# Ratoath Senior National School

# Our Self-Evaluation Report and School Improvement Plan 2021-2022

# 1. Introduction

This document records the outcomes of our last Self-Evaluation Report, the findings of this self-evaluation, and our current school improvement plan, including targets and the actions we will implement to meet the targets.

* 1. **Outcomes of our last improvement plans from 2019 to 2020**
* **Building relationships and community**

Building relational practices where staff and pupils work to understand how individuals in the classroom or the school community relate to one another, using affective language.

* **Developing social and emotional capacity**

Using circles to facilitate pupil and teacher connectivity – community building circles, thereby developing responsibility for self and others and learning about accountability.

* **Developing school wide/prevention practices**

Developing routines, creating classroom values, thereby building community, working together addressing school-wide and classroom issues.

**2. Step 1: Identify Focus**

We undertook self-evaluation of teaching and learning during the period 2019 - 2020 and now will continue the process of School Self-Evaluation. Due to Covid-19 the School Self-Evaluation process was temporarily paused for 2020-2021. During the 2019-2020 evaluation, the focus of the SSE report was on our teaching and learning and leadership and management in developing the area of Restorative Practice throughout the school. The focus of this SSE report is on our teaching and learning and leadership and management regarding the introduction of new resources in both Gaeilge and English to support the Primary Language Curriculum. The purpose of this SSE is to support teachers in achieving the aims of the Primary Language Curriculum (2019) and to support all of our pupils in their learning.

The aims of the curriculum are presented in three groups and are summarised as follows:

Children and Their Lives

The Primary Language Curriculum aims to support teachers to:

* Enable children to build on prior knowledge to enhance their language learning.
* Encourage children to embrace, be proud of and to share their heritage
* Recognise the different experiences, abilities and language styles of children.

Children’s Communications and Connections with Others

The Primary Language Curriculum aims to support teachers to:

* Nurture appreciation and understanding of language and communication in a variety of contexts and situations.
* Enable communication in the languages of their school.
* Enable engagement with a wide range of linguistic and communicative experiences with peers and adults.

Children’s Language Learning and Development

The Primary Language Curriculum aims to support teachers to:

* Foster a lifelong love of language learning.
* Foster an appreciation of other languages and cultures.
* Encourage children to engage with and think critically about spoken, gesticulated, written and multimodal texts.
* Help develop children’s understanding of the content and structure of languages.

The above aims were used to formulate questions which we as a staff reflected upon in identifying what language resources are working well in our school and what language resources need to be improved.

1. What aspects of our current resources are highly effective? What are we doing well?
2. How can we work towards improving our resources to provide for the aims of the Primary Language Curriculum?
3. What areas need improvement and development? What are the areas for growth?
4. Where and what can we do to make the improvements happen?
5. When examining new resources, the following questions will be asked:

* Are the learning outcomes clear?
* Are the interests, abilities and needs of the children catered for?
* Is new learning taking place?
* Is differentiation catered for - to challenge and support?
* Is assessment built into the programme?
* Are there opportunities for continuity and progression?
* Is digital literacy catered for?
* Are the children being provided with opportunities to develop communicative relationships?
* Are the children being provided with opportunities to explore and use language?
* Are a variety of writing genres evident?
* Are a variety of reading genres evident?
* Is there an easy to follow planning tool?

We looked at the following aspects of teaching and learning and leadership and management from the perspective of identifying what language resources are working well in our school and what language resources need to be improved in order to implement the requirements of the Primary Language Curriculum:

**Pupils**

* Learner Outcomes – Pupils enjoy their learning, are motivated to learn and expect to achieve as learners
* Learner Outcomes – Pupils demonstrate the knowledge, skills and understanding required by the primary curriculum
* Learner Experiences – Pupils engage purposefully in meaningful learning activities
* Learner Experiences - Pupils reflect on their progress as learners and develop a sense of ownership of and responsibility for their learning

**Teachers**

* Teachers’ Individual Practice – The teacher selects and uses planning, preparation and assessment practices that progress pupils’ learning
* Teachers’ Individual Practice – The teacher selects and uses teaching approaches appropriate to the learning objective and to pupils’ learning needs
* Teachers’ Individual Practice –The teacher responds to individual learning needs and differentiates teaching and learning activities as necessary
* Teachers’ Collective/ Collaborative Practice – Teachers work together to devise learning opportunities for pupils across and beyond the curriculum
* Teachers’ Collective/ Collaborative Practice – Teachers collectively develop and implement consistent and dependable formative and summative assessment practices
* Teachers’ Collective/ Collaborative Practice – Teachers contribute to building whole-staff capacity by sharing their expertise.

