



ST ANDREW'S COLLEGE

School Self-Evaluation Report

Evaluation period: August 2014 - 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 St Andrew's College was undertaken during the period, August 2013 to May 2014. During the evaluation, teaching and learning in the following subjects and programmes were evaluated:

- Literacy (in L1 English) and how the teaching and learning in all other subjects support the acquisition of literacy skills were reviewed in Third Year student
- Numeracy and how the teaching and learning in all other subjects support the acquisition of numeracy skills were reviewed in First Year students.

This is a report on the findings of these evaluations.

1.2 School context

St Andrew's College is a fee-paying co-educational secondary school under the trusteeship of St Andrew's College, Dublin Ltd.

Founded originally in 1894 by the Presbyterian community as a boys school, it has grown substantially since it moved to Booterstown Avenue in 1973 and began operating as a co-educational school.

The school is currently at maximum capacity with an enrolment of 999 students. The school has a strong international dimension, with twenty-five percent of its students coming from abroad, which creates a unique multi-cultural learning community.

2. The findings

- Literacy & Students' engagement in learning
- Numeracy

2.1 Literacy

The following areas were prioritised for improvement over three years (2013 – 2015).

Reading for enjoyment

2013

- 23% of students did not read at all for enjoyment
- Target was to decrease to 18%

2015

- 18.5% do not read for enjoyment

Groupwork

2013

- 13% of students get a chance to learn in class in small groups (3 or 4)
- Target was to increase to 18%

2015

- 40.7% of students get a chance to learn in class in small groups (3 or 4)

Library

2013

- 16% of students visited the library between two to three times per week
- Target was to increase to 20%

2015

- 14% of students visited the library between two to three times per week

Non-fiction

2013

- 7% of students read non-fiction
- Target was to increase to 10%

2015

- 23% of students read non-fiction

It was noted that it is a considerable challenge to promote reading for enjoyment to Third Year students who sit their first state examination at the end the academic year.

2.2 Numeracy

The evaluation is based on 2nd year survey.

The feedback from the survey was predominantly positive with:

- 68% of students agreeing with the statement, "I like maths".
- 81% of students agreeing that they are good at mental arithmetic.
- 83% of students expecting to take higher level maths at the Junior Certificate.
- 79% agreeing that maths is important in everyday life.

Questions pertaining to learner experience suggested that more than one fifth (23%) of students would like to try a new problem by themselves before seeing a method from the teacher while a similar number (22%) would prefer to see the problem done one-to-one with the teacher. When asked their preference to working alone or in groups, the replies varied quite evenly:

- On my own (25%)

- In pairs (28%)
- Small groups (20%).

The use of technology appealed to 12% of students and 15% added "in fun ways and real life scenarios".

In the survey it was noted that 66% of students disagreed with the statement "Maths is important in my other subjects". This would be seen as an area which would require some attention from teachers of all subjects.

Other noteworthy information revealed in the survey included;

- 4% of students are using the library as a resource to supplement their progress in areas of numeracy
- 63% of students are not using the internet as a valuable resource for numeracy progression
- 89% of students feel that when receiving help from parents/guardians different methodologies are employed leading to confusion
- Only 10% of students feel that teachers utilize ICT to better numeracy in the classroom

The following recommendations are being made;

- Introduction of a common approach across all subjects for the treatment of fractions, decimals and percentages. This common approach will be produced by the maths department.
- Introduction of coversheet for class tests. The sheet will have an area for literacy, numeracy and AfL. With respect to numeracy, the students will be asked to use the Estimate-Calculate-Check method to attain their score in the exam as a percentage. Teachers will aid the process by marking the exam out of a number other than 100.
- Introduction of a numeracy diary, to address the lack of awareness of numeracy. In the diary students will document moments where the skills associated with numeracy were used in their lessons.
- Promotion of the library as a valuable source of materials which can help with numeracy progression.
- Recommendation to students of suitable websites which can be accessed to gain numeracy understanding
- Production of videos showing best practice methods used in maths lessons to help parents assist their children at home
- Develop an on line resource for parents including; scope and sequence for mathematics; links to useful videos showing best practice methods to develop numeracy key skills.
- Pilot an evening with parents where the key skills which first year pupils will encounter are demonstrated to enable parents to assist their child/children.

