

GLANTANE N.S.
LOMBARDSTOWN
MALLOW
CO. CORK
17823P

***School self-evaluation summary report for the school
community***

Evaluation period: *February –May 2015*

Report issue date: *June 2015*

Summary School Self-Evaluation Report

1. Introduction

Our school has its own context. There are currently 8 class teachers plus 3 full-time L.S.R.T's and 146 pupils in the school. The school has grown significantly in size in the last twelve years, resulting in almost a doubling of the numbers of pupils enrolled in our school. We have a number of programmes operating in the school including (e.g. Literacy Lift off, Handwriting Without Tears, the use of the Numicon Mathematical Approach, a Fine and Gross Motor group to assist pupils with Occupational Therapy difficulties, The Green Schools' Programme, various sporting activities including swimming lessons, Cork City Sports, Music lessons etc. Our attendance levels are good. From the staff's viewpoint, our pupils' behaviour is excellent. For more information on how we intend to improve our pupils' learning, please see our School Improvement Plan which is available e.g. on our website www.glantanens.ie.

1.1 The focus of the evaluation

We undertook a school self-evaluation of teaching and learning during the year. As instructed by the Department of Education of Skills, we selected a third topic for review. We as a staff decided upon the teaching and presentation of Handwritten activities in Glantane N.S. Therefore, as many as possible stakeholders in our school and community evaluated Handwriting for this process. We chose this area because, we felt that perhaps our pupils could improve their learning outcomes and presentation of written work, if we addressed some deficits or inconsistencies in the Handwriting/penmanship area.

This report summarises the strengths that were identified and the areas that have prioritised for improvement.

2. Summary of school self-evaluation findings

We collected information from parents, pupils and teachers in preparing this report. We looked at how well our pupils were doing regarding handwriting in the Irish Primary Curriculum. We interviewed the pupils from Junior Infants up to sixth class. Mrs. Foley (Special Duties Post Holder & Mainstream Teacher) held a focus group of some of the staff to ascertain their views on Handwriting in our school. We used our school's website to allow the parents to answer a questionnaire online. *(if they did not have internet access they also could have received a hardcopy from our school secretary)*

2.1 We found that our school has **strengths** in the following areas:

Strengths

- The majority of pupils (73.2%) like their presentation of written work
- A majority (80.5%) practise handwriting in class
- Most of the children (85.4) have a special hand writing copy.
- The majority of children (63.4%) stated that they have opportunities to enter handwriting competitions
- The majority of parents (68.2%) believe that there is a benefit in the cursive style of handwriting for their children

We know these are our strengths because they are based on the results of the pupil's questionnaires and that of the parent's online survey. These results have been recorded and are filed in the school. They can also be viewed by the staff and relevant individuals via the internet.

2.2 We have decided to prioritise the following **areas for development**:

Areas for development

- To create a better system of communicating with parents about the handwriting systems used in our school and of the classes where e.g. capital letters and cursive script are introduced, as from the Focus group some Teachers mentioned that some parents are unsure about when to introduce their children to the new stages in handwriting
- To improve our home- school links regarding the communication of handwriting in our school. 50% of parents said that they never reward their children for good handwriting and are not aware of the emphasis placed on it in school.
- To foster a more positive attitude towards handwriting (48.8% of children find the handwriting process boring) by entering more handwriting competitions, rewarding improving handwriting in school and to communicate this with parents via the school website and notes sent home. By illustrating to the children the benefits of good written presentation skills and cursive script, e.g. improves spelling by up to 30% according to some research
- To aid children with learning difficulties, it was suggested at the focus group, that on a case by case basis, these children could use the plain script style of writing with the agreement of their parents/ legal guardians or with the older pupils the use of ICT could be introduced into the daily school routine.
- To create a handwriting display space within all the classrooms to increase awareness of and to promote its importance of handwriting in our school. This was raised during the focus group as it would act as an aid for the Teacher's to refer to the display area when discussing neatness, presentation of work and formation of letters.

We have decided to prioritise these areas because the above points were indicated by the staff, parents and pupils as in need of some further development and improvement in order to maintain the pupils' engagement in learning, assist in preparation for teaching and assessment of the implementation an improved handwriting plan/scheme in our school.

As previously indicated these results are filed securely within the school.

**Appendix to Primary School Self-Evaluation Report:
legislative and regulatory checklist – reporting to the school community**

| Which area of school life is involved? | What is the relevant legislation, rule or circular? | Is the school fully meeting the requirements of the relevant legislation, rule or circular? |
|---|---|--|
| The school calendar and the school timetable | Circular 11/95 sets down the length of the school year - minimum of 183 days Circular 11/95 sets down the length of the school day 4 hours 40 minutes (infants); 5 hours 40 minutes (1 st -6 th classes) | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Implementation of agreement regarding additional time in school for teachers | Circular 0008/2011 requires teachers to do an additional 36 hours of out-of-class work each year, so as not to reduce teaching time | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Development of school plan | Section 21, Education Act 1998 requires all schools to have a school plan | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Engagement with SSE process | Circular 39/2012 outlines the school self-evaluation process and what it requires of schools | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Time for literacy and numeracy - assessing and reporting literacy and numeracy achievement | Circular 56/2011 sets out initial actions required in the implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategy | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Code of behaviour including anti-bullying policy | Section 23, Education (Welfare) Act 2000, and the 2008 National Educational Welfare Board Guidelines set out regulations and good practice for schools to follow in drawing up and implementing a code of behaviour and an anti-bullying policy | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Internet acceptable use policy | Schools should have and implement a policy to instruct pupils on safe and responsible use of the internet | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Special education needs policy | Various pieces of equality and education legislation, especially the Education for Persons with Special Education Needs Act (EPSN) 2004, require schools to be inclusive of pupils with special educational needs and to provide for them appropriately using the resources available | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Parents as partners | Circular 24/91 requests schools to set up a parents' association, and promotes partnership between home and school | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |