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**Ratoath Senior National School**

**Fairyhouse Road,**

**Ratoath**

**Co Meath**

**20200T**

School Self-Evaluation Report

Evaluation Period: September 2015-June 2016

Report issue date: June 2016

**School Self Evaluation**

**Ratoath Senior National School**

**Numeracy**

**School Profile:**

* Mixed Senior
* 23 teachers
* Administrative Principal
* Pupil enrolment 427

**School Context**

Ratoath Senior National School is a mixed, senior school under the patronage of the Bishop of Meath, Bishop Michael Smith, which was established in 2005, following the split of Ratoath National School into a junior and senior school. Ratoath Junior National School and Ratoath Senior National School share the same campus. Ratoath Senior National School is a fully inclusive school and currently has 16 mainstream classroom teachers from 3rd class to 6th class. Seven teachers work in the area of Special Education Needs and there are five Special Needs Assistants. When the school first opened it was a developing school but the numbers are stabilising now. The school administers standardised tests in Numeracy and Literacy to all children from third to sixth classes. The New Non- Reading Intelligence Test is administered to fourth class children.

**Getting Started**

During the school year 2015-2016, the school identified problem solving in numeracy as the focus to evaluate having scanned figure 3.3 in the School Self-Evaluation Guidelines for Primary Schools and having engaged in staff discussion. To get an overview of the student problem solving numeracy outcomes the teachers examined the Standardised Tests for Numeracy. The standardised test results showed that most pupils were performing at or above the national norm.

The class teachers, in collaboration with the Special Education Needs teachers, examined the children’s work, taking into consideration the children’s knowledge of problem solving and application of knowledge and skills. The disposition of the pupils was also considered taking into account motivation, attitudes and their engagement in learning. The teachers noted that they would need to obtain evidence on attainment levels on problem solving during step one of this process.

In order to establish specific areas to evaluate within numeracy, the school conducted a scan of the eight subthemes using the evaluation criteria. Certain subthemes emerged as being in need of particular attention and thus were selected for evaluation. The subthemes chosen were:

* Attainment of curriculum objectives (Learner outcomes)
* Engagement in Learning (Learner experiences)
* Teaching Approaches (Teachers’ practice)

**Now the school was ready to begin step one of the six-step process**

The school decided that pupil focus groups, a teachers’ questionnaire and a parents’ survey would provide relevant data from all the stakeholders on these sub-themes. The evaluation criteria for the chosen sub-themes were used to directly inform the content of the tools. In addition, outcome related data was sought for problem solving skills as outlined in the initial teacher discussion. This was in addition to the evidence that had been already gathered using the standardised test results, individual teacher reflection, whole school reflection, focus group discussions, peer dialogue and professional collaboration among teachers. Learner and parent surveys were also conducted to contribute to our qualitative data.

**The Findings**

* Standardised test results in Numeracy show, that on average, most pupils are scoring at or above the national norm with 40% of pupils scoring STen 8-10 (versus 15.9% nationally) and 3% of pupils scoring STen 1-3 (versus 15.9% nationally – June 2015 figures).
* Analysis of standardised test data over the past three years shows that progress has been made with more pupils now in the average and above average range.
* **Analysis of the results from June 2015 shows that the school scores….. in Data,** Number/Algebra, Shape and Space, Measures and Problem Solving
* Responses from a survey of the parents show that the majority of parents believe that their children like Maths. A majority of parents indicated that they knew their child’s strengths in Maths and also parents stated that knew their child’s weaknesses in Maths. Most parents believe that their child learns Maths at just the right level of difficulty. The vast majority of parents do not need to help their child complete Maths homework. The majority of parents agreed that they get useful information from the school about their child’s progress in numeracy.
* A finding from the Parent’s Questionnaire was that some parents would like information on Maths methodologies.
* Some parents would like a list of useful websites to help themselves and their children to practise and understand Maths methodologies.
* Parents have also indicated that they would like regular feedback with regard to their child’s progress at Maths.
* Some parents stated that they would like to see more challenging work for those children who are progressing very well at Maths.
* A survey of the pupils was carried out. It was found that the children have a very positive attitude to Maths and are content with mental and written work. The children **particularly enjoy practical, hands-on maths and the use of concrete materials. They enjoy collaborative problem-solving………**
* **A survey of the teachers demonstrated …..**
* Teachers prepare short and long term plans and use their plans to guide teaching and learning. Learning outcomes and teaching approaches, activities and resources are identified in their plans. Curriculum objectives and the school plan are used to devise long and short term plans by teachers. Commercial products are only used with reference to curriculum objectives. Teachers plan how they are going to assess their pupils’ learning.
* Teachers employ a wide variety of teaching methodologies appropriate to the development of Numeracy and problem solving. Use is made of ICT to support pupils in their learning. Teachers differentiate their lessons effectively to cater for the needs and abilities of all pupils.
* Collaboration between class teachers and the Special Education Needs teachers takes place on a regular basis and team teaching and in-class support are being used to support the development of Numeracy. Children are also withdrawn for support if this is deemed to be the best way to support the child’s learning needs. A variety of organisational groupings and settings are used in classrooms to support Numeracy.
* A positive code of behaviour including an anti-bullying policy is implemented in a fair and consistent manner. This is an inclusive school which respects all pupils regardless of background or gender. Teachers have high but realistic expectations of pupils’ behaviour and learning and this is communicated to the students regularly.
* Teachers employ a wide range of assessment methodologies to assess learning in Numeracy. Observation, checklists, curriculum objectives, questioning (both higher order and lower order), self-assessment, teacher designed tasks and tests and standardised tests are used. The Sigma-T Standardised Test is administered to all classes from third to sixth in May of each year and the results are reported to parents in the end of year report. The New Non Reading Intelligence Test is undertaken with the fourth classes each year.
* Pupils at all class levels are actively engaged in their learning and the level of pupil interest and participation is high. Pupils reported that they enjoy a variety of activities in Maths lessons.
* Parents are very supportive of the school’s Numeracy initiatives. Parents are encouraged to support their child’s Maths homework through checking their work, listening to tables, creating opportunities to make maths real and encouraging the use of the Interactive Resources. Teachers support parents in their work with their children.
* Teachers in all classes use a variety of classroom management strategies. Paired work, group work, individual work and whole class approaches are used in the organisation of the class. There is order and structure in the manner in which all activities are organised.
* A variety of Assessment for Learning and Assessment of Learning methodologies are used in all classes to monitor progress and determine teaching and learning. Assessment results are analysed and used for the screening and diagnosis of students with learning difficulties and also to identify aspects of the Numeracy Programme which needs extra work and support. Teachers differentiate their work to cater for the learning needs of all pupils. Class teachers and learning support teachers collaborate to ensure that supplementary teaching is available for children with learning difficulties and for children with exceptional abilities. Team teaching and early intervention strategies are provided.
* Ratoath Senior National School is a safe, stimulating environment and the classrooms and the building are organised, clean and well-maintained. Classrooms are appropriately laid out and they are well resourced and orderly. Teachers are aware of and follow the school’s Child Protection Guidelines. The school environment is used to provide opportunities for the creation of an awareness of literacy through the use of signs, notices and interesting facts displayed around the walls of the building

