

*Killorglin Community College
Langford Street
Killorglin
County Kerry*

School Roll Number: 70460G

School Self-Evaluation Report

Evaluation period: September 2012 to May 2013

Report issue date: May 20 -2013

School Self-Evaluation Report

1. Introduction

1.1 The focus of the evaluation

A school self-evaluation of teaching and learning in Killorglin Community College was undertaken during the period *September 2012 to May 2013 and subsequently reviewed*. During the evaluation, teaching and learning in the following curriculum areas were evaluated:

- Literacy: Punctuation i.e. Capital Letters, Full Stops, Commas, Question Marks and Exclamation Marks.
- Numeracy: Understanding and using Mathematics Measurement and Arithmetic Tables.
- Other curriculum areas: Staff in-service on the use of Instructional Leadership techniques. Whiteboards installed in each classroom containing (A) The Learning Objectives, (B) Keywords and (C) Homework to be given at the start of each lesson. We hope to look at student engagement as we go forward to include attendance and progression and the role ICT could play in this.

1.2 School context

Killorglin Community College is a co-educational and multi belief secondary school under the governing body of Kerry Education Service (Kerry Education and Training Board). We have a broad cross section of students from the town of Killorglin and the rural hinterland. The school offers a variety of programmes including the Junior Certificate School Programme (JCSP) and the Leaving Certificate Vocational programme (LCVP). We participate in the DEIS and School Completion programmes. A high number of our students have special education needs. (39.3% 2012-2013 cohort) but the school operates in an inclusive and supportive environment within the context of our core principles of Courtesy, Loyalty, Learning and Responsibility. The school had a WSE-MLL in 2011.

Evidence on teaching and learning, with a specific focus on literacy and numeracy, was gathered from a broad range of sources including whole-staff discussion, student and parent surveys and literacy-focused assessments.

2. The findings

In the academic year 2012/13, during an entire staff discussion on teaching and learning, punctuation in literacy and arithmetic tables in numeracy were identified by all as areas in need of improvement. A literacy and numeracy noticeboard was installed in the main foyer, a reading tree was installed in the library and for the first five weeks of the year the entire staff focused on different aspects of literacy and numeracy. The school also got involved with Forbairt at this time and decided to take part in an Action Learning Project (ALN) on Literacy. This project is published in the Action Learning Project Booklet.

These are the findings of work carried out already on literacy and teaching/learning at Killorglin Community College.

1. Entrance tests Results on Literacy (43% of first year students in September 2013 have a reading age of one year less than their chronological age)

2. We gave a short punctuation exercise to all first year students during their Induction Day in August 2013. (53% was the average success rate in this assessment.) We will get the students to repeat this exercise in May 2014 and see if using their punctuation checklist has increased to our target of 58%.
3. Action Learning Network (ALN) Conclusions showed 5.1 errors were evident in every 10 sentences written, based on set punctuation and comprehension criteria. In this we were testing their written and comprehension work.
4. Summer test 2013 checklist on punctuation (findings for first years was an average score of 3.3 out of 5.) These results were based on teachers counting the number of punctuation errors made in 10 sentences and filling an on-line result sheet for each student which had an evaluation scale of 1- 5.
5. We also conducted a Motivation to Read Survey with first year students and parents 2012-2013. This survey showed 66% of students read less than 30 minutes a day outside of their homework.
6. The results of our survey of parents in September 2013 indicated that 66% of students read for less than 30 minutes a day.
7. Other findings include those from the inspectorate evaluation. At Killorglin Community College a committed staff constantly strive to improve literacy levels. The WSE report of April 2011 stated that “the vibrant, enthusiastic and well-motivated teachers provide up-to-date teaching methodologies in a very positive atmosphere that enhances the learning experiences of the students.”
8. The good practices of JCSP are used throughout the school by all teachers and are a focus for teaching and learning.
9. The Accelerated Reading Programme is also very helpful in developing a culture of reading in students and evaluating their reading through book reviews.
10. There is a need to embed good practice in terms of punctuation editing among all staff and students
11. Our ALN project found that while students’ punctuation improved with prescribed pieces of work they reverted back to bad habits in their day to day homework.
12. Teaching and Learning: As a Kerry ETB school we have had 7 members of staff trained in Instructional Leadership Technique over the past number of years. These staff members give feedback, presentations and workshops to the rest of the staff to try to embed improved teaching and learning techniques. In the past we have worked on mind-maps, effective group-work, setting learning objectives, classroom management etc. Higher order questioning using Bloom’s Taxonomy is the focus for 2013/14.
13. The school environment is very positive and teacher classrooms enable print rich environments that are conducive to teaching and learning
14. The school has a broad, balanced curriculum. (WSE 2011)
15. As a staff we have agreed to continue to analyse our students’ performance in State exams and encourage more of our students to attempt the highest levels that they are capable of.

