



COLÁISTE AN SPIORAID NAOIMH

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN FOR LITERACY 2012/13 – 2015/16

COLÁISTE AN SPIORAID NAOIMH SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN (LITERACY)

This school improvement plan forms part of Colaiste an Spioraid Naoimh's overall School Self-Evaluation (SSE) programme. The Colaiste an Spioraid Naoimh SSE programme will examine three inter-related aspects of teaching and learning in the school over a four year period running from 2013 to 2017. In the first year of the programme, we have chosen to evaluate literacy in our school. The second strand will evaluate numeracy while the third strand will examine another aspect of teaching and learning yet to be decided. Initial findings and recommendations are based on data gathered over the period from February 2013 to April 2014. The data are presented as appendices at the back of this document.

This School Improvement Plan for Literacy is made up of three sections:

- A summary of the school's strengths in literacy
- A summary of the areas requiring improvement
- A plan for each area identified as requiring improvement comprising:
 - Improvement targets
 - Action(s) required to meet the target and person(s) responsible
 - Timeframe for action
 - Success criteria/measurable outcomes
 - Review dates

Summary of main strengths as identified in School Self-Evaluation (SSE) of literacy conducted from February to September 2013:

▪ **Reading attainment in 2nd Years was very high with average score being 107.76**

– equivalent to average reading age of above 16 years 8 months (that is, exceeding upper limit of the test)

Source: NGRT version 4A

▪ **Overwhelming majority of students are self-confident readers**

- only 13% regard reading as ‘hard’.

Source: CESC Reading Survey of 2nd Years

▪ **Verbal skills attainment was well above national averages**

- Mean Standard Age Score of 106.4 (against national mean of 100)

Source: CAT testing of all 1st Year students

▪ **Positive attitudes towards reading as a life skill:**

- 61% view it as a skill for life

- 87% describe reading as important

Source: CESC Reading Survey of 2nd Years

▪ **Extensive use of reading skills for utilitarian purposes**

- text messages read by 100%;
- websites read by 87%;
- Facebook 78%;
- newspapers 61%;
- email 61%;
- catalogues 48%

Source: CESC Reading Survey of 2nd Years

▪ **Attainment in Junior Cert English examination above national averages:**

- 67% getting an Honours grade (A, B or C) at higher level as against national figure of 55%

▪ **High proportion of students taking Junior Cert. English at higher level**

- 87% taking higher level (as against national figure of 72%)
- 13% taking ordinary level (as against national figure of 26%)
- 0% taking foundation level (as against national figure of 3%)

Source: Analysis of school's 2012 Junior Cert. exam results

▪ **Strong parental support of school's efforts to promote positive attitudes to literacy:**

- 74% of 2nd year parents believe that the school promotes positive attitudes to literacy either 'quite well' or 'extremely well'

Source: Findings of CSN 2nd Year Parents' Literacy Survey (September 2013)

Summary of main areas requiring improvement as identified in School Self-Evaluation (SSE) of literacy conducted from February to September 2013:

▪ **Negative attitudes towards the school library**

- survey of 2nd year class which hadn't been exposed to regular library use indicated that only 22% liked going to the library

Source: CESC Reading Survey of 2nd Years

▪ **Negative attitudes toward reading for pleasure and towards reading generally:**

- 35% think that reading is boring

Source : CESC Reading Survey of 2nd Years

- 33% of parents say that their son 'only reads when he has to and rarely, if ever, for pleasure'
- 50% of parents say that their son 'generally avoids reading' while a further 3% say he 'detests reading'.

Source: Findings of CSN 2nd Year Parents' Literacy Survey (September 2013)

▪ **Little use of reading skills for pleasure**

- fiction read by just 39%; poetry by 26%; factual books by 22%;
- graphic novels by 17%; plays 13%; encyclopaedias by 9%;
- travel books by 9%; audiobooks by 0%

Source: CESC Reading Survey of 2nd Years

▪ **Standards of written work (especially the mechanics of writing) not in keeping with the standard of reading attainment**

- Average score on a test of mechanics of writing: 47.1%
- Over a quarter of students failed the test of writing mechanics (26.1%)
- Just 7.9% of second years excelled on the test (ie scored at 70 or above)

Source: The 'GOK' test (an in-house test of Grammar, Spelling, Punctuation and Vocabulary administered to all 2nd Years)

▪ **Negative attitudes toward writing for pleasure and towards writing generally:**

- 81% of parents say that their son 'only writes when he has to and rarely, if ever, for pleasure'
- 41% of parents say that their son 'generally avoids writing' while a further 3% say 'he detests writing'

Source: Findings of CSN 2nd Year Parents' Literacy Survey (September 2013)

▪ **Low percentage of students getting the highest grade (A) on Junior Cert. higher level English paper**

- 3% taking scoring an A grade at higher level (as against national figure of 8%)

Source: Analysis of school's 2012 Junior Cert. exam results

▪ **Relatively low use of Assessment for Learning (AfL) strategies by teachers**

- 42.9% of a list of 20 AfL techniques being used by teachers lessons during previous two weeks

