

School Self-Evaluation Report

Evaluation: November 2012-June 2013

Report Issue Date: September 2013

School Self-Evaluation Report

1. Introduction

1.1 The Focus of the Evaluation

A school self-evaluation of the teaching and learning in..... was undertaken during the period November 2012 to June 2013. During the evaluation the following curriculum area was evaluated:

- Numeracy: Understanding and using Mathematics

The following sources of evidence were used to compile the findings of this report:

- Teacher Questionnaire
- Parent Questionnaires
- Pupil Questionnaires
- Observations of Mainstream Teachers
- Observations of Learning Support Team
- Staff Collaboration & Discussion

- Standardised Test Results
- Whole-school Plan for Maths
- Review of Maths Resources
- School Policies

This is a report on the findings of the evaluation.

1.2 School Context

Awards:

- We have 3 Green Flags for our work on Litter & Waste, Energy and Water Saving
- We won overall Best School in in Pride of Place in 2012
- We won Best Edible Garden in a School in Meath in Pride of Place in 2013
- We received a Primary Science & Maths Award 2 years in succession in 2011 & 2012
- We also have an Active Schools Flag which was awarded in 2012
- Both our boys and girls football teams have won numerous county titles over the past 20 years and we have a strong link with our local G.A.A. club.

2. The Findings

Preparation for Teaching

All teachers are expected to prepare short-term and long-term plans for Maths. These plans are then used to direct their teaching. Teachers' planning is based on the Maths Curriculum and the School Curriculum Plan. Teachers take time to consider the most appropriate teaching approaches, resources and activities to guide the children towards their learning goals. A catalogue of all maths resources in the school is available in the staff-room. Teachers' planning also takes direction from the information gathered through regular assessment of the children's needs.

Teaching Approaches

Teachers engage in a range of teaching approaches as outlined in the Primary School Curriculum. These include guided discussion, hands-on activities & maths games to consolidate learning. Teachers all report encouraging a 'have a go' attitude in maths class. A variety of collaborative learning models are used in all classes e.g. pair work, group work and whole-class teaching. Mental maths is encouraged across all strands. In conjunction with the self-evaluation process, teachers regularly discuss the improvement of their teaching methodologies at staff meetings and new teaching models are shared by the Maths Link Teacher.

Management of Pupils

Individual classes are organised as appropriate for each maths lesson so that maximum learning takes place. Children may be arranged in friendship groups, ability groups, regular class groups or with maths buddies as the teacher deems appropriate. A varied approach to the grouping of children at maths time is recommended. The teachers consider the ability of each child and have realistic expectations in relation to their learning. Lessons are differentiated according to the varying needs of the children. Maths learning takes place in a structured learning environment.

Assessment

Pupils' work is regularly monitored, discussed and corrected by the class teacher. Pupils are provided with constructive feedback on their learning and are given the support to further develop their mathematical knowledge. Standardised tests are administered and their results are communicated to parents in accordance with Department guidelines. Assessment results are used to guide teachers' planning. Standardised assessments and teacher observation are used to determine the children who are in need of Learning Support.

Attainment of Curriculum Objectives

Standardised test results indicate a high standard of achievement of mathematical objectives in general. Early intervention is encouraged for children who are seen to be challenged in this area. There is general agreement among all staff members of the importance of such intervention.

Individual class teachers and the Learning Support Team work hand-in-hand to develop a plan where a child has particular needs.

Learning Environment

The children are provided with a safe and stimulating learning environment. All teachers have easy access to maths equipment and a catalogue of the maths resources in the school is provided. The environment provides much opportunity for maths learning to take place. There are mathematical activities painted on the school yard, outdoor maths trails have been developed and the buildings and school gardens contain a wealth of mathematical material. All teachers are aware of and follow the school's Child Protection Guidelines.

Pupils' Engagement in Learning

Over 70% of pupils reported that they liked maths and feel that they are good at maths. The participation of all pupils is encouraged through the use of appropriate differentiation methods at all class levels. Pupils are also given regular opportunities to work collaboratively in maths and teachers encourage active pupil engagement in their learning.

3. Summary of the School Self Evaluation Findings

3.1 Our school has strengths in the following areas

- Mental maths is encouraged across the strands
- Children are given opportunities to explain their answers to problems and teachers model appropriate language
- There is an agreed approach to numeral formation and the presentation of written work in maths
- A broad range of assessment tools are being used to monitor pupil progress
- Assessment is used to identify aspects of numeracy that need re-teaching
- 83% of parents reported that their children like maths
- 71% of parents reported that they know their children's strengths in maths
- 60% of parents reported that they know their children's difficulties in maths
- 55% of parents reported that their children rarely have difficulty with maths homework
- 73% of children said that they like maths
- 71% of children said that they feel they are good at maths
- 62% of children reported that they find maths easy

3.2 The following areas are prioritised for improvement:

- Put in place measures to ensure all teachers are familiar with the maths curriculum for their class level
- A specific strategy should be used at whole school level to support the children in problem solving
- Encourage many approaches to solving one problem and further develop a classroom culture of talk and discussion
- Problem solving lessons should include a greater variety of problems e.g. projects & investigations etc.
- Make more problem solving ideas, activities and resources available in the school
- The teaching of measures: Weight, Capacity, Time & Money
- A number of parents suggested that children should do more problem solving & maths project work
- 40% of parents reported that their children sometimes have difficulty with maths homework
- 22% of children reported that they do not like maths

- 19% of children reported that they don't find maths easy

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

- See checklist attached for full details of the review carried out.