We are tracking our students from their entrance exams right through our house exams to make sure they sit the highest levels possible in the state exams.

16. As a staff we have decided that department plans need to be digitised and include specific timeframes for syllabus completion along with the methodologies and resources used. We want to cut down on paperwork and be able to make changes to plans easily as well as making plans more accessible.
17. There are strong links with parents and the community.(Tidy towns, Business in the Community, Biodiversity project, Scouts etc.)
18. The school atmosphere is very positive and this is aided by our commitment to Restorative Practice. A culture of courtesy and openness exists in the school.

Our Strengths continue to be a committed staff who constantly strive to improve literacy levels. The WSE Report of 2011 called the staff vibrant, enthusiastic and well-motivated. It also praised teachers for providing up to date teaching methodologies in a very positive atmosphere that enhances experiences of the students. The good practices of JCSP are used throughout the school by all teachers and are a focus for teaching and learning. The accelerated reading programme is also very helpful in developing a culture of reading and evaluating students' reading through book reviews. Parents have acknowledged the increased reading that is taking place at home and the increased interest in books. At various staff meetings we have discussed literacy and spoken about developing a reading culture in the school.

Areas for Improvement. There is a need to embed good practice in terms of punctuation editing among all staff and students. Our ALN project found that while students' punctuation improved with prescribed pieces of work they reverted back to old habits in their day to day homework. Our school improvement plan will include specific actions to increase reading among our school population.

Our DEIS plan is a constant evaluative tool for the following areas and in our links with parents and the wider community. (Our current plan helps to set targets and implement actions for improvement.) The following are some of the strategies that are employed to enhance teaching and learning in our school.

- **Literacy** e.g. Author in Residence, Paired Reading, Library upgrade.
- **Numeracy** e.g. Maths Quizzes, Algebra Tiles, Project Maths for Parents.
- **Attainment of curriculum objectives** e.g. Pathfinders Programme, U.C.C Plus Programme.
- **Learning environment** e.g. Improved ICT facilities, use of technology in teaching and Learning.
- **Students' engagement in learning** e.g. Motivation and study skill, Trips to Gaeltacht, Awards structure.
- **Learning to learn** e.g. Input from the Supergeneration and Kerry Life Education.
- **Preparation for teaching** e.g. The placing of Learning Objective notice boards in each class room.
- **Teaching approaches** e.g. One third of the staff trained in Barrie Bennett Instructional Leadership.
- **Management of students** e.g. Students try all subjects in first year before deciding on Junior Cert subjects
- **Assessment** e.g. Regular assessment and student's attendance at parent teacher meetings.

3. Progress made on previously-identified improvement targets in our DEIS plan

- The number of students taking ordinary and higher level papers in State exams has greatly

increased. Foundation level take up is down 8.3% this year.

- The total number of days lost through student absence was reduced by 483 in 2012
- The number of students sitting no exams at higher level Junior Certificate papers was reduced by 15% in 2013
- The recommendations of the 2011 Whole School Evaluation have been fully implemented.

4. Summary of school self-evaluation findings:

4.1 Our school has strengths in the following areas:

- The WSE report of APRIL 2011 stated that “the vibrant, enthusiastic and well-motivated teachers provide up-to-date teaching methodologies in a very positive atmosphere that enhances the learning experiences of the students.”
- The school environment is very positive and teacher classrooms enable rich environments that are conducive to Teaching and Learning.
- The School has a broad, balanced curriculum. (WSE 2011)
- There are strong links with parents and the community.
- The school atmosphere is very positive and is aided by our commitment to Restorative Practice.
- The good practices of JCSP are used throughout the school by all teachers and are a focus of teaching & learning.
- Attainment in the majority of subjects at both JC and LC is increasing steadily.
- The school library has been developed and books are colour coded to reflect different reading abilities.
- There is a critical mass of teachers already using comprehension techniques.
- There is willingness to share good practice.
- Students are getting opportunities to develop oral language (e.g PowerPoints) and many are confident working in pairs and small groups.