3. Summary of school self-evaluation findings

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

3.1.1 Literacy

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

Whole school

- A strong staff commitment to promoting literacy
- A print rich environment
- An excellent ICT structure

Third Year students

- 50.4 % of students read for more than one hour per week
- 53.3% of students read fiction for enjoyment
- 40.7% of students get a chance to learn in class in small groups (3 or 4)
- 13% of students get a chance to learn in class using technology
- 64.4% of students find the library to be helpful
- 20% of students find the library to be helpful or very helpful

3.1.2 Numeracy

- Excellent assistance from the Support for Learning Department
- Good structures to support students
- Students tested showed proficiency in areas such as spatial awareness, order of operation and patterns and sequences.
- A positive attitude towards numeracy amongst First Year students
- Many extracurricular activities which positively enforce numeracy skills (Sci-Fest, BTYS Maths Olympiad, Applied Maths Competition)
- Positive attitude of parents/guardians towards numeracy.

3.2 The following areas are prioritised for improvement:

3.2.1 Literacy

- Promotion of interest in reading among all Junior Cycle students through literacy initiatives.
- Development of students' spelling abilities
- Provide more opportunities for students to learn in class in small groups
- Encourage pre-teaching of key vocabulary
- To introduce further Assessment for Learning (AfL) techniques in order to improve levels of motivation, learning and student engagement.
- To increase use of the College library
- To provide on-going CPD for Literacy Core Team
- To continue to purchase a wide variety of books, magazines and newspapers as well as e-books.

3.2.2 Numeracy

- Increase the number of students using the library as a tool to improve their numeracy from 4% to 15%.
- 63% of students are current not utilising the internet as a means of progressing their numeracy, reduce this to 50%.
- Address the number students who feel parents/guardians use different methodologies to solve problems than those they are taught in school; currently 89% of students are of this opinion.

- Increase use of ICT to immerse students in number rich content from 10% to 15%.
- Adopt a common approach for simple calculations of fractions, decimals and percentages with first year students.
- Develop a number rich environment throughout the school.

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

- *None*

**St. Andrew's College School Improvement Plan
May 2015**

OUR SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN	
<p>Summary of main strengths as identified in last SSE in May 2015</p>	<p>Literacy</p> <p>Whole school</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A strong staff commitment to promoting literacy • A print rich environment • An excellent ICT structure <p>Third Year students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 50.4 % of students read for more than one hour per week • 53.3% of students read fiction for enjoyment • 40.7% of students get a chance to learn in class in small groups (3 or 4) • 13% of students get a chance to learn in class using technology • 64.4% of students find the library to be helpful • 20% of students find the library to be very helpful <p>Numeracy</p> <p>Whole School</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An understanding of the importance of fostering numeracy across curriculum • A numeracy rich environment • An excellent ICT structure • Many extracurricular activities which positively reinforce numeracy skills (including Sci-Fest, BTYS Maths Olympiad, Applied Mathematics Competition, Mathletes, Copper Crawl, Maths Assembly). <p>Second Year students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 67% of the student cohort have a positive attitude to numeracy • 79% of the student cohort believe their parents/guardians to have a positive attitude towards numeracy • 77% of the student cohort feel that similar numeracy methodologies are applied across curriculum by all teachers
<p>Summary of main areas requiring improvement as identified in last SSE:</p>	<p>Literacy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion of interest in reading among all Junior Cycle students through literacy initiatives. • Provide more opportunities for students to learn in class in small groups • Encourage pre-teaching of key vocabulary