**School Leaders**

* Leading learning and Teaching – Promote a culture of improvement, collaboration, innovation and creativity in learning, teaching and assessment
* Leading learning and Teaching – Foster a commitment to inclusion, equality of opportunity and the holistic development of each pupil
* Leading learning and Teaching – Manage the planning and implementation of the curriculum
* Leading learning and Teaching – Foster teacher professional development that enriches teachers’ and pupils’ learning
* Managing the Organisation – Establish an orderly, secure and healthy learning environment, and maintain it through effective communication
* Leading School Development – Communicate the guiding vision for the school and lead its realisation
* Leading School Development – Manage, lead and mediate change to respond to the evolving needs of the school and to changes in education
* Developing Leadership Capacity – Empower staff to take on and carry out leadership roles

We decided that our focus would be taken from the Teaching and Learning Dimension, Domain 1, Learner Outcomes, Standard Number 1.

**Step 2: Gather Evidence**

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| **Domain** | **Standard** | **Questions** | **Methods to Gather Evidence** |
| Learner Outcomes | Pupils demonstrate the knowledge, skills and understanding required by the primary curriculum | With respect to the resources used to implement the Primary Language Curriculum the following statements were discussed:   1. Pupils’ enjoyment in learning is evident and is often linked to a sense of making progress and of achievement. Their engagement with learning contributes to their sense of well-being. 2. Pupils are motivated to learn, and this is often linked to having a clear sense of learning outcomes. 3. Pupils see themselves as learners and demonstrate this in their positive approach to classwork and homework. | * Reflection sheets to be completed by all teachers * Professional collaboration review * Teachers’ focus groups * Questioning and discussion with pupils * Whole school discussion * Looking at our School 2016 – a quality Framework for Primary Schools |

**Step 3: Analyse and Make Judgements**

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| **Statements of Effective Practice** | **How well are we doing?** | **What are the strengths?** | **What are the areas for improvement and growth?** |
| 1. Pupils’ enjoyment in learning is evident and is often linked to a sense of making progress and of achievement. Their engagement with learning contributes to their sense of well-being. | It was established that pupils’ enjoyment in learning is evident. There is evidence that all children are making progress. All children are encouraged to progress and achieve. All achievements are acknowledged. As a school there is a very clear understanding of the importance of well-being and of how closely well-being is linked to academic progress and achievement. However, there is a clear understanding amongst all staff that many of the resources being currently used in the teaching of language are outdated and this needs to be addressed. | Our strengths are that the teachers are very keen to work together to achieve this change and they are very interested in putting the time into investigating new resources. This will benefit the children and also the teachers as they will be to the fore using the most up-to-date materials available at this time. | As a senior school our progress in introducing the Primary Language Curriculum was severely hampered by Covid-19. However, we are now able to reflect clearly on our exact needs having learnt from the P.L.C webinars, training, and the experiences of other schools. We need to examine carefully the Primary Language Curriculum resources that are available for schools and select those resources which we believe most reflect the learning needs of our pupils and will enhance the teaching and learning experience for all. As a school we have to respond professionally to the needs of all of our pupils |
| 1. Pupils are motivated to learn, and this is often linked to having a clear sense of learning outcomes. | The children in Ratoath Senior National School are very motivated and interested in learning. They have a clear sense of what it is they are learning and what is expected of them. | Our strengths are that the teachers, when planning their lessons, always consider the learning outcomes. Learning outcomes are central to all lesson planning. A range of approaches are used in teaching which provides the children with a very clear sense of the learning outcomes. | With the introduction of the Primary Language Curriculum, further focus on learning outcomes will enable teachers to use a range of appropriate pedagogical approaches to support children on their learning journey. The introduction of new resources will further support the teachers in clearly identifying the range of possible learning outcomes. |
| 1. Pupils see themselves as learners and demonstrate this in their positive approach to classwork and homework. | The pupils in Ratoath Senior National School clearly see themselves as learners and consistently demonstrate this in their approach to classwork and homework. | Our strengths are that the children are very keen to learn. This is fostered, in the first instance, by their families and then further nurtured and further developed in school by their teachers. Support from family is vital in developing a positive approach to schoolwork and homework. Consistency from the class teacher is vital in ensuring that it is always completed in conjunction with classwork. Having good home school links is very important and we are very fortunate to have that in Ratoath Senor National School. | With the continued introduction of the Primary Language curriculum it will be necessary to have feedback from the children and teachers with regards to the new resources so that a continued positive approach to classwork and homework is maintained. If the children enjoy the programmes selected, they will enjoy working with the new resources. |

**Step 4: Write and Share Report and Improvement Plan**

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| **School Improvement Plan 2021-2022** | |
| **Improvement Plan**  **Co-ordinator** | **Loraine Butler** |
| **Targets** | **Target 1**  Teachers will investigate the approaches and emphases of the Primary Language Curriculum. They will become familiar with the strands, elements, progression continua and learning outcomes for English and Gaeilge, in particular examining resources which will best achieve these areas of importance.  **Target 2**  Teachers will be able to identify the elements of language teaching that are working well and are consistent with the requirements of the new curriculum and the elements that need to be developed using samples of available resources with a view to selecting a new programme for the school.  **Target 3**  The teachers will examine current language teaching and the pupils’ language learning in English and Gaeilge and select, based on their findings and discussion, the best programme that will suit the needs of all of our pupils. |

