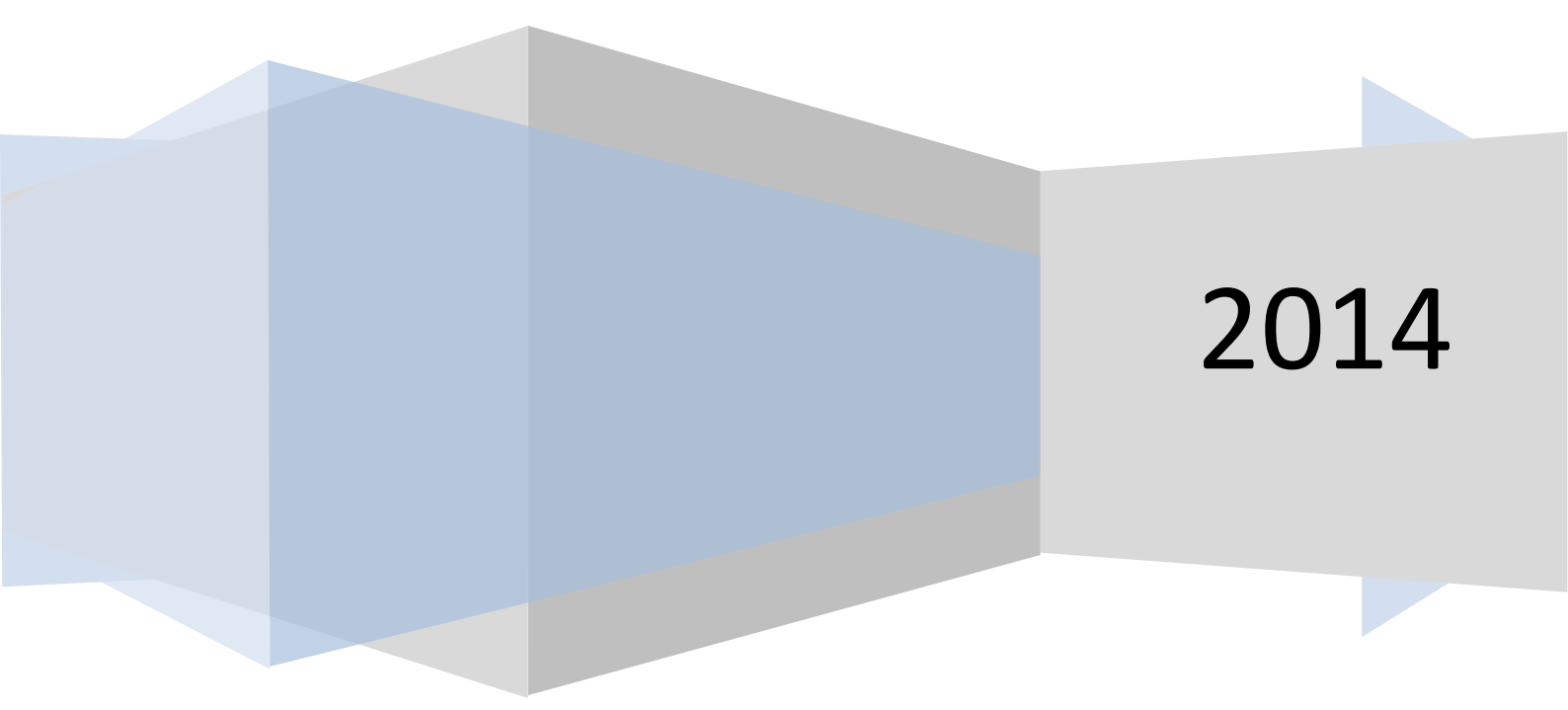


Presentation Senior School

# School Self Evaluation

Numeracy



2014

## School Self Evaluation Report

A school self-evaluation of teaching and learning in Presentation Senior School was undertaken during the period September 2013 – June 2014. During the evaluation the quality of teaching and learning in relation to the following areas were evaluated:

- Shape and Space strand in Mathematics
- Development of problem solving skills in Mathematics

This document presents a report on the findings of the evaluation. It also includes the school improvement plan for numeracy in the 2014-2015 school year.

## Findings

### Theme 1 – Learner Outcomes

#### Attainment of Curriculum Objectives

The overall attainment of the pupils with regard to numeracy is improving in accordance with the learning outcomes of the Primary School Curriculum. Pupils at risk of underachieving are generally attaining well and make good progress. The pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding in numeracy are developing in a progressive way as they move from class level to class level. Pupils enjoy numeracy lessons and are motivated to learn.

In this respect, we believe the school's strengths outweigh its weaknesses.