Source: Survey of teachers' use of Assessment for Learning techniques (April 2014)

Action Plans for each area identified as requiring improvement:

Area 1 identified as requiring improvement: **Negative attitudes towards the school library**

Improvement targets:

- To increase the percentage of students who by the end of second year like going to the library from 22% to 35%

<i>Action(s) required to meet the target</i>	<i>Person(s) responsible</i>	<i>Timeframe</i>
The library must become a more inviting place for students to visit. Comfortable seating should be purchased to create 'reading corners'	librarian/principal	by June 2014
More computers for on-line reading and research and an up-to-date computer-based cataloguing system should be installed to modernise the library and dispel the image students may have of a library being a drab joyless place	librarian/principal	by September 2013
Old books that are never likely to be read should be removed	librarian	by September 2013
More age appropriate range of books must be purchased (junior fiction in particular must be improved with greater numbers of books written by popular authors)	librarian	ongoing
Displays of students' work and reading-orientated posters should be hung on the walls	librarian	ongoing
Plants should be purchased	librarian/principal	by November 2013
Events such as author readings should be organised periodically	librarian	ongoing

Creative writing and poetry competitions should be organised from time to time	librarian/English teachers	ongoing
Library should become focal point of Reading Week	librarian/English teachers/ all teachers	annually

Success criteria/measurable outcomes:

- Each of the actions listed above will have been completed
- The percentage of students who by the end of second year like going to the library will have increased from 22% to 35% by the end of the 2015-16 school year

Review dates:

- During last term of each school year
- Final review during last term in 2015-16 school year.

Area 2 identified as requiring improvement: **Negative attitudes towards reading for pleasure**

Improvement targets:

- To decrease the percentage of students who think that reading is boring from 35% to 25%

Action required to meet the target:

<i>Action(s) required to meet the target</i>	<i>Person(s) responsible</i>	<i>Timeframe</i>
Ensure that the library becomes an attractive place to visit (see action plan for library above)	librarian	by June 2014
Old books that are never likely to be read should be removed	librarian	by September 2013
More age appropriate range of books must be purchased (junior fiction in particular must be improved with greater numbers of books written by popular authors)	librarian	ongoing
Provide copies of age-appropriate graphic novels and magazines/journals relating to sport, music and other topics of interest to male teenagers	librarian	ongoing
Provide a more 'literacy rich' school environment through the provision of daily newspaper notice-board in cafeteria, through the provision of literacy-themed posters on corridors and in classrooms, through increased use of students' written work on display boards on corridors and in classrooms	principal, deputy-principal, all teachers, librarian	ongoing
Organisation of an annual Reading Week	librarian, English teachers, all teachers	annually
Organising reading-themed fun events such as the existing Readathon event	1 st and 2 nd Year class teachers	ongoing

Encourage subject teachers to begin to put together mini-libraries in their own classrooms which would also include some ‘non-technical’ or other ‘light’ reading material relevant to the subject	all subject teachers	ongoing	
<p>Success criteria/measurable outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each of the actions listed above will have been completed • The percentage of students who think that reading is boring will have decreased from 35% to 25% by the end of the 2015-16 school year <p>Review dates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During last term of each school year • Final review during last term in 2015-16 school year. 			

Area 3 identified as requiring improvement: **Little use of reading skills for pleasure**

Improvement targets:

- To increase the percentage of students who by the end of second year regularly read fiction for pleasure from 39% to 50%

<i>Action(s) required to meet the target</i>	<i>Person(s) responsible</i>	<i>Timeframe</i>
The library must provide a greater range of junior fiction through purchasing of new books and through setting up book donation initiatives through the CSN Parents' Association	librarian/principal	by June 2014
All 1 st and 2 nd Year English classes to visit the library at least once per fortnight	English teachers	from November 2013 onwards
All 1 st and 2 nd Year students to be required to have a book out on loan from the school library at all times	English teachers	from November 2013 onwards
Time for quiet reading to be provided in 1 st and 2 nd Year English classes twice a week for fifteen minutes	English teachers	from November 2013 onwards
Organisation of an annual Reading Week	librarian, English teachers, all teachers	annually

Success criteria/measurable outcomes:

- Each of the actions listed above will have been completed
- The percentage of students who by the end of second year regularly read fiction for pleasure will have increased from 39% to 50% by the end of the 2015-16 school year

Review dates:

- During last term of each school year
- Final review during last term in 2015-16 school year.

Area 4 identified as requiring improvement: **standards of written work (especially the mechanics of writing) not in keeping with the standard of reading attainment**

Improvement targets:

- To increase the average score on the ‘GOK’ test of writing mechanics from 47.1% to 55%
- To reduce the percentage failing the ‘GOK’ test of writing mechanics from 26.1% to 15%
- To increase the percentage excelling (scoring above 70%) on the ‘GOK’ test of writing mechanics from 7.9% to 10%

The ‘GOK’ test (an in-house test of Grammar, Spelling, Punctuation and Vocabulary) to be administered annually at the end of 2nd year.

