



LORETO ABBEY SECONDARY SCHOOL
DALKEY,
CO. DUBLIN

60130c

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT SUMMARY
REPORT FOR THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY - LITERACY

Evaluation period: November 2013 – May 2014

Report issue date: 30th May 2014

1. Introduction

Loreto Abbey is an all girls fee-charging post primary school under the trusteeship of the Loreto Education Trust. There are currently 622 students enrolled in the school coming from 25 feed Primary schools in South County Dublin and North Wicklow. Students are grouped in mixed ability classes. The majority of students take Higher levels in most Junior and Leaving Certificate subjects with Ordinary and Foundation levels offered where appropriate. Transition Year is offered as an option since 1988 and the Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme was initiated in September 2013.

As part of our School Self Evaluation process, a School Improvement Plan in the area of Literacy was adopted by the Board and was made available to all parents by email.

1.1 The focus of the Evaluation

As part of our ongoing work in the school, we conducted a school self evaluation of teaching and learning this year. We evaluated literacy in English and how the teaching and learning in other subjects supported the acquisition of literacy skills in First Year. For more information on how the evaluation took place, please see our School Self Evaluation Report which is emailed under separate copy.

2. Summary of School Self Evaluation findings

2.1 Our school has strengths in the following areas:

- Attainment in subjects in all Certificate Examinations are above the national norms
- STEN scores of 1st Year students for reading are above the national norms
- 77% of students enjoy reading for pleasure
- A significant number of teachers give attention to the systematic development of knowledge, skills and literacy in their lessons
- There is a critical mass of teachers using group work and AFL strategies.

2.2 Our school has decided to prioritise the following areas for development:

- To increase the standards in writing and the presentation of work across the curriculum with the implementation of an editing check list to concentrate on spellings, punctuation and grammar.
- To increase the percentage of students who when surveyed state that they are confident in relation to their oral skills.

- To increase the percentage of students who are reading for enjoyment and to increase the student usage of the school library.

The following legislation and regulatory requirements need to be addressed:

- Data Protection Policy to be developed in the 2014/2015 academic year.

2.3 Our school has set the following targets for improvement which are related to pupils' achievement and has identified the following actions which will help in achieving these targets over the next three years:

Improvement Targets	Required Actions	Success Criteria
<p>1. Standards of writing and presentation of work.</p> <p>To increase the percentage of students who check their work for mistakes from 6% in November 2013 to 40% in December 2014 and from 40% in December 2014 to 60% in May 2015 and from 60% in May 2015 to 80% in December 2015.</p> <p>To increase the percentage of students who consider their writing legible and easy to read from 37% in November 2013 to 50% in December 2014 and from 50% in December 2014 to 65% in May 2015 and from 65% in May 2015 to 85% in December 2015.</p>	<p>Editing check list to be agreed by all staff across all subject areas and agreement to monitor the self editing by students of their written work.</p> <hr/> <p>Editing check list and other literacy aids to be included in the student journal.</p> <hr/> <p>Editing check list to be displayed in all classrooms and distributed as book marks.</p> <hr/> <p>Literacy seminar for all years during induction sessions explaining standardised expectations regarding spellings, punctuation, grammar and presentation.</p> <hr/> <p>Reference made to the editing check list by all subject teachers before and after completion of assigned work.</p> <hr/> <p>A stated percentage to be awarded for presentation on all homeworks, project work and examinations.</p> <hr/> <p>Handwriting competition for all Junior Cycle years.</p>	<p>On surveying the 2nd Years in December 2014, 40% will check their work for mistakes increasing to 60% when surveyed in May 2015. This number will rise to 80% when 3rd Years are surveyed in December 2015.</p> <hr/> <p>That on completion of an error analysis test on a sample of written work across the curriculum, the percentage of students deemed in the very good and satisfactory categories will increase by 10% in December 2014, by another 10% in May 2015 and by a further 10% in December 2015. There will be corresponding decreases in the percentages in the unsatisfactory/poor categories.</p> <hr/> <p>On surveying the 2nd Years in December 2014, 50% will consider their writing legible increasing to 65% in May 2015 and increasing to 85% when 3rd Years are surveyed in December 2015.</p>

2. Development & Confidence in Oral Skills

To increase the percentage of students stating that they are confident in relation to their oral skills from 50% in April 2014 to 65% in December 2014, increasing to 75% in May 2015 and 85% in December 2015.

