

## **Summary of School Self Evaluation (SSE)**

### **Holy Family Senior School**

#### **School Community Information Sheet**

In November 2012 the Minister for Education and Skills launched the School Self Evaluation Guidelines for Primary Schools. These provide schools with a structure to enable teachers, principals, and management of schools to have focused conversations about teaching and learning in their schools.

Experience and research in Ireland and many countries show us that some of the most beneficial changes in schools occur when the principal and teachers collaborate in a focused way to improve how they teach and assess