**Attainment in Numeracy**

**Whole School Numeracy Test Results Compared with Normal Distribution – 2015**

The Standardised Sigma-T Numeracy Test results for May 2015 are as follows:

0.0% of pupils at or below a standard score of 70 (Normal distribution 2.0%)

1% of pupils with a standard score between 70 -79 (Normal distribution 7.0%)

5% of pupils with a standard score between 80 -89 (Normal distribution 16%)

38% of pupils with a standard score between 90 –109 (Normal distribution 50%)

26% of pupils with a standard score between 110 –119 (Normal distribution 16%)

18% of pupils with a standard score between 120 -129 (Normal distribution 7.0%)

13% of pupils with a standard score of 130 and above (Normal distribution 2.0%)

**Summary of School Self-Evaluation Findings**

**Our school has strengths in the following areas with regard to Numeracy:**

* Revised Mathematics Curriculum Plan in place
* Commercial products used with reference to Mathematics Curriculum objectives
* Good resources available
* Variety of assessment tools used
* Standardised and diagnostic tests are administered
* Results of assessments are used to inform teacher planning
* Teachers report a very positive attitude towards the teaching of Mathematics in the school
* A number of teachers have completed in-service training in the area of Numeracy
* Teacher willingness to team-teach
* Collaborative planning across class levels and learning support
* The majority of pupils display a very positive attitude to Maths
* The school encourages parents to foster a culture of thinking about real Maths at home
* An agreed approach to Maths teaching methodologies utilised across all class levels

**The following areas are prioritised for improvement with regard to Numeracy:**

* The development of children’s mathematical/problem solving ability throughout the school
* An increase in the percentage of pupils performing at or above **X** in the area of problem solving across all class levels. We intend to increase this cohort to **X%** in year 2 and furthermore to **X%** in year 3.
* All teachers intend to plan for and develop collaborative weekly problem solving sessions for 15 minutes at all class levels beginning in Term 1 of year 2. It is intended that this action will allow pupils opportunities to actively participate in, discuss and reflect upon their learning in problem solving.
* Staff indicated the need to teach the following basic steps in problem solving through explicit teacher modelling **X.** Therefore, these steps will be explicitly taught across all class levels through the **X** strategy. This problem-solving strategy will be applied to each strand and strand unit of the Maths Curriculum.
* Staff members will contribute to the development of a whole-school plan for teaching problem solving
* The provision of information and guidance to parents as to how best they can assist their child at home in the area of Mathematics
* The provision of a list of useful websites to parents which could help with the practice and understanding of Numeracy
* Continue to support exceptionally able children through differentiation, ICT, competitions, and independent work
* The provision of more concrete materials and ICT resources for the purpose of developing problem solving skills
* To further develop the teaching of Maths language throughout the school which will further enhance problem solving skills and development
* To further promote a positive attitude towards Mathematics
* To continue monitoring the school’s Mathematics plan and to amend and review as required

**The following legislative and regulatory requirements need to be reviewed:**

1. Review of Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures
2. Data protection Policy

**The following curriculum plans and policies need to be reviewed or developed over the next three years:**

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| 1. Gaeilge 2017 | 1. Policy on Inclusion 2016 |
| 1. Maths 2017 | 2. Data Protection Policy 2017 |
| 1. Science 2016 | 3. Enrolment Policy 2018 |
| 1. History 2017 | 4. |
| 1. English 2017 |  |
| 1. SPHE 2016 |  |
| 1. Visual Arts 2017 |  |
| 1. Geography 2016 |  |
| 1. P.E 2017 |  |