### Theme 2 – Pupils' Learning Experiences

#### Learning Environment

A safe, stimulating learning environment is provided for the pupils in this school. Classrooms and other sections of the building are organised, clean, and well maintained. Classrooms are appropriately laid out, well-resourced and orderly. All pupils have access to appropriate learning settings and learning environments provide for the needs of the pupils. The school is decorated with displays and centres of interest that celebrate pupils' work and support their learning. Due attention is given to pupil safety during lessons and break times. During lessons, the pupils have access to high quality resources (including ICT) to support their learning and to enable them to be active learners. Teachers are aware of and follow the National Child Protection Guidelines.

In this respect, we believe the school's strengths outweigh its weaknesses.

#### Pupils Engagement in Learning

Pupils at all class levels are enabled to engage actively in their learning and the level of pupil interest and participation is generally high. They are given opportunities to engage in independent learning and collaborative learning. Pupils are challenged in the activities organised for them in the classrooms and other learning settings in the school. They are given as much additional support as possible. Most pupils achieve the expected learning outcomes of lessons.

In this respect, we believe the school's strengths outweigh its weaknesses.

## **Learning to Learn**

The school makes every effort to equip the pupils effectively with the tools and skills they need for learning now and in the future. Pupils are helped to reflect on their work and are involved in monitoring their own progress. The teachers focus effectively on developing the pupils' abilities to communicate, work with others, engage in research, investigate/enquire, experiment, analyse and problem-solve. The pupils are guided in developing the necessary skills to plan, study, organise homework, revise, summarise, present their work to others and answer questions on their work. The pupils are provided with frequent, well-guided access to ICT and are enabled to use it to present and illustrate their work, access, assess and retrieve information, organise and produce information, express ideas, and to develop, support and extend their learning.

In this respect, we believe the school's strengths outweigh its weaknesses.

## **Theme 3 – Teachers' Practice**

### **Preparation for Teaching**

Teachers are well prepared in terms of practical and written planning for the delivery of the curriculum through the lessons they teach. Every effort is made to ensure that expected learning outcomes are clear, curriculum-based and are differentiated as necessary to cater for the learning needs and abilities of all pupils in the classroom. All teachers prepare short-term and long-term plans and use their written plans to guide teaching and learning. Written plans indicate the expected learning outcomes of lessons and the teaching approaches, resources and activities that will facilitate the achievement of the learning outcomes. Necessary and relevant resources, materials and equipment are available for pupils and teachers during the lessons. Teachers plan effectively for how they are going to assess the pupils' learning, taking due account of curriculum guidelines, the NCCA guidelines and Numeracy and Numeracy for Learning and Life - The National Strategy to Improve Numeracy and Numeracy.

In this respect, we believe the school's strengths outweigh its weaknesses.

### **Teaching Approaches**

Teaching is focused, stimulating and relevant to the pupils' learning needs. Numeracy lessons are guided by expected learning outcomes that are linked with the curriculum and shared with the pupils. Expected learning outcomes are achieved during lessons by most pupils. There is systematic development and application of knowledge and skills, including ICT, in numeracy. Attention is also given within numeracy to the development of positive dispositions and attitudes towards learning. Approaches recommended by the curriculum are skilfully applied to teaching and learning in numeracy lessons. These approaches include teacher and pupil questioning, active learning including guided activity and discovery, co-operative/collaborative learning, talk and discussion, environment-based learning and a focus on higher-order thinking and problem solving. Lower and higher order questions are posed during lessons and these stimulate responses from pupils. Assessment for learning is a key feature of classroom practice. Assessment outcomes are recorded and used to inform subsequent lessons and the school improvement plan.

Very good use is made of relevant and necessary resources (including ICT) to support pupils in their learning of numeracy and the development of the specific skills associated with it. The needs and abilities of all pupils are catered for in the course of lessons through effective differentiation of provision.

In this respect, we believe the school's strengths outweigh its weaknesses.

### **Management of Pupils**

The management of pupils during learning and routine activities is effective. A positive code of behaviour including is implemented in a fair and consistent way. Teacher-pupil, pupil-pupil and pupil-teacher interactions are respectful. The teachers have high but realistic expectations of the pupils in relation to their behaviour and learning and they communicate these to them. There is order and structure to the way activities are organised. Appropriate opportunities for active, independent and collaborative learning are provided. The pupil voice is strong in the school. Pupils' contributions and questions are welcomed in the classroom. Their views and opinions are listened to in accordance with their age and maturity and taken into account in the organisation of classroom activities and in the devising of relevant policies. The school is inclusive and treats all pupils equitably and fairly. There is respect for all pupils regardless of their background. Differences across the equality grounds are understood, acknowledged and valued by all staff. Equal learning opportunities are provided for boys and girls. Pupils with special education needs and pupils from minority groups are treated in an inclusive and equitable way.

In this respect, we believe the school displays significant strengths.

### **Assessment**

The quality of assessment is effective in terms of planning, the implementation of assessment approaches and the use and reporting of assessment information. The school has a written policy on assessment. However, a co-ordinated whole school approach to assessment for learning is not evident. A range of assessment approaches including assessment for learning (AfL) and assessment of learning (AoL) is used to evaluate pupils' understanding, progress and achievement of expected learning outcomes in each curriculum area. Pupils are involved in assessing their learning. Pupils' work, including non-written work and homework, is regularly monitored and corrected. Pupils are provided with constructive oral and written feedback on their learning and amend their learning in the light of feedback provided. Standardised tests are administered and their results are communicated to parents in accordance with Department guidelines.

In this respect, we believe the school's strengths outweigh its weaknesses.

## **Progress Made on Previously Identified Targets**

### **Targets set for the previous year**

1. The percentage of children achieving above the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile in the Drumcondra Reading Test will be increased from 41.5% to 45%.
2. The reading age of all children in the 3<sup>rd</sup> classes will be increased by at least 18 months.

The first of the two targets was achieved. It is difficult to establish clearly if the second target was achieved as reading ages for the children in third class were established in September using the Group Reading Test and in May using the Micra-T test.

## **Summary of School Self-Evaluation Findings**

Data collected from the children, parents and teachers provided evidence of the following:

1. The children generally have a positive attitude towards mathematics.
2. Many children find problem solving difficult and require a significant level of support.
3. A clearly defined problem solving strategy should be used in all classes throughout the school.
4. A very significant percentage of the children are consolidating learning in mathematics by using the mathematics programme.
5. The pupils are achieving the highest scores in standardised tests in Number, Data and Algebra. Children scored lowest in the Shape and Space strand and the Measure strand.
6. It is clear from feedback received from teachers that additional maths resources are required in the classrooms.
7. An increased focus on the language of mathematics is required in all classrooms.

## **Mathematics - Curriculum Areas Prioritised for Improvement**

1. Shape and Space Strand
2. Problem Solving Skill

## **School Plan - Legislative and Regulatory Areas to be Addressed**

- Assessment Policy (review)
- Special Educational Needs (Review)
- Health and Safety (Review)

# School Improvement Plan (SIP) for Numeracy

## 2014-2015

Action	Person(s) Responsible	Timeframe
Purchase Maths equipment for each class	Niamh O'Neill in consultation with teachers	Nov 2014
Revision of school's curriculum plan for Mathematics	Niamh O'Neill and members of Maths planning group.	Sept 2014
Maths scheme developed for each class from 3 <sup>rd</sup> – 6 <sup>th</sup>	Niamh O'Neill and members of Maths planning group.	Sept 2014
Use of Mathletics Programme strongly promoted in all classes	All teachers – support available from Niamh.	Ongoing during 2014/2015 school year
Use of RUCSAC problem solving method – RUCSAC display in all classrooms	All teachers	Completed by Sept 2014 – Ongoing use of strategy throughout 2014/2015 School Year.
All teachers provided with a copy of the PDST Shape and Space manual – e-copy uploaded to the school plan available to all staff	All teachers are encouraged to use the manual – support available from Niamh.	Ongoing Sept 2014 – June 2015
Problem of the week implemented in all classrooms – BrainSnack resource available for all teachers.	All teachers and co-ordinated by Niamh	Ongoing Sept 2014 – June 2015
Numicon programme to be implemented in the special class	Caitriona Murphy	Ongoing Sept 2014 – June 2015
Focus on Maths Language- Maths language displayed in all classrooms	All teachers	Ongoing Sept 2014 – June 2015
Maths Day	All teachers and co-ordinated by Niamh	

### Improvement targets

1. 52% of the Shape and Space questions were answered correctly in May 2014. This will increase to 58% in May 2015.
2. 41% of the word problems were answered correctly in May 2014. This will be increased to 47% in May 2015.
3. The average percentile score in the Sigma T test administered in May 2014 was 53.8. This percentile will be increased to 57 in May 2015.

4. Every child will understand the basic maths language for their class standard.
5. Every child will become experienced in using the RUCSAC problem solving strategy in Maths.

**Success Criteria**

1. Improved standardised test results in May 2015.
2. Improved feedback from students, parents/guardians and teachers in relation to learning and teaching in the area of numeracy.