

School Self-Evaluation Report

Evaluation period: *September 2014 to May 2015*

Report issue date: *May 2015*

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 2014-May 2015. During the evaluation, teaching and learning of literacy across all subjects was evaluated with a focus as follows:

- Literacy attainment of the current Form One and Form Two groups.

This is a report on the findings of the evaluation.

1.2 School Context

Sandford Park is a co-educational school of 255 students, 188 boys and 67 girls, 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, which included an English inspection.

A School Self Evaluation core team has been established and the literacy link teacher formed a committee to help with the promotion of literacy. An analysis of state examination results in English over the last five years was done to indicate how we compare to national averages. Our Form One and Form Two students also completed a range of standardised tests (CAT3; NGRT). 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 2013 some background work was done when a primary school principal talked about literacy in primary school and the main topics covered in the subject of English 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 literacy skills.

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

This gathering of data was fed back to staff at a staff meeting on Monday, the 11th of May, 2015.

2 The Findings

Learner Outcomes:

- The school is performing above national norms in the State Examinations.
- Over the last five years four out of every five students sit Higher Level Junior Certificate English within the school.
- Over the last five years two out of every three students sit Higher Level Leaving Certificate English within the school.
- Our standardised scores for literacy for this Form One cohort are well above national norms.

Learner Experiences:

In a general literacy questionnaire administered to Form One in September 2014:

- 72% read for enjoyment: 76% read novels; 46% newspapers; 44% long-form online writing; 40% magazines; 36% short stories and 32% comic books.
- 92% were confident readers.
- More than 50% read something that is not a school assignment everyday, and on average reads 14 books.
- 94% believe that they will continue reading after graduating from secondary school.

Teachers' Practice:

- The teaching staff are enthusiastic and committed to literacy; they see themselves as having a role to play in developing literacy skills. There is evidence of shared good practice and resources within subject departments.
- The SEN department plays a central role in identifying students' literacy needs and informs teacher practise.
- It is recognised that teaching practice must focus on increasing student speaking and listening skills, to prioritise oral language skills. Specific methodologies must be implemented to develop oral language skills and ensure the regular practice of those skills.

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 English in the State Examinations.
- Standardised testing of Form One indicates that 80% of them have a reading age above their chronological age.
- Standardised testing of Form Two indicates that 91% of them have a reading age above their chronological age.
- Standardised test scores in Literacy of our first-year cohort are well above the national norms.

3.2 The following areas are prioritised for improvement:

- Increasing student speaking and listening skills, to prioritise oral language skills. Specific teaching of oral language skills and regular practice of these skills.
- Creating a literacy rich environment in the school.
- Continue to improve the standard of vocabulary attainment for all classes.
- Deepening student writing skills, especially mechanics, and presentation.
- Focus on digital literacy.

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

- Homework Policy.
- Healthy Eating Policy.
- Review of in-school management structures.
- A review of Enrolment Policy in line with the Admissions Bill.



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School Improvement Plan

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Literacy school improvement plan

<p>Summary of main strengths as identified in the SSE of May 2015.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We are performing above national norms with regard to English in the State Examinations.• Attainment in English at both Junior and Leaving Certificate is above the national norms.• NGRT standardised testing shows that Form One reading ages are significantly above the national average and also that the improvement in average reading age during the course of first year is significant.• Standardised test scores in literacy of our Form One cohort are well above the national norms.• There is already widespread use of AfL techniques by staff, due to staff CPD.• The teaching staff are enthusiastic and committed to literacy; there is evidence of shared good practice and resources within subject departments.• There are very good pastoral and SEN structures in place.• The school has a well stocked library, with a regularly updated collection.• Extracurricular activities support literacy:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ The school has a strong tradition of debating.○ There are active book and film clubs.○ There are regular theatre outings.
<p>Summary of main areas requiring improvement as identified in the SSE of May 2015.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Creating a literacy rich environment in the school.• Increasing student speaking and listening skills, to prioritise oral language skills. Specific teaching of oral language skills and regular practice of these skills.• Continue to improve the standard of vocabulary attainment for all classes.• Deepening student writing skills, especially mechanics, and presentation.• Focus on digital literacy.

Improvement Targets	Required Actions	Persons responsible	Timeframe for Action	Success Criteria / Measurable Outcomes	Review date
<p>Creating a Literacy rich environment among students.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">and</p> <p>Drop Everything and Read (DEAR) and Book in the Bag, to foster an enjoyment of reading and to increase the number on non-syllabus books being read.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To create a Literacy notice board outside the library. • To display students' work in all classrooms. • To display posters with keywords and other literacy related subject-specific materials. • The development of classroom based, subject-specific libraries. • Students to be surveyed on their interests and a book list to be drawn up for the library. • The use of the 'GoodReads' website for monitoring and encouraging student reading. • Ensure students have a book with them at all times and provide reading opportunities 	<p>Whole school.</p> <p>Individual subject Department and subject teachers.</p>	<p>September 2015 - May 2016</p>	<p>Visibility of Literacy to increase around the school.</p> <p>Visibility of Literacy to increase in all classrooms.</p> <p>Students will have books with them at all times and be active on 'GoodReads'.</p> <p>The development of recommended reading lists.</p> <p>Evidence of an increase in reading age and in the enjoyment of reading.</p>	<p>May 2016</p> <p>May 2017</p>

<p>To increase the percentage of students who are considered to use effective subject specific vocabulary and a clear structure in their assignments by 10% each year over three years.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">and</p> <p>To improve writing skills by prioritising spelling, grammar, punctuation and the presentation of written work through subject planning and teaching.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategies for explicit vocabulary instruction will be shared across all subject areas, for example the pre-teaching of key terminology. The creation of 'word walls' and subject keyword displays will be in all classrooms. A keyword journal/vocabulary notebook will be used by students. Appropriate rubrics will be developed and used, as part of a continued focus on AFL strategies, such as pair work, success criteria and peer marking. Standardised testing will be administered to first and second year students. This test will be based on spelling, punctuation and grammar. 	<p>Whole school CPD.</p> <p>Literacy link teacher.</p> <p>Individual subject departments.</p> <p>English Teachers</p> <p>Subject teachers will self-monitor their rooms and adapt according to class groups and course content.</p>	<p>September 2016 – May 2019</p>	<p>Survey of classroom teachers.</p> <p>Development and improvement of rubrics.</p>	<p>May 2016</p> <p>May 2017</p>
<p>To increase the proportion of first year students who say they feel confident in speaking aloud in public, using speaking and listening strategies, by 10% each year over three years.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integration of speaking and listening into subject lesson plans. Oral presentation to become part of the assessment of all first year students in every subject. Developing of speaking and listening rubrics. 	<p>Whole school CPD.</p> <p>Individual subject departments.</p> <p>Subject teachers</p>	<p>September 2016 – May 2019</p>	<p>Survey of students.</p> <p>Survey of teachers.</p> <p>Oral responses to texts to be assessed through formative feedback of class teachers and peers.</p>	<p>May 2016</p>

To increase the number of Junior cycle students using digital technology to share and present facts and data, both as classwork and homework over three years.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whole school CPD • Focus upon digital technology in subject planning. 	Whole school CPD.	September 2016 – May 2019	Student survey.	May 2016
		Individual subject departments.			Teacher observation.
		Subject teachers.			

We suggest that parents help us achieve these targets in the following ways:

- The school is implementing a **Book in the bag** initiative, so please ensure that your child has a **physical** book with them at all times.
- Be a regular reader yourself and show that you enjoy reading. Have varied books around the house. Encourage your child to read widely.
- Join the library and go regularly. Everyone can have access to good books. Ask the librarian for help.
- In conversation, always try and draw out ideas. Use questions and language that need deeper thought. Words such as *compare, analyse, predict, give examples* may promote conversations.
- Help your child to use precise wording rather than generalisations.
- Discuss television advertisements, documentaries or films. You could talk about the message behind the surface and what the creators are really trying to say or sell. Ask your child to justify their own interpretation of a film, article or text by referring to the film or article and their own knowledge and experience.
- Ask your child to show you his or her plan for getting an assignment done, the ideas and the timing involved. Could your child rehearse oral presentations in front of family members and ask for feedback?
- Glance at homework and ensure that it is neatly presented. Insist that poorly written/presented work should be redone.

The following legislative and regulatory requirements are identified as needing to be addressed:

- Homework Policy.
- Healthy Eating Policy.
- Review of in-school Management structures.
- A review of Enrolment Policy in line with the Admissions Bill.