



LORETO ABBEY SECONDARY SCHOOL
DALKEY,
CO. DUBLIN

60130c

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT SUMMARY
REPORT FOR THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY - NUMERACY

Evaluation period: November 2014 – May 2015

Report issue date: September 2015

1. Introduction

Loreto Abbey is an all girls fee charging post-primary school under the trusteeship of the Loreto Education Trust. There are currently 606 students enrolled in the school coming from 25 feeder 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.

1.1 The focus of the Evaluation

A school self-evaluation of teaching and learning was undertaken from November 2014 to May 2015. Numeracy in the school was examined in the 1st Year cohort and how the teaching and learning in other subjects supported the acquisition of numeracy skills was also considered.

This report summarises the strengths that were identified and the areas that have been prioritised for improvement.

2. Summary of School Self Evaluation findings

2.1 Our school has strengths in the following areas:

- There is high uptake and attainment in Junior and Senior Cycle Higher level Maths.
- 87% of students use their Maths skills in other subjects.
- 74% of students are confident solving difficult questions.
- Teachers are aware of the importance of numeracy and view themselves as having a role to play in developing numeracy skills.
- We are a Project Maths Phase 1 school.

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

- To ensure that 1st Year students (2014/2015) improve their competence in a range of mathematical concepts and operations identified by the Criterion Referenced Test. The use of fractions and percentages will be a particular focus.
- To develop student competency in the area of problem solving in particular.

- To promote positive attitudes to numeracy across all year groups and to increase the percentage of students who like the subject.
- To sustain the existing levels of students taking Higher Level Maths papers at Junior Certificate and to sustain or increase the percentage of students taking Leaving Certificate Maths using data from June 2015 as a baseline.

The following legislation and regulatory requirements need to be addressed:

- All legislative and regulatory requirements are now addressed.

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. Competency</p> <p>To increase the proficiency level on the criterion referenced test for the 1st Year cohort (2014/2015) by May 2016. The targets will be reviewed and revised where appropriate for the 2016/2017 academic year.</p>	<p>Administer Criterion Referenced Test to 1st Years 2014/2015</p> <p>Prioritisation of C.R.T. findings by Maths team and S.S.E. Group.</p> <p>Implement the Project Maths Course in 2nd Year 2015/2016 in line with these priorities.</p> <p>Results of tests in all subjects to be returned in the form of a fraction with the requirement that students convert to a percentage, aided by a conversion chart available in all rooms.</p>	<p>Criterion Referenced Test to show students' forward progression</p>

2. Development of Problem Solving Skills

To increase the percentage of 1st Year students (2014/2015) competent in the area of problem solving in particular, from 23%, as evidenced in the CRT tests administered in January 2015 to 40% in May 2016 and with further percentage increases in May 2017.

'Think' (problem solving strategy) introduced as a problem solving rubric in Maths classes.

Problem of the Week Competition extended from a Maths Week activity to an on-going one throughout the year.

Maths Club to have a focus on problem solving.

Supply of Sudoku puzzles available for classroom activity.

Focus on open ended and higher order questions and thinking in all areas.

Focus on investigative process in Science and focus on the design process in Art.

3. The Development of Positive Attitudes to Numeracy

To increase the percentage of students in the 1st Year cohort (2014/2015) who definitely like Maths from 53% when surveyed in 1st Year increasing to 60% when surveyed in May 2016 and increasing further in May 2017.

The encouragement of a "can do" attitude to numeracy in all classes where attempt and effort are valued as much as correct answers.

Maths classrooms to be safe for mistakes.

Exceptionally able students to be provided with opportunities for extension activities to challenge and motivate.

The integration of numeracy moments in all curricular subjects.

The creation of a numeracy rich environment using interactive visuals where possible.

Maths Week to continue and Maths Club to be developed further.

The inclusion of Maths related vocabulary in the Student Journal.

On surveying the 2nd Year students in May 2016, the percentage of students competent in the area of problem solving will have increased to 40% and further increase will be noted when the same cohort are surveyed in 3rd Year.

Attitudinal survey

Listing in subject schemes of numeracy moments

Visual evidence

Programme of events developed and increase in numbers attending Maths Club

4. Numbers taking Junior Certificate and Leaving Certificate Higher Level Maths papers

To sustain the existing levels of students taking Higher Level Maths papers at Junior Certificate and to sustain or increase the percentage of students taking Leaving Certificate Higher level Maths using data from June 2015 as baseline.

The encouragement of a "can do" attitude to numeracy in all classes where attempt and effort are valued as much as correct answers.

Maths classrooms to be safe for mistakes.

Exceptionally able students to be provided with opportunities for extension activities to challenge and motivate.

The integration of numeracy moments in all curricular subjects.

The creation of a numeracy rich environment using interactive visuals where possible.

Maths Week to continue and Maths Club to be developed further.

The inclusion of Maths related vocabulary in the Student Journal.

The percentage of students taking Higher Level Maths at Junior Cert. will be sustained at 80% using data from June 2015 as a baseline.

The percentage of students taking Higher Level Maths at Leaving Cert. will be sustained or increased from 40% using data from June 2015 as a baseline.

**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