To increase the percentage of students who don't feel that they communicate ideas and experiences fluently and clearly when speaking from 56% in April 2014 to 65% in December 2014, increasing to 70% in May 2015 and 75% in December 2015.

To increase the percentage of students who see themselves as having opportunities to talk about their work in class from 51% in April 2014 to 70% in December 2014 increasing to 80% in May 2015 and increasing again to 90% in December 2015.

- A focus in all lessons on the oral presentation of work through small groups and whole class engagement.
- Oral examinations in subjects where appropriate and a % of assessment grade awarded for the oral presentation work.
- Increased opportunities for students to read aloud in class.
- Increased opportunities for debating and public speaking as co-curricular activities.
- Establishment of formal debating/public speaking clubs for Junior Cycle students with the support of past pupils.
- Encouragement and facilitation of students in Junior Cycle years to attend and participate in Loreto, Mace and Concern Debates and Public Speaking Competitions.
- The Drama Club will be open to 1st & 2nd Year students.

Review of AFL strategies and Inservice on Co-operative Learning strategies for staff.

Use of such strategies throughout the school, e.g. Think, Pair, Share and then Square
 Co-operative reading
 summarising pairs
 Co-operative threesomes
 Working together on a piece of written work
 Jig-saw learning
 Placemats
 Walking debate
 In the Hot Seat
 Academic controversy
 Speed discussion
 Working with peers as critical friends

On surveying 2nd Years in December 2014, 65% of students will state that they are confident in relation to their oral skills increasing to 75% when 3rd Years are surveyed in May 2015 and 85% in December 2015.

On surveying 2nd Years in December 2014, 65% of students will state that they can communicate ideas and experiences fluently and clearly when speaking increasing to 70% in May 2015 and 75% in December 2015.

In surveying the 2nd Years in December 2014, 70% of students will see themselves as having opportunities to talk about their work in class increasing to 80% when surveyed in May 2015 and increasing to 90% when surveyed as 3rd Years in December 2015.

3. Reading for Enjoyment and Increasing Student Usage of the School Library

To increase the percentage of students who are reading for enjoyment from 77% in November 2013 to 80% in December 2014, from 80% in December 2014 to 85% in May 2015 and from 85% in May 2015 to 90% in December 2015.

To increase regularly the percentage of students using the school library from 61% in November 2013 to 65% in December 2014, increasing to 70% in May 2015 and rising again to 75% in December 2015.

Emailing appropriate book lists for all 1st – 4th Years.

“Book in the Bag” initiative
“Drop Everything & Read” initiative
Record of books read during the year retained in the student journal and monitored by the English teachers

All students will be required to read a book during a free period. Subject specific books, where appropriate, will be available.

Library class timetabled for 1st years for one term only as part of English provision.

Book Clubs continue at lunchtime.

Re-ordering of the school library making it an inviting and welcoming space for personal reading.
Re-stocking of library with teen fiction books
Use of the library for Book Clubs

On surveying the 2nd Years in December 2014, 80% will read for enjoyment increasing to 85% in May 2015. This percentage will rise to 85% when 3rd Years are surveyed in December 2015.

On surveying the 2nd Years in December 2014, 80% will read for enjoyment increasing to 85% in May 2015. This percentage will rise to 85% when 3rd Years are surveyed in December 2015.

On surveying the 2nd Years in December 2014, 65% will indicate that they regularly use the school library, increasing to 70% in May 2015 and rising to 75% in December 2015.

**Appendix to Post-primary School Self-Evaluation Report:
legislative and regulatory checklist – reporting to the school community**

