



*St. Brendan's PS
Moorpark St.
Birr, Co.Offaly
12370C*

School Self-Evaluation Report

Evaluation period: *Term 1 2014/2015*

Report issue date: November 2014

1. Introduction

1.1 The focus of the evaluation

A school self-evaluation of teaching and learning in *St. Brendan's PS* was undertaken during the period *September 2014* to *October 2014*. During the evaluation, teaching and learning in the following curriculum areas were evaluated:

- Numeracy

1.2 School context

St. Brendans PS is an all-boys primary school in the town of Birr, Co.Offaly. There are currently over 210 pupils on the register with 15 teachers working in the school. Unfortunately in recent years because of the economic climate in this country we have lost our RTT AND EAL teachers and this has impacted on the whole school body. The school is allocated DEIS disadvantaged status by the Dept. of Education. Being a DEIS school there are economic and cultural factors within our local community that affect the work the school does. We are conscious at all times of problems which may exist at home and that we try to make the school a happy and welcoming place where all of our pupils feel they belong. A lot of our pupils are educationally disadvantaged because of home situations where families do not want to/ are not able to help with education. Parental involvement in Education can be very limited in some cases. Literacy, numeracy and attendance are central focuses at St. Brendan's PS and through this emphasis we aim to help provide our pupils with the best possible start in life they can receive. We follow a Catholic Ethos at the school in which inclusiveness lies at the heart of our school in welcoming pupils from a variety of countries. These boys bring to our school a huge amount of vibrancy and diversity which we embrace. It does however impact on the learning which occurs at the school as many of these boys come to school with little or no English. We are fortunate to have the support of access to many new teaching initiatives at the school along with the fantastic support of HSCL teacher and a very supportive parent body and local community.

2. Data and views collected as part of SSE process

- Survey of all parents in school regarding numeracy.
- SCOT analysis by staff on numeracy and current practice/initiatives within the school.
- Meeting and collaboration with St. Brendan's Community school Math Department at request of staff at St. Brendans PS with regard to new project math syllabus.

3. Progress made on previously-identified improvement targets

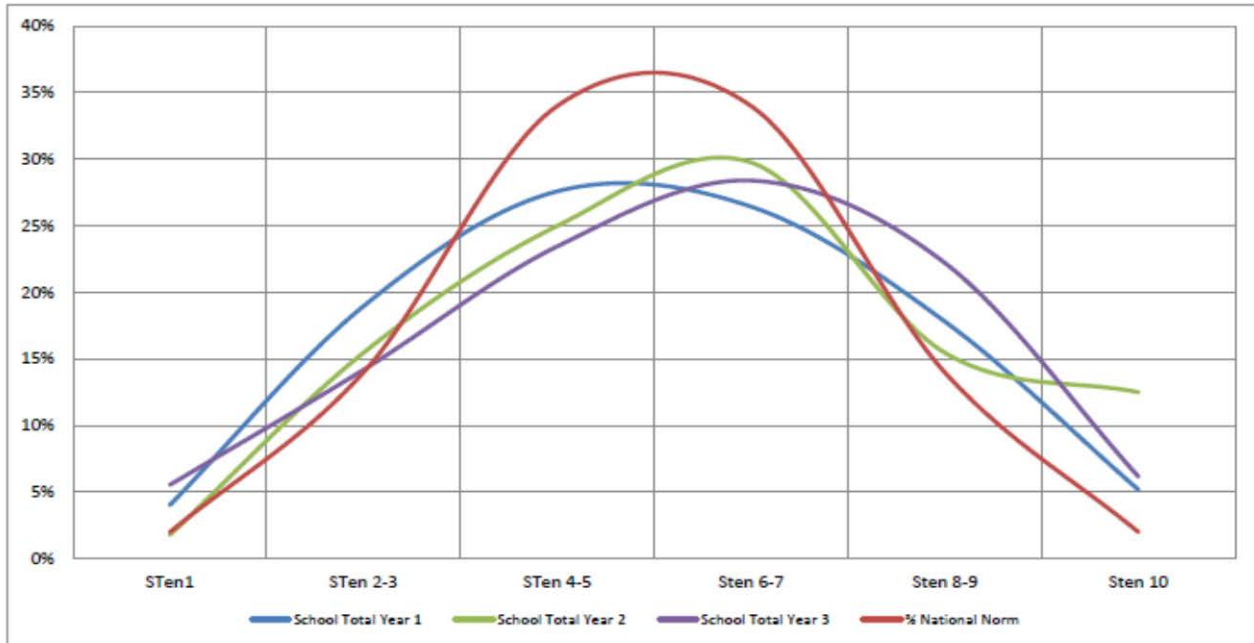
The school has engaged in long term planning and target setting with relation to Literacy and Numeracy for a number of years through its development of DEIS plans. These were also developed in the areas of attendance and Parental/Community involvement. The school has been monitoring progression towards targets set in Literacy (Bell Curve) and numeracy (Bar Chart) and whole school improvement of standards in both areas is evident. As outlined in the data below, the school is improving its standardised test results each year which is something the staff and school are pleased with.