4.2 The following areas are prioritised for improvement:

(Specify the aspects of teaching and learning that need to be improved)

- Literacy: There will be an increased expectations in standards of students’ written work across the curriculum. The standard of punctuation and sentence construction needs improvement for all students. (Main focus for 2013-14). For year 2 (2014/15) we have agreed to continue to focus on punctuation but also to increase the amount of time students read for enjoyment. These targets have emerged from the findings of our data so far. Comprehension, note making and group-work strategies are to be developed across **all** subject areas to include at least one on-line tool.
- Numeracy: Arithmetic tables and measurement needs to be taught and embedded in all junior cycle students. (Decision taken by staff in 2013.) This area will be addressed in our numeracy plan.
- Teaching and Learning: Higher order questioning using Bloom’s Taxonomy is the focus for 2013/14.

- As a staff we have decided that department plans need to be digitised and include specific timeframes for syllabus completion along with the methodologies and resources used. We want to cut down on paperwork and be able to make changes to plans easily as well as making plans more accessible.
- As a staff we have agreed to continue to analyse our students' performance in State exams and encourage more of our students to attempt the highest levels that they are capable of. We are tracking our students from their entrance exams right through our house exams to make sure they sit the highest levels possible in the state exams.
- Increase in self and peer assessment. (yr 1)
- Teachers to reflect on their practice in relation to pair/group work using a rubric designed by the core team.
- Student's to self-assess how they work in pairs/groups using a rubric designed by the core team.

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

- A Homework Policy needs to be crafted.
- The implementation of the New Junior Cycle Student Award
- A Social Media Policy needs to be finalised.
- The creation of the new Education and Training Board to replace KES will need attention.
- School Self Evaluation needs continuous monitoring
- New Anti-Bullying Policy

Appendix 1 legislative and regulatory checklist – reporting to the school community

Which area of school life is involved?	What is the relevant legislation, rule or circular?	Is the school fully meeting the requirements of the relevant legislation, rule or circular?
Valid enrolment of students	Sections of the Education Act 1998 and the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, and Circular M51/93 set out the conditions for students to be validly enrolled in a school	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
The school calendar and the school timetable	Circular M29/95 sets down the length of the school year - minimum of 167 days for all year groups Circular M29/95 sets down the length of the school week - minimum of 28 hours for all year groups	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Standardisation of school year	Circular 034/2011 gives the dates for school holidays	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Parent/teacher meetings and staff meetings	Circular M58/04 sets out the arrangements for these meetings	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Implementation of national literacy and numeracy strategy	Circular 25/12 describes the whole-school approach required by the strategy, and the implications for timetabling, assessment and reporting students' progress	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Implementation of 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Development of school plan	Section 21 Education Act 1998 requires all schools to have a school plan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Engagement with school self-evaluation process	Circular 40/2012 outlines the SSE process and what it requires of schools	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Guidance provision in secondary schools and whole-school guidance plan	Circular 09/2012 sets out the current arrangements for guidance planning and provision and refers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

	to Section 9 of the Education Act 1998	
Delivery of CSPE to all junior cycle classes	Circular M12/01 Circular M13/05 set out the required provision for Civic, Social and Political Education	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Exemption from the study of Irish	Circular M10/94 sets out the conditions necessary for students to be exempt from studying Irish	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Implementation of child protection procedures	Circular 65/11 and the Child Protection Guidelines 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 checked="" 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	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Complaints have been resolved or are being resolved <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
Appeals in the case of refusal to enrol students, suspension and expulsion (permanent exclusion)	Section 29 Education Act 1998 provides for appeals procedures in these cases, which are dealt with first of all by the school. Where cases are not resolved at school level, an external appeals committee hears the appeal and makes a decision.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Appeals have been dealt with or are being dealt with <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>

