



ST AIDAN'S COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL
COOTEHILL
CO CAVAN
81005Q

School Self-Evaluation Report

Evaluation period: **April 2015 to April 2016**

Report issue date: *April 2016*

School Self-Evaluation Report

1. Introduction

1.1 The focus of the evaluation

A school self-evaluation of teaching and learning in St Aidan's Comprehensive School was undertaken during the period April 2014 to April 2015. During the evaluation, teaching and learning in the following subjects and programmes were evaluated:

- Numeracy at Junior and Senior Cycle

This is a report on the findings of the evaluation.

1.2 School context

St Aidan's Comprehensive was officially opened in 1966. It was one for the first three Comprehensive Schools opened in Ireland.

These new Comprehensive Schools were to be co-educational and open to all classes and abilities and were to offer a broad curriculum to match the aptitudes of their students. The curriculum consisted of both academic and practical subjects and every student was to take at least one practical subject.

The aim of St Aidan's Comprehensive school is to provide a nurturing and enriching environment for the academic, moral, spiritual and social education of all students. The ethos is Christian and each individual is respected regardless of religious persuasion.

The school is located in the town of Cootehill and serves two town schools St Michael's and the Darley. It has some 16 feeder schools within its rural catchment area. The school has a student population of 500 students approx. and this is almost evenly divided between boys and girls. The curriculum on offer has developed over the years. The school offers a three year Junior Cycle programme with subject sampling in 1st year. A Transition Year programme is offered with a 70% - 75% take up rate. The school then offers the:

- Traditional 2 year Leaving Certificate Programme (LC)
- The Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme (LCVP)
- The Leaving Certificate Applied Programme (LCA)

The school has at its core a very strong Pastoral Care policy and every year group has a Year Head and every class is assigned a Tutor. The school has an active student council and Parent's Association. There is a full time school Chaplain, Guidance Counsellor and Learning Support team available to students.

The school has a very strong tradition of co-curricular and extra-curricular activities including sport, debating, school trips, home and abroad, Young Scientist, YSI, Youth for Justice etc. Participation is promoted and encouraged to help develop student's confidence, self-esteem and social skills. These activities are central to our pastoral care policy and to our goal of developing leadership qualities within our students. The school is very community based and receives a great deal of support for all its activities from the local business community.

The school has a reputation for leading and responding to change in the field of education. There is a very strong tradition of School Development Planning (SDP) and the school is actively involved in and embedding change and new initiatives such as the Literacy and Numeracy Strategy, Cyberbullying and the Well-being policy documents. The school was one of 48 pilot schools for the development of the new Junior Cycle Framework and is to have a Hearing Impairment Unit from September 2015.

2. The findings

Learner outcomes

The student's standardised test results and report cards from the primary school were gathered by the SEN and the Numeracy Team and analysed. It was noted that the Maths ages attained in their entrance scores. There is no major discrepancy between Verbal and Quantitative Scores.

Leaving Cert and Junior Cert results analysis

While our overall results are in line with National averages, our student uptake of higher level Maths at both Junior Cert and Leaving Cert are below national average.

State examination examiner's reports would state that fractions are an area of difficulty for students.

Learning experience

The school numeracy team prepared a student questionnaire on attitudes to numeracy. This was conducted as an online questionnaire using Survey Monkey and administered to all students. By using an online tool results were instantly collated and analysis began immediately.

74% of students like Maths and 62% aspire to do Higher Level Maths in Junior Cert.

70% of students identify that there is more than one way to solve a problem in Maths and 68% check their answers to make sure they make sense.

75% of students say they understand Maths best when they listen to the teacher and when the teacher explains where they went wrong.

84% of students realise it is linked to pocket money but only 45% identified the link to mobile phones.

Teachers' Practice

90% of Teachers say they are comfortable in dealing with numeracy in their subject and 80% identify Maths as being linked across the curriculum

68% felt students learn Maths better in groups but only 32% of student agreed with this

79% of classes' students work mostly on their own

Parents' views

70% of parents said they enjoyed Maths at school.

80% of parents feel that their children enjoy Maths.

60% of parents would be confident in helping their children with homework.

78% of parents would like their children to do Higher Level Maths.

95% of parents viewed Maths as being essential for other subjects.

3. Progress made on previously-identified targets improvement targets

The Literacy Improvement Plan was in place from Sept 2013 to April 2014. The target was to increase the chronological reading age of our first year students by at least 6 months – **72% improved their chronological reading age by 6 months or more.**

Numeracy – The Numeracy Improvement plan was in place for 2014 – 15. The target was to improve competency in dealing with fractions in Maths and in real life situations more than Progress made after Year 1 more than 60% of students stated they are more comfortable in dealing with fractions.

4. Summary of school self-evaluation findings

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

- Attainment in the majority of subjects at both JC and LC is above the national norm with attainment at LC a real strength.
- School has a very good reputation for improving the outcomes of students with SEN.
- Students want to improve their numeracy with 74% of students like Maths and 62% aspire to do Higher Level Maths in Junior Cert.
- Most teachers are comfortable in dealing with numeracy in their subjects

4.2 The following areas **are prioritised for improvement:**

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

- Improve the standard and use of fractions among students.
- Develop the Maths vocabulary of students.
- Encourage students use mental arithmetic.
- All students to be able to calculate test results as fraction of total and then as percentage
- Improve concept of distance and units used to measure distance
- Engage students in problems solving for enjoyment

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

(Specify the aspects that need to be addressed)

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**Appendix to School Self-Evaluation Report:
legislative and regulatory checklist**

| Issue | Relevant legislation, rule or circular | Is the school fully meeting the requirements of the relevant legislation, rule or circular? | If no, indicate aspects to be developed |
|--|---|--|---|
| Valid enrolment of students | M51/93 | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | |
| Time in school - Length of school year (minimum of 167 days for all year groups) - Length of school week (minimum of 28 hours for all year groups) | Circular M29/95 | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | |
| Standardisation of school year | Circular 034/2011 | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | |
| Arrangements for parent/teacher and staff meetings | Circular M58/04 | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | |
| Implementation of national literacy strategy | Circular 25/12 | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | |
| Implementation of Croke Park agreement regarding additional time requirement | Circular 025/2011 | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | |
| Development of school plan | Section 21 Education Act 1998 | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | |
| Guidance provision in secondary schools | Circular PPT12/05, Education Act 1998 (section 9(c)) | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | |
| Whole-school guidance plan | Section 21 Education Act 1998 | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | |
| Delivery of CSPE to all junior cycle classes | Circular M12/01 Circular M13/05 | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | |
| Exemption from the study of Irish | Circular M10/94 | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | |
| Implementation of revised in-school management structures | Circular M29/02, Circular 21/98, Circular 30/97, Circular 29/97 | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | |
| Limited alleviation on filling posts of | Circular 53/11 | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | |

| Issue | Relevant legislation, rule or circular | Is the school fully meeting the requirements of the relevant legislation, rule or circular? | If no, indicate aspects to be developed | | | | | | | | |
|---|--|--|---|--|--------------------------|---|--------------------------|---|--------------------------|--|--|
| responsibility for school year 2011/12 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Parents as partners in education | Circular M27/91 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Implementation of child protection procedures | <p>Circular 65/11</p> <p>Please provide the following information in relation to child protection</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="438 638 893 1189"> <tr> <td data-bbox="438 638 893 750">▪ Number of cases where a report involving a child in the school was submitted by the DLP to the HSE</td> <td data-bbox="893 638 1074 750" style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="438 750 893 884">▪ Number of cases where a report involving a child in the school was submitted by the DLP to the HSE and the school board of management informed</td> <td data-bbox="893 750 1074 884" style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="438 884 893 1019">▪ Number of cases where the DLP sought advice from the HSE and as a result of this advice, no report was made</td> <td data-bbox="893 884 1074 1019" style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="438 1019 893 1189">▪ Number of cases where the DLP sought advice from the HSE and as a result of this advice, no report was made and the school board of management informed</td> <td data-bbox="893 1019 1074 1189" style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> </table> | ▪ Number of cases where a report involving a child in the school was submitted by the DLP to the HSE | <input type="checkbox"/> | ▪ Number of cases where a report involving a child in the school was submitted by the DLP to the HSE and the school board of management informed | <input type="checkbox"/> | ▪ Number of cases where the DLP sought advice from the HSE and as a result of this advice, no report was made | <input type="checkbox"/> | ▪ Number of cases where the DLP sought advice from the HSE and as a result of this advice, no report was made and the school board of management informed | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | |
| ▪ Number of cases where a report involving a child in the school was submitted by the DLP to the HSE | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | | | | | | | | |
| ▪ Number of cases where a report involving a child in the school was submitted by the DLP to the HSE and the school board of management informed | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | | | | | | | | |
| ▪ Number of cases where the DLP sought advice from the HSE and as a result of this advice, no report was made | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | | | | | | | | |
| ▪ Number of cases where the DLP sought advice from the HSE and as a result of this advice, no report was made and the school board of management informed | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | | | | | | | | |
| Implementation of complaints procedure as appropriate | <p>Section 28 Education Act 1998</p> <p>Please provide the following information in relation to complaints made by parents during this school year</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="438 1344 893 1626"> <tr> <td data-bbox="438 1344 893 1422">▪ Number of formal parental complaints received</td> <td data-bbox="893 1344 1074 1422" style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="438 1422 893 1500">▪ Number of formal complaints processed</td> <td data-bbox="893 1422 1074 1500" style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="438 1500 893 1626">▪ Number of formal complaints not fully processed by the end of this school year</td> <td data-bbox="893 1500 1074 1626" style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> </table> | ▪ Number of formal parental complaints received | <input type="checkbox"/> | ▪ Number of formal complaints processed | <input type="checkbox"/> | ▪ Number of formal complaints not fully processed by the end of this school year | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | | | |
| ▪ Number of formal parental complaints received | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | | | | | | | | |
| ▪ Number of formal complaints processed | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | | | | | | | | |
| ▪ Number of formal complaints not fully processed by the end of this school year | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | | | | | | | | |
| Refusal to enrol | <p>Section 29 Education Act 1998</p> <p>Please provide the following information in relation to appeals taken in accordance with Section 29 against the school during this school year</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="438 1792 893 2040"> <tr> <td data-bbox="438 1792 893 1870">Number of section 29 cases taken against the school</td> <td data-bbox="893 1792 1074 1870" style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="438 1870 893 1948">Number of cases processed at informal stage</td> <td data-bbox="893 1870 1074 1948" style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="438 1948 893 2027">Number of cases heard</td> <td data-bbox="893 1948 1074 2027" style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="438 2027 893 2040">Number of appeals upheld</td> <td data-bbox="893 2027 1074 2040" style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> </table> | Number of section 29 cases taken against the school | <input type="checkbox"/> | Number of cases processed at informal stage | <input type="checkbox"/> | Number of cases heard | <input type="checkbox"/> | Number of appeals upheld | <input type="checkbox"/> | N/A | |
| Number of section 29 cases taken against the school | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | | | | | | | | |
| Number of cases processed at informal stage | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | | | | | | | | |
| Number of cases heard | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | | | | | | | | |
| Number of appeals upheld | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | | | | | | | | |

| Issue | Relevant legislation, rule or circular | | Is the school fully meeting the requirements of the relevant legislation, rule or circular? | If no, indicate aspects to be developed |
|------------------------|---|--|---|---|
| | Number of appeals dismissed | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | | |
| Suspension of students | Section 29 Education Act 1998 Please provide the following information in relation to appeals taken in accordance with Section 29 against the school during this school year | | N/A | |
| | Number of section 29 cases taken against the school | <input type="checkbox"/> | | |
| | Number of cases processed at informal stage | <input type="checkbox"/> | | |
| | Number of cases heard | <input type="checkbox"/> | | |
| | Number of appeals upheld | <input type="checkbox"/> | | |
| Expulsion of students | Section 29 Education Act 1998 Please provide the following information in relation to appeals taken in accordance with Section 29 against the school during this school year | | N/A | |
| | Number of section 29 cases taken against the school | <input type="checkbox"/> | | |
| | Number of cases processed at informal stage | <input type="checkbox"/> | | |
| | Number of cases heard | <input type="checkbox"/> | | |
| | Number of appeals upheld | <input type="checkbox"/> | | |
| | Number of appeals dismissed | <input type="checkbox"/> | | |

Appendix to School Self-Evaluation report: 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 | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | |
| Code of behaviour, including anti-bullying policy ¹ | 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 | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | |
| Attendance and participation strategy ² | Circular M51/93 Section 22, Education Welfare Act 2000 | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | |
| Health and Safety Statement | Health and Safety Act 2005 Section 20 | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | |
| Data protection | Data Protection Act 1988 Data Protection (Amendment Act) 2003 | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | |
| Special education needs policy ³ | Education Act (1998) Equal Status Acts (2000 to 2011), Education (Welfare) Act (2000), Education for Persons with Special Education Needs Act (EPSEN) ⁴ (2004) Disability Act (2005)) | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | |
| Social, personal and health education (SPHE)/Relationships and sexuality education (RSE) policy | Circulars 37/2010, 23/2010, M27/08, M11/03, M22/00, M20/96, M4/95 | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | |
| Substance use policy | Department of Education and Skills Directive; guidelines issued to schools in 2002 | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | |
| Internet acceptable use policy | Department of Education and Skills Directive | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | |
| Child Protection Policy | Circular 0065/2011 | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | |

¹ Under the provisions of the Education (Welfare) Act (2000) (section 23) the school's code of behaviour should conform to the specifications stated.

² Under the provisions of the Education (Welfare) Act (2000) (section 22) the school's attendance strategy should conform with the provisions stipulated.

³ Section 9 of the Education Act (1998) requires a school to "use its available resources" to identify and provide for the educational needs of those "with a disability or other special educational needs."

⁴ The EPSEN Act requires that schools be inclusive of and provide an appropriate education for students with special educational needs.