Key: Year 1 2011-2012, Year 2 2012-2013, Year 3 2013-2014

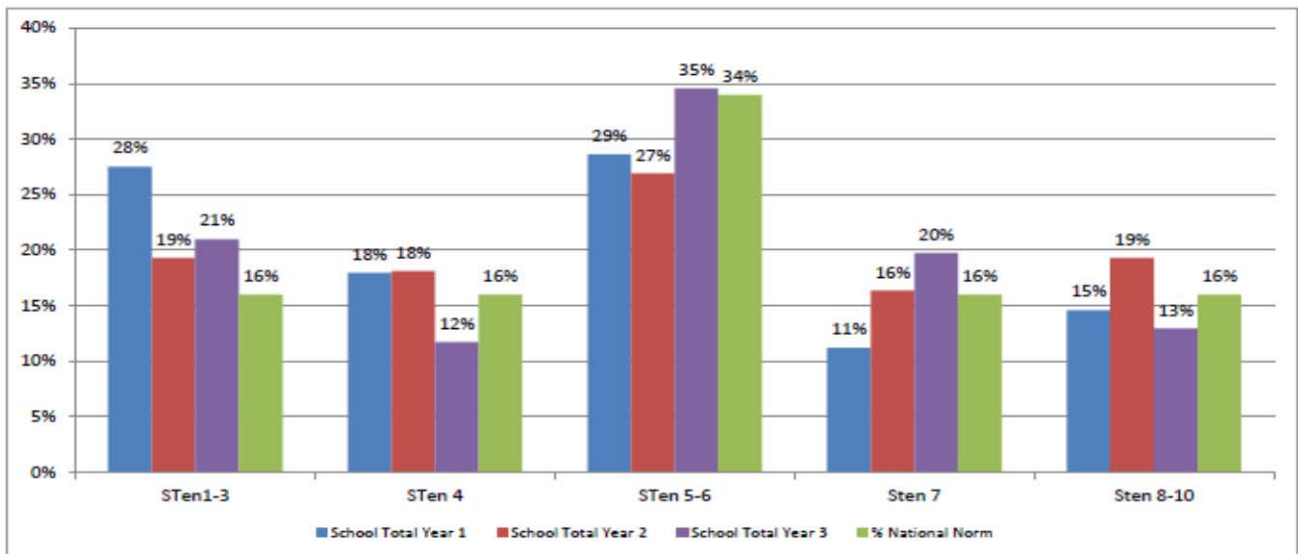
[Scroll down to view a selection of analysis graphs](#)



Whole School Mathematics Comparison with National Norms - Bell Curve



Whole School English Comparison with National Norms - Bar Graph



Key: Year 1 2011-2012, Year 2 2012-2013, Year 3 2013-2014

SCOT Analysis tool used by whole School Staff to evaluate NUMERACY in school

<h2 style="text-align: center;">Strengths</h2> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team • Maths for fun in operation • Math Stations • Good IT infrastructure with interactive boards in all classes. Used for planet maths. • Computer room – • Math recovery strategies • Maths week • Challenge and reward 	<h2 style="text-align: center;">Challenges</h2> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Computers aging – cost of being replaced and maintaining earphones etc • Providing IT games • Math concrete equipment-some areas and strands are short • Getting enough parents to support MATHS 4 FUN • Busy timetables • Timetables sometimes changing at expense of math • Some pupils not knowing tables • Pressure of math curriculum from broad P.School Curr. Being overloaded • Pupils experiencing difficulty with literacy-math problems • Transfer to 2nd level-Prog.
<h2 style="text-align: center;">Opportunities</h2> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work on tables- Boys generally like tables • Positive attitude in general to maths • Maths eyes prog could be developed. • Whole school approach to corrections could be beneficial. • D.A .S TIME – Problem solving (Drop everything and solve) 	<h2 style="text-align: center;">Threats</h2> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff cuts and increased pressure on LS team • Increased pupils with EAL / Traveller background who present with difficulties and no support (RT –cut) • DEIS Status- planning at present with no certainty over future. • DEIS – Disadvantaged pupil group regarding numeracy • Methodology

**St. Brendans PS: School Self-Evaluation Questionnaire for Parents - Numeracy
(TOTALS AND ANSWERS) 70 % return rate on surveys given out**

	Yes	No	Don't know
Does your child like maths?	77%	21%	2%
Did you like maths when you were at school?	67%	28%	5%
Do you know your child's strengths in maths?	61%	26%	13%
Do you know your child's difficulties in maths?	57%	30%	13%

What aspects of maths does your child enjoy most?