Appendix 2 Policy checklist

Policy	Source	Has the policy been approved by the Board of Management?	If no, indicate aspects to be developed.
Enrolment policy	Section 15(2)(d) of Education Act Equal Status Acts 2000-2011	Yes	
Code of behaviour, including anti-bullying policy	Circular M33/91 NEWB guidelines Section 23, Education Welfare Act 2000 Guidelines on Countering Bullying Behaviour, 1993, Circular M33/91 Equal Status Acts 2000-2011	Yes	
Attendance and participation strategy	Circular M51/93 Section 22, Education Welfare Act 2000	Yes	
Health and Safety Statement	Health and Safety Act 2005 Section 20	Yes	
Data protection	Data Protection Act 1988 Data Protection (Amendment Act) 2003	Yes	
Special education needs policy	Education Act (1998) Equal Status Acts (2000 to 2011), Education (Welfare) Act (2000), Education for Persons with Special Education Needs Act (EPSEN) (2004) Disability Act (2005)	Yes	
Social, personal and health education (SPHE) Relationships and sexuality education (RSE) policy	Circulars 23/2010, M27/08, M11/03, M22/00, M20/96, M4/95	Yes	
Substance use policy	Department of Education and Skills Directive; guidelines issued to schools in 2002	Yes	
Internet acceptable use policy	Department of Education and Skills Directive	Yes	
Child Protection Policy	Circular 006512011	Yes	

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School Self-Evaluation Summary Plan

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School Self Evaluation at Killorglin Community College. (Summary Plan for 2013/2014).

School Context:

Killorglin Community College is situated in the town of Killorglin serving the town and a large rural hinterland. We have approximately 15 primary feeder Schools situated throughout mid-Kerry.

Killorglin Community College is a co-educational and multi belief Secondary School under the governing body of Kerry Education and Training Board (County Kerry Vocational Education Committee). We have a broad cross section of students from the town of Killorglin and the rural hinterland. The school offers a variety of programmes including the J.C.S.P programme and the Leaving Certificate Vocational programme. We participate in the DEIS and School Completion programmes. A high number of our students have special education needs, however the school operates in an inclusive and supportive environment within the context of our core principles of Courtesy, Loyalty, Learning and Responsibility.

School Self Evaluation:

In the academic year 2012/13 the entire staff identified punctuation in literacy and arithmetic tables in numeracy as areas in need of improvement. A literacy and numeracy team was established. A Literacy and Numeracy noticeboard was installed in the main foyer, a reading tree was installed in the library and for the first five weeks the entire staff focused on different aspects of literacy and numeracy. The school also got involved with Forbairt at this time and decided to take part in an Action Learning Project on Literacy. This project is published in the Action Learning Project Booklet which is a publication for projects done throughout the Country.

For the Academic year 2013/14 we decided to concentrate on punctuation. The first year students sat a punctuation test which will be repeated at the end of the year. Each student was given a laminated punctuation checklist which was to be used before handing up any written work in the year ahead. Teachers also were given a laminated checklist and received presentations on punctuation. At the Christmas and summer tests it was agreed to give 5% of marks for punctuation and the students' success in this is also being monitored to check if the intervention is having any effect.

Other initiatives in 2013/14 included an **attitudinal survey** on literacy for parents. Following from this a paired reading programme was put in place. Our library underwent a major overhaul and following from this we got involved in the **Accelerated Reading** Programme. The books in the library are colour coded (to suit specific reading levels) and each week the first year students have a **reading class** after which they complete an on-line book review. Reviews are also placed on the reading tree. There is also a whole school appreciation of literacy and keywords are now emphasised in all subject areas. Other Kerry ETB initiatives such as the **Poetry Aloud** and **Writer in Residence** have helped with literacy among our student population and given our students a broader outlook on developing their oracy, as well as their reading and writing skills. Over the coming two years of self evaluation we will look at supporting other aspects of literary development among our students. This will be informed by data gathered from further surveys, viewing student work as well as analysing results of various tests and exams. Literacy is on the agenda with the implementation of the new **Junior Cycle** and we have had whole school discussions on how the key skills of literacy and numeracy can be promoted and embedded in the coming years. The staff are committed to supporting and promoting literary development and skills in our students.

In **2014/15** we will continue to work on punctuation and work on the amount of time our students read for enjoyment. We will also monitor their academic progression in state exams