

***Scoil Choilm Community National School
Porterstown Road, Clonsilla, Dublin 15.
Roll No: 20241K***

School Self-Evaluation Report

Evaluation period: *April 2014 – May 2015*

Report issue date: 6th October 2015

School Self-Evaluation Report

1. Introduction

1.1 The focus of the evaluation

A school self-evaluation of teaching and learning in Scoil Choilm Community National School was undertaken during the period April 2014 – May 2015. During the evaluation, teaching and learning in the following curriculum area was evaluated:

- **Numeracy**

This is a report on the findings of the evaluation.

1.2 School context

Scoil Choilm CNS opened in 2007 with 87 junior infant pupils. There are now 717 pupils attending the school, ranging from Junior Infants to sixth class. Scoil Choilm CNS is a rapidly developing school in the Dublin 15 area with a very diverse school community.

Scoil Choilm CNS comes under the Patronage of the new model of Community National Schools. The ethos of the school is firmly based on inclusion, equality and partnership in education. Scoil Choilm CNS is a multi-belief school which welcomes pupils of all faiths and none.

During 2014/2015, the area of Numeracy was highlighted as an area of development for SSE. Since mathematics and numeracy is such a broad curriculum area, as a school we decided to bring our focus to the '**Measures strand and the topic of Time**'. We looked at how 'Time' is currently taught and based on whole school staff involvement decided upon some strategies to help teach the topic in a more cohesive and school wide way, deciding upon targets and activities which can be taught at each year level.

2. The findings

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

- Discussions at staff meetings.
- Analysis of quantitative and qualitative data on standardised numeracy tests.
- Review of numeracy lessons taught in each class to see what area of numeracy requires priority development.
- On-Line parent questionnaire.
- Pupil questionnaire.
- Individual lessons taught at each year level.
- Teacher focus groups/year group reflections at class level to review the findings of teaching and learning in Mathematics in Scoil Choilm CNS.

From the information gathering process of our School Self Evaluation, in which teachers, children and parents were involved the following areas were highlighted:

- Questionnaires (1st-6th Class) revealed that across the school, students have a positive attitude towards maths in general. 32.5% of children feel that maths work in school is not difficult. 65% felt that on some occasions maths work was difficult while only 2.5% of children found maths work very difficult. This was based on a sample of 197 children from 1st to 6th class.
- Focus groups in our Infant classes revealed that 96% of children liked maths lessons. This is a very positive reflection on the teaching and learning of maths in our school. This positive attitude could be attributed to the teaching of Ready Set Go Maths in the Infant years.
- 113 parents completed an online questionnaire based on their child's attitude and learning of maths. Of the 113 surveyed 83.5% reported that their children liked doing maths. This is also an encouraging and positive reflection on the teaching and learning of maths in our school.
- In our parent questionnaires a number of parents were concerned about fractions, decimals, percentages and time. Parents also suggested using more real life situations and resources e.g. money, clocks, use of games on the yard.
- In our pupil questionnaire over 19% stated that they do not like lessons on time as they get confused with the analogue clock (quarter past/quarter to), adding and subtracting time was also mentioned as difficult.
- Teachers reported the positive impact of having availability of hands on resources and concrete materials when teaching maths topics, helping to reinforce and consolidate mathematical concepts.
- Teachers feel that there should be more emphasis placed on teaching in the area of '**Time**' and in the Infant classes the teaching of time should be integrated across the curriculum and highlighted naturally over the course of the day e.g. break- time, P.E. day, home-time etc.
- Teachers in the senior school reported issues when converting time on an analogue clock to a digital clock e.g. 20 to 4 = 3:40. Teachers also mentioned that children can find everyday examples of time difficult e.g. 'How long it takes the train to get from A to B?' Teachers mentioned personalised/real life activities as very important if we are to improve pupil knowledge around the topic of time.

3. Progress made on previously-identified improvement targets

N/A this is our first time to view the area of numeracy as part of school self –evaluation.

4. Summary of school self-evaluation findings

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

- Based on our findings from the pupils questionnaires and focus groups there is overall a positive attitude to maths in our school. (*see aforementioned findings*)
- Over 80% of the respondents to our parent questionnaire on maths reported that their children liked doing maths.
- From the parent questionnaires it was clear many parents realise the importance of maths and are keen to support their children in this area e.g. 'I think maths is a great subject, it's everywhere around us', 'I appreciate that my daughter was placed in a maths support group as it will help her develop a liking for the subject', 'Use real life situations like the shop and try to keep the fear of maths at bay'.
- Parents are listening to their children speak about school and what they are doing in all subject areas including maths. There is also a willingness to support their children with maths homework.
- Group planning takes place across the school with a strong emphasis placed on the teaching and learning of all subject areas including maths. Teachers share concrete and on-line resources and each classroom in Scoil Choilm CNS has access to their own set of maths classroom resources. In addition there are shared maths boxes in both schools with concrete resources to reinforce topics such as length, weight, capacity, money etc. All children from 1st to 6th class have access to clocks as part of their classroom maths resources.
- Children are given many opportunities to work with concrete and on-line mathematical materials and resources and from the teacher year group reflections this is seen as necessary and important.
- Maths vocabulary is pre taught.
- A variety of teaching methods are being used in the teaching of maths e.g. team teaching, station teaching and one to one support through LS/Resource teaching.
- Ready Set Go Maths takes place in Junior and Senior Infants. This programme aims to support children with their earliest understanding of number by focusing on four related strands; sorting, relationships & operations, counting and understanding number. The Ready Set Go Maths programme is designed to give a more secure start in early number work in the infant years.
- Maths Week is a big event in Scoil Choilm CNS. Each year a special emphasis is created around mathematics during maths week. The children engage in maths quizzes, maths trails, treasure hunts and puzzles throughout the school. Our school has a numeracy committee which is composed of teachers from the Junior and Senior schools working together. The committee strives to make Maths week interesting, fun and engaging for the pupils in our school.
- The children from 1st to 6th class participate in Manga High an on-line Maths consolidation programme. The children really enjoy and benefit from this experience.

4.2 The following areas are prioritised for improvement:

- More emphases to be placed on the teaching of the language of mathematics and in particular time. Class teachers, EAL and LS teachers will all be involved in language development around the topic of 'Time'.
- 'Aistear' will continue to take place for up to one hour daily in all Junior Infant and Senior Infant classrooms, where children will be given opportunities to engage with time; clocks, timers, a bus/train station drama/role play.
- Each day and in every classroom, the topic of time will form part of discrete oral language lessons.
- In all classes more emphasis will be placed on time in real life situations; bus/train timetables, times of the day e.g. break time, home time etc.
- From senior infants to 6th class there will be an increased focus on the reading and recording of 'Time' (see SIP for ideas)
- The teachers will inform the children that in every classroom in Scoil Choilm CNS we are going to focus on learning and having fun with 'Time' this year (teachers stating the Learning Intention)
- The parents will be informed through the school website/orally and at meetings that numeracy and the topic of 'Time' is our focus for SSE this year.
- During 'Maths Week' Time will form an integral part of the lessons and games taught and played during this week.
- All teachers will focus on displaying time-lines in their classroom, as appropriate to their year group.
- Assessment: teachers will check and assess understanding around the topic of 'Time' each term and as appropriate to their year group content. In the senior classes the conversion of analogue time to digital time should be reviewed fortnightly to ensure understanding.
- At staff meetings teachers from different year groups will present the ways in which they are developing an understanding of 'Time' with their class giving examples of the language and classroom activities used.