J. Infants : Matching / Counting

S. Infants: Sorting / Matching

1st class: Addition / Tables / Math games

2nd class: Ten and Units

3rd class: Money / Time

4th Class: Everything / Fractions

5th Class: Operations + - x , 3D shapes , Addition

6th Class: All operations + - x

What aspects of maths does your child find most difficult?

J. Infants : Too early to say

S. Infants: Various topics mentioned

1st class: Tables

2nd class: Tables / Problem Solving / Fractions

3rd class: Reading Problems in problem / Tables / Change from writing in books

4th Class: Tables / Division with remainders / Literacy required with book

5th Class: Division / Long division / Problem solving / long multiplication / Fractions

6th Class: Long multiplication / Literacy in reading problems in problem solving

	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
How often does your child have difficulty with maths homework?	7%	40%	32%	21%

How can we improve maths homework in our school?

- Home work to be clearly explained before going home
- Pupils understanding homework better
- Practical maths – home – Eg: Matching socks , setting the table
- Give more math homework
- Make it more fun (Common)

- More differentiated homework – different levels of difficulty
- More math wizard newsletters
- More tables for homework (common answer)
- Get pupils to learn tables better / faster
- Help for parents – examples of how to do sums (Long division)
- Less math homework

Do you feel confident helping your child with his maths homework?

Yes I do - 81 %

No I don't – 9 %

Sometimes only- 10 %

How can the school help improve maths in our school?

J.Infants : More 1 to 1 work

S.Infants: Explain maths slowly / More maths games / Use of Lego programs

1st class: More real life maths / Make maths more fun / integrate into daily home life / extra help for boys who need it

2nd class: Maths lift off – More tables – Dev maths in everyday life

3rd class: Use gaming for maths – lego – More 1 to 1 maths / Steiner problem solving model

4th Class: Parents tips sheets / extra math work / link to other subjects

5th Class: Explain math / extra math work / more fun in math / Parental tutorials

More emphasis on basic operations (Multiplication / Division) / Reports on progress , problems to home / Math for fun

6th Class: Maths for fun / More tables work / explain math clearly / start hardback copy with examples of sums for boys to use for homework / parents to learn

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Feedback from team meeting with Math Dept. Community school

- All pupils MUST know basic tables to enable them to do math at 2nd level.
- Basic operations must be learnt off by pupils and understood.
- Patience and use of gradual steps is vital for 2nd level maths. Getting away from MICROWAVE MATH" where only answer is produced. This is PROJECT MATHS.
- Parental knowledge of skills in operations (Mul/Div) and understanding of math programme is vital at both primary and second level
- Overall our boys are performing no better no worse than boys in other local schools
- Mr. Crofton thanked all staff from community school for their attendance and valuable contribution to what was a very productive meeting and we look forward to working together in future to helping our pupils reach their full math potential !

- Higher number of above average pupils SIGMA-T in school at 28% compared with national average of 16%
- Decrease in number of pupils performing at below average in SIGMA T : 23%-20%
- Need to focus attention on pupils in average ability range to ensure they reach their maximum potential.
- Positive attitude to Maths from both staff, pupils and parents.
- Development and improvement of basic tables was a common theme from staff SCOT analysis, parent questionnaire where 4/6 relevant classes highlighted as a difficulty and given a high priority by Math dept. from 2nd level school.
- Feedback from pupils/parents to try to make maths fun/ relevant to real-life / living maths.
- Need to support parents with regard to helping their children with Math homework as 19% were not fully confident in helping their child with this.
- Maths for Fun (Organised by HSCL) proved to be popular with pupils/parents but staff feedback will require a revision of format and resources in order for it to succeed.

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

- Numeracy - Development of basic tables skills/knowledge throughout the whole-school
- Numeracy- Focus on real-life maths / living maths in Junior Classes
- Numeracy- Redevelopment of "Maths for Fun" model and look at fun ways of teaching math
- Numeracy - Develop ways to support parents in helping their children with math skills/ homework
- Numeracy- Examine ways to support the transition of our 6th class pupils to 2nd level maths

The following legislative and regulatory requirements need to be addressed:

(Specify the aspects that need to be addressed)

- The schools Critical Incident policy needs to be reviewed and updated.
- An updated Healthy Lunches policy will be developed in association with HSCL during this school year.