

School Self-Evaluation (SSE) Report 1

Gorey Educate Together N.S.
School roll number: 20214H
Evaluation period: 2012-2013
Report issue date: 29th May 2013

1. Introduction

1.1 The focus of the evaluation

Curriculum area: **Literacy** [Ref: Department of Education Circular 39/2012]
A review of pupils' writing was already underway as part of a cyclical approach to monitoring the implementation and effectiveness of elements of the School Plan/Plean Scoile. [Ref: School Development Planning Log.]

Evaluation theme: **Learner outcomes** [Ref: Inspectorate Guidelines for Schools]
This is the first theme in the Inspectorate's SSE framework.

1.2 School context

- A multi-denominational school, delivering the national Primary School Curriculum & the Educate Together ethical education curriculum.
- A primary school of choice for families from across north-Wexford and south-Wicklow.
- A *developing/rapidly-developing* school since foundation, with a 1350% increase in enrolment in the period 2005-2012.
- An inclusive school community, where pupils thrive on the support and dedication of many individuals and groups, including (at present): thirteen mainstream classteachers, 11.16 special needs assistants, two learning support & EAL teachers, two special class teachers, 4.8 resource teachers, administrative principal, secretaries, cleaners, caretaker, parent & staff volunteers, Board of Management and Parent Teacher Association.
- A school already committed to continuous improvement, where the *school development planning process* was supplemented by external inspection. E.g. To date, 45% of our teaching staff have had their work evaluated by the Inspectorate of the Department of Education and Skills while working at this school (and a further 35% were evaluated in the 12 months before they joined Gorey Educate Together.)

2. Findings

Main findings

- Reading: standardised reading attainment test results show our pupils performing somewhat above the national norm. [Ref: *Micra-T* results 2011-2012.]
- Writing: teacher interviews, writing samples/portfolios and observations of pupils' knowledge of the Writing Process show some variation in pupils' experience and understanding of this curriculum area across different class levels. [Ref: *Plean Scoile* for English Writing, revised 2012.]

Other findings

- Teacher observation, reflection and discussion indicates that the school's revised approach to Learning Support & Resource Teaching (including early intervention programmes, greater use of cooperative teaching/in-class support and greater collaboration between classteachers and SEN teachers) is better serving the pupils that are at risk of underachieving in literacy. [Ref: *Plean Scoile* for Learning Support & Resource Teaching, 2012.]
- Teacher reflection and discussion of *The 2009 National Assessments of Mathematics and English Reading* (2010) and *The National Strategy to Improve Literacy and Numeracy* (2011) indicates that the school should give more attention to the explicit teaching of comprehension strategies (including higher-order strategies.)

3. Progress made on previously-identified improvement targets

[Not applicable in year 1.]

4. Summary of school self-evaluation findings

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

- Reading: the overall attainment of our pupils is good, in accordance with the expected learning outcomes of the Primary School Curriculum.
- Writing: pupils at some class levels competently and confidently apply the knowledge and skills associated with the expected learning outcomes for this curriculum area.

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

- Writing: pupils' knowledge and understanding of this curriculum area at each class level Junior Infants – 6th class, (ensuring progression as they move from class level to class level.)
- Oral language/reading/writing: pupils' comprehension skills (including higher order comprehension skills)

4.3 The following legislative and regulatory requirements need to be addressed, (see checklist at Appendix overleaf):

- *Data Protection Act 1988 and Data Protection (Amendment Act) 2003*

**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
Time in school - Length of school year - minimum of 183 days - Length of school day 4 hours 40 minutes (infants); 5 hour 40 minutes (1 st -6 th classes)	Circular 11/95	Yes	
Arrangements for parent/ teacher and staff meetings	Circular 14/04	Yes	
Implementation of Croke Park agreement regarding additional time requirement	Circular 0008/2011	Yes	
Standardisation of school year	Circular 034/2011	Yes	
Valid enrolment of pupils	Section 9(1), 15(2) and 23 Education Act 1998 Sections 20 and 21, Education (Welfare) Act 2000 Rules 55, 64, 108 and 123, Rules for National Schools Circular P24/02 Staffing Schedule for current school year	Yes	
Retention of pupils	Rule 64 Rules for National Schools Circular 11/01 Circular 32/03	Yes	
Development of school plan	Section 21, Education Act 1998	Yes	<i>[On-going development and redevelopment]</i>