**Step 5: Put Improvement Plan into Action**

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| **ACTIONS**  **Actions for Target One**   1. The teachers will reflect on the strands, elements, progression continua and learning outcomes for English and Gaeilge in the Primary Language Curriculum at our staff meeting in August. 2. At each class level teachers will be asked to take a leadership role in steering the work to be done over the course of this academic year. One teacher will be asked to take charge of English and another teacher will take charge of Gaeilge 3. The ISM team will take a role in guiding and supporting teachers at each class level. 4. The publishing companies will be contacted by Loraine Butler to supply class teachers with all available resources. 5. Christine Dillon (Rang VI) is going to trial the Over the Moon series in her class. 6. Teachers have been given a ‘Template for Review of Gaeilge and English’ which will provide for an accurate review of the resources.   **Actions for Target Two**   1. By January the teachers will have identified what is working well so far and what is not working well.      1. This findings of the teachers’ review will be discussed at our staff meeting in February. 2. Resources that are deemed unsuitable will be discounted. 3. The teachers will continue to work on the remaining programmes with the clear focus of selecting the most appropriate programme for the pupils in the school.   **Actions for Target Three**   1. A decision on the most appropriate programmes for both Gaeilge and English will be made after Easter.      1. This decision will be based on the findings of the teachers and will involve discussions with the children and pupil feedback. | **WHO**  All teachers  All teachers  ISM Team  Principal  All teachers  All teachers  All teachers  All teachers  All teachers  All teachers  All teachers  Pupils and teachers |

**Step 6: Monitor Actions and Evaluate Impact**

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| **Monitoring Strategies for Actions**  **Action 1**: Loraine Butler will lead the discussion in relation to the updating of the existing Gaeilge and English programmes at the August 2021 staff meeting.  **Action 2:** Staff members will be asked to lead the work.  **Action 3**: The ISM Team will be asked to support the teachers.  **Action 4**: At each planning meeting, time will be allocated to discussion using the template provided.  **Action 5**: The principal, Loraine Butler, will check with teachers regularly to see what progress is being made.  **Action 6**: Christine Dillon will update the principal regularly with regards to her work using Over the Moon.  **Action 7**: Feedback will be taken from staff members after Christmas regarding the effectiveness of the programmes in achieving the aims and objectives of the Primary Language Curriculum.  **Action 8:** Feedback will be taken from staff members with a view to discarding what is unsuitable.  **Action 9**: Feedback will be taken from staff members as to how the children are engaging with the various programmes.  **Action 10**: Feedback will be taken from staff members after Easter with a view to a decision being made on what programmes in both Gaeilge and English will be used in the school in the coming years. |

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| **Evaluation Approaches**  **Target 1:** In August 2021, the staff will discuss the changing of the current language programmes in the school in order to ensure that the aims and objectives of the Primary Language Curriculum will be fully implemented throughout the school.  **Target 2**: In February 2021, the staff will examine the completed Template for Review of Gaeilge and English Textbooks. A decision will be made at that point as to which resources are unsuitable and which resources merit further examination.  **Target 3**: In April/May 2021, the staff will decide which resources are to be selected to support the implementation of the Primary Language Curriculum in the coming years. | **Evaluation Tools**   * Focus groups * Staff meetings * In-school management meetings * Template for Review of Gaeilge and English Textbooks |
| **Necessary Adjustments Throughout Implementation Process**  Regular reflection at staff meetings and at the monthly planning meetings regarding the review of resources will be required. Relevant adjustments will be made based on levels of satisfaction and dissatisfaction of the various programmes and resources. | |

**Template for Review of Gaeilge and English Textbooks**

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| **Gaeilge** | **Béarla** |
| Teanga ó bhéal  Léitheoireacht  Scríbhneoireacht | Oral Language  Reading  Writing |

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|  | **Folens – Abair Liom** | **C.J Fallon – Léigh sa Bhaile** | **Educational Company – Bua na Cainte** | **Folens – Starlight** | **Gill Education – Over the Moon** | **C.J Fallon – Rainbow** |
| 1. Are the learning outcomes clear? |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Are the interests, abilities and needs of the children catered for? |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Is new learning taking place? |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Is differentiation catered for- to challenge and support? |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Is assessment built into the programme? |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Are there opportunities for continuity and progression? |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Is digital literacy catered for? |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Are the children being provided with opportunities to develop communicative relationships? |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Are the children being provided with opportunities to explore and use language? |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Are a variety of writing genres evident? |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Are a variety of reading genres evident? |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Is there an easy to follow planning tool? |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Textbook Recommendation/Rating   1, 2, 3 in order of preference, 1 being your least favourite. |  |  |  |  |  |  |

Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Class Level: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Please forward this template to your class level co-ordinator by January 10th 2022.**

**Co-ordinators – Gaeilge – Rang 3 Elaine; Rang 4 Michael; Rang 5 Miriam; Rang 6 Deirdre**

**Co-ordinators – Béarla – Rang 3 Jennifer; Rang 4 Laura; Rang 5 Ciara; Rang 6 Christine**