Rules and regulations for schools are set out in a number of Education Acts, and in Circulars issued to schools from time to time by the Department of Education and Skills. The list below deals with important areas of school life and tells you what rules and regulations apply to them. You will find the Acts and Circulars mentioned on the Department's website, www.education.ie .	
Which area of school life is involved, and what are the regulations?	Is the school following the regulations fully?
Enrolment of students The Education Act 1998, the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, and Circular M51/93 set out the principles schools should follow in their enrolment policies	√ <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Repeating a year Students may repeat a school year in certain conditions and for particular reasons, such as illness. Conditions are set out in Circular M02/95	√ <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
The school calendar and the school timetable Schools must offer a minimum of 167 school days each year to all year groups. Circular M29/95 sets this down. Schools must offer a minimum school week of 28 hours for all year groups. Circular M29/95 sets this down.	√ <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No √ <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Standardised school year School holidays are now standardised so all post-primary schools have holidays at the same time. The current school holidays circular is 34/2011	√ <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Parent/teacher meetings and staff meetings These meetings have to happen at certain times of the day so as not to interrupt teaching time or inconvenience parents. Circular M58/04 sets these out.	√ <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Implementation of national literacy and numeracy strategy Schools are required to have a whole-school approach to literacy and numeracy development. Parents have an important role to play in this area. See <i>Literacy and Numeracy for Learning and Life</i> , and Circular 25/2012	√ <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Agreement regarding additional time in school for teachers 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 type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Development of school plan All schools are required to have a school plan, giving their mission and vision, policies and priorities for development	√ <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Engagement with school self-evaluation (SSE) process The SSE process requires schools to evaluate how well they are doing, and where they need to improve. The voices of parents and students are very important to this evaluation process. See www.schoolself-evaluation.ie .	√ <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Guidance provision in post-primary schools The Education Act 1998 requires all schools to provide appropriate guidance to students. See Circular 09/2012 for the current arrangements.	√ <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Delivery of CSPE to all junior cycle classes Civic, Social and Political Education is currently a compulsory subject in the junior cycle. All junior cycle students should have one CSPE lesson per week.	√ <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Exemption from the study of Irish Some students may be exempt from studying Irish. See Circular M10/94	√ <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Implementation of child protection procedures The <i>Child Protection Procedures for primary and post-primary schools</i> (2011) 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 type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Implementation of complaints procedure as appropriate Section 28 Education Act 1998 provides for procedures to address complaints about a school	Complaints have been resolved or are being resolved √ <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
Appeal in the case of refusal to enrol students, suspension, and expulsion Section 29 Education Act 1998 provides for an appeal procedure in these cases. The school deals with them first. Where cases are not resolved at school level, an external appeals committee hears the appeal and makes a decision.	Appeals have been dealt with or are being dealt with <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A √ <input type="checkbox"/>

Appendix to School Self-Evaluation report: policy checklist – reporting to the school community

Schools are required to have certain policies in place as part of their permanent school plan. It is good practice for schools to consult with the school community in forming and reviewing many of these policies. The school board of management has to approve and ratify policies, and should ensure that they are reviewed on a regular basis.	
What area of school life does the policy deal with and what is the aim of the policy?	Has the policy been approved by the Board of Management?
Enrolment policy 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 type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Code of behaviour Section 23, Education (Welfare) Act 2000, and the 2008 <i>National Educational Welfare Board Guidelines</i> set out regulations and good practice for schools to follow when drawing up and implementing a code of behaviour. This good practice includes consultation with parents and students.	√ <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Anti-bullying procedures The Department's <i>Anti-bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-primary Schools</i> , 2013, set out the measures that schools are required to have in place.	√ <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Attendance and participation strategy Section 22 Education Welfare Act 2000 requires schools to develop a strategy to support high levels of student attendance and participation in school life. Parents have a very important role and responsibility in this area.	√ <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Health and Safety Statement All schools should have a health and safety statement that is regularly reviewed (see Section 20 Health and Safety Act 2005)	√ <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Data protection School procedures relating to gathering, storing and sharing data on students should comply with data protection legislation - Data Protection Act 1988 and Data Protection (Amendment Act) 2003	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes √ <input type="checkbox"/> No
Special education needs policy Various pieces of equality and education legislation, especially the Education for Persons with Special Educational 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 type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Social, personal and health education (SPHE)/Relationships and sexuality education (RSE) policy Schools are required by various circulars to provide SPHE in the junior cycle and RSE throughout the school, and to have policies to support this provision.	√ <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Substance use policy The National Drugs Strategy and Department guidelines require schools to develop and implement a substance use policy in consultation with parents and students, and other relevant agencies	√ <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Internet acceptable use policy Schools should have and implement a policy to instruct students on safe and responsible use of the internet. Parents have a key role to play in this area. See www.webwise.ie .	√ <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Child protection policy All schools should have a child protection policy that includes the <i>Child Protection Procedures</i> . The policy should be communicated to the whole school community.	√ <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Parents as partners in education It is good practice for schools to have a parents' association, and to promote partnership between home and school. The board of management has an important role in supporting the parents' association.	√ <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Deployment of special needs assistants Circular 71/11 allows for SNAs to be deployed flexibly to respond to the needs of schools and students.	√ <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No