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To introduce further Assessment for Learning (AfL) techniques in order to improve levels of motivation, learning and student engagement. • To increase use of the College library • To continue to purchase a wide variety of books, magazines and newspapers as well as e-books. <p>Numeracy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To introduce further Assessment for Learning (AfL) techniques in order to improve levels of motivation, learning and student engagement. • To increase use of the College library • To continue to purchase a wide variety of books, magazines and newspapers as well as e-books. • To increase use of ICT structure by the whole school body. • Whole school numeracy approach extended to include participation of parents and guardians. <p>Specific survey findings grounding the above assertions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 96% of students are either unaware or positively disengage from the school library facility for numeracy progression. • 63% of students do not use the internet as a resource to supplement numeracy understanding and learning • Only 26% of the students surveyed believe ICT to be a benefit in their numeracy endeavours, whilst only 10% felt this was an avenue explored and encouraged by teachers. • 89% of the students believe their parents' numeracy methodologies differ from their own learning experience at school
<p>Improvement targets (related to students' achievement)</p>	<p>Literacy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First Year students to be surveyed in September 2015 • Targets will then be set and communicated to all stakeholders • Targets will relate to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Spelling ability ○ Reading expectations ○ Learning preferences and styles ○ AfL ○ Groupwork and collaboration ○ Use of keywords <p>Numeracy</p> <p>Second Year students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4% of students are using the library as a resource to supplement their progress in areas of numeracy

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Increase this to 15% ● 63% of students are not using the internet as a valuable resource for numeracy progression <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Decrease this to 50% ● 89% of students feel that when receiving help from parents/guardians different methodologies are employed leading to confusion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reduce this to 80% ● Only 10% of students feel that teachers utilise ICT to better numeracy in the classroom <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Increase this to 20%
<p>Required actions (Related to Teaching and Learning that will help to achieve the targets)</p>	<p>Literacy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To develop a spelling and grammar teacher pack for each First Year English Teacher ● To continue to implement cross-curricular Literacy strategies e.g Keywords, Drop Everything and Read, Guess who's reading, Book of the Year etc. ● To further develop AfL strategies ● To encourage participation in Book Club, Writing Club, Grapevine, Debate Club and Spelling Bee Competition ● To share literacy resources with subject coordinators to illustrate examples of good practice and further increase awareness ● To introduce a literacy noticeboard in order to raise awareness of current initiatives ● Subscription to Accelerated Reader - a progress monitoring tool designed to motivate students to practice their reading through success. ● Develop an online resource for parents including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ recommended reading list ○ key First Year vocabulary ○ links to useful videos, blogs, podcasts, etc. ● Pilot a literacy evening with parents and guardians to outline how best they can support and enhance their child's literacy skills <p>Numeracy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Promotion of library as a valuable resource of number rich content ● Demonstration to students of the wealth of resources specifically designed to promote numeracy ● Design videos showing best practice methods to help parents assist their children with homework ● Encourage teachers to utilise ICT in the classroom to engage pupils with number rich material ● Cross curricular numeracy approach adopted and fostered throughout the education and ancillary staff. ● All departments adopting numeracy into their scope and sequence planning. ● Visual displays of numeracy in action on posters and noticeboards

	<p>positioned strategically throughout the College campus.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular promotion of the use of numeracy through competition such as Math-letes and in-house competition and quizzes. • Surveys to be undertaken of education staff and parents/guardians to establish where specific improvements are required and to form the basis of further action plans for improvement. • Develop an online resource for parents including; scope and sequence for mathematics; links to useful videos showing best practice methods to develop numeracy key skills. • Pilot an evening with parents where the key skills which first year pupils will encounter are demonstrated to enable parents to assist their child.
Persons responsible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Headmaster, Deputy Principals, Literacy Link Teacher, Numeracy Link Teacher, Literacy & Numeracy Core Team, Subject Teachers including coordinators of Debate Club, Book Club and Creating Writing Club, College Librarian & PTA.
Timeframe for action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • August 2015 – May 2016
Success criteria/measurable outcomes	<p>Literacy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased numbers of students using library / borrowing books for literacy. • Surveys should show increased membership of relevant clubs promoting literacy in school • Strong student engagement with Afl practices • Feedback from staff through surveys <p>Numeracy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased numbers of students using library / borrowing books for numeracy. • Surveys should demonstrate increased levels of use of numeracy for problem solving in real life situations. • Students, parents and teachers to be surveyed to show effective adoption of methodologies and appreciation of numeracy throughout the school body.
Review date(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May 2016