<i>Action(s) required to meet the target</i>	<i>Person(s) responsible</i>	<i>Timeframe</i>
The OLAM Assessment for Learning (AfL) strategy to be implemented for all formally assessed written work in all 1 st and 2 nd Year classes	all subject teachers	from September 2013 onwards
All 1 st and 2 nd Year students to be given regular written work (including homework) in all subjects	all subject teachers	from September 2013 onwards
All subject teachers to correct aspects of written work using recognised AfL techniques (such as peer correction, use of mechanics checklists etc)	all subject teachers	from November 2013 onwards
English teachers to ensure that opportunities for writing are provided in almost all lessons	English teachers	from November 2013 onwards

Success criteria/measurable outcomes:

- Each of the actions listed above will have been completed
- The average score on the 'GOK' test of writing mechanics as administered at the end of 2nd year will have risen from 47.1% to 55% by the end of the 2015-16 school year
- The percentage of students who by the end of second year fail the 'GOK' test will have decreased from 26.1% to 15% by the end of the 2015-16 school year
- The percentage of students excelling on the 'GOK' test will have increased from 7.9% to 10% by the end of the 2015-16 school year

Review dates:

- During last term of each school year
- Final review during last term in 2015-16 school year.

Area 5 identified as requiring improvement: **negative attitudes toward writing for pleasure and towards writing generally**

Improvement targets:

- To reduce the percentage of parents who say that their son ‘only writes when he has to and rarely, if ever, for pleasure’ from 81% to 70%

<i>Action(s) required to meet the target</i>	<i>Person(s) responsible</i>	<i>Timeframe</i>
To provide opportunities for 1 st and 2 nd year students to engage in creative/informal/fun writing activities – such as: <i>Cloud of Think</i> – the school’s creative writing magazine which is published both in hard copy and on-line <i>Spiorad Signals</i> – the school’s newsletter which is usually published each term	all teachers who are engaged in writing-based activities (most especially <i>Cloud of Think</i> (Mr Cooney) and <i>Spiorad Signals</i> (Ms Moriarty/Mr Malone)	from September 2013 onwards
1 st and 2 nd Year students to be provided with regular opportunities to engage in fun and creative writing activities during lessons such as crosswords, word games, nonsense poetry, whacky writing, anagrams, cloze tests, sequencing exercises, writing instructions, humorous writing (jokes, anecdotes) etc	all teachers but most especially English teachers	from September 2013 onwards
Students to be provided with a writing wall to allow their creative writing to be read by other students	Mr Cooney	from November 2013 onwards

Success criteria/measurable outcomes:

- Each of the actions listed above will have been completed
- The percentage of parents who say that their son 'only writes when he has to and rarely, if ever, for pleasure' will have declined from 81% to 70%

Review dates:

- During last term of each school year
- Final review during last term in 2015-16 school year.

Area 6 identified as requiring improvement: **low percentage of students getting the highest grade (A) on Junior Cert. higher level English paper**

Improvement targets:

- To increase the percentage of students who score an A grade in the higher level Junior Cert/Cycle English exam from 3% to 8% by 2017

<i>Action(s) required to meet the target</i>	<i>Person(s) responsible</i>	<i>Timeframe</i>
Differentiated teaching and learning for high-ability students of English in 2 nd and 3 rd Year: More able students of English to be identified at the end of 1 st Year (through examination of house exam results) and given more challenging work in 2 nd Year and 3 rd Year than that given to the rest of their classmates.	English teachers	from January 2014 onwards
Progress of the high ability students of English identified at the end of 1 st Year to be monitored closely by the co-ordinator of English	The co-ordinator of English (currently Mr O'Kelly)	from September 2014 onwards
Junior Certificate examination results to be analysed each September to check that we are on track to achieve the set improvement target of 8% by 2017	The English Department	annually from 2014

Success criteria/measurable outcomes:

- Each of the actions listed above will have been completed
- The percentage of students who score an A grade in the higher level Junior Cert/Cycle English exam will have increased from 3% to 8%

Review dates:

- Annually on issuing of Junior Cert/Cycle exam results
- Final review during last term in 2015-16 school year.

Area 7 identified as requiring improvement: **relatively low use of Assessment for Learning Techniques by Teachers**

Improvement targets:

- To increase the use of a list of 20 given Assessment for Learning Techniques used regularly by teachers from 42.9% to over 50% by 2017

<i>Action(s) required to meet the target</i>	<i>Person(s) responsible</i>	<i>Timeframe</i>
All teachers to be provided with CPD in the form of explanations/demonstrations of AfL techniques by colleagues and on occasion by outside presenters	Various teachers led by the Literacy and Numeracy team	from September 2014 onwards
Books, booklets, handouts etc to be made available in the staffroom on AfL techniques	Principal, all teachers who have access to such material	from September 2014 onwards

Success criteria/measurable outcomes:

- Each of the actions listed above will have been completed
- The percentage of teachers making regular use of AfL techniques will have increased from 42.9% to 50%

Review dates:

- Annually during final term
- Final review during last term in 2015-16 school year.

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