Appointments to posts of responsibility	Circular 07/03 Circular 053/2011	Yes	
Time for literacy and numeracy - assessing and reporting literacy and numeracy achievement	Circular 0056/11 Initial Steps in the Implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategy	Yes	
Exemption from Irish	Circular 12/96	Yes	
Implementation of child protection procedures	Circular 0065/2011 Please ensure the following in relation to child protection	Yes	<i>[Ref: confidential minutes of Board of Management meetings]</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Number of cases where a report involving a child in the school was submitted by the DLP to the HSE _____ ▪ 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 _____ ▪ Number of cases where the DLP sought advice from the HSE and as a result of this advice, no report was made _____ ▪ 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 _____ 		
Implementation of complaints procedure as appropriate	Complaints Procedures, Section 28 Education Act Primary Boards of Management Information Manual November 2007 Please consider the following in relation to complaints	Yes	<i>[Ref: confidential minutes of Board of Management meetings]</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Number of formal parental complaints received _____ ▪ Number of formal complaints processed _____ ▪ Number of formal complaints not fully processed by the end of this school year _____ 		

Refusal to enrol	Section 29 Education Act 1998		Yes	
	Please provide the following information in relation to appeals taken in accordance with Section 29 against the school during this school year			
	Number of section 29 cases taken against the school	Nil		
	Number of cases processed at informal stage	N/A		
	Number of cases heard	N/A		
	Number of appeals upheld	N/A		
	Number of appeals dismissed	N/A		
Suspension of students	Section 29 Education Act 1998		Yes	
	Please provide the following information in relation to appeals taken in accordance with Section 29 against the school during this school year			
	Number of section 29 cases taken against the school	Nil		
	Number of cases processed at informal stage	N/A		
	Number of cases heard	N/A		
	Number of appeals upheld	N/A		
	Number of appeals dismissed	N/A		
Expulsion of students	Section 29 Education Act 1998		Yes	
	Please provide the following information in relation to appeals taken in accordance with Section 29 against the school during this school year			
	Number of section 29 cases taken against the school	Nil		
	Number of cases processed at informal stage	N/A		
	Number of cases heard	N/A		
	Number of appeals upheld	N/A		
	Number of appeals dismissed	N/A		

Policy	Source	Has policy been approved by the board of management?	If no, indicate aspects to be developed.
Enrolment policy	Section (15)(2)(d) Education Act 1998	Yes	
Code of behaviour ¹ including anti-bullying policy	Circular 20/90 DES Guidelines on Countering Bullying Behaviour 1993 NEWB Guidelines Section 23, Education Welfare Act 2000	Yes	
Attendance and participation strategy ²	Section 22 Education Welfare Act 2000 Equal Status Acts 2000-2011	Yes	
Health and safety statement	Section 20 Health and Safety Act 2005	Yes	
Data protection	Data Protection Act 1988 Data Protection (Amendment Act) 2003	No	<i>School policy to be developed by December 2013 in tandem with the introduction of School Management Software.</i>
Special education needs policy ³	Education Act 1998 Equal Status Acts 2000- 2011 Education (Welfare) Act 2000 Education for Persons with Special Education Needs Act (EPSEN) ⁴ 2004 Disability Act 2005	Yes	
Relationships and sexuality education (RSE) policy	Relationships and Sexuality Education: Policy Guidelines (1997)	Yes	
Child protection policy	Circular 0065/2011	Yes	
Parents as partners	Circular 24/91	Yes	
Public service (Croke Park) agreement – special needs assistants	Circular 71/11	Yes	

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 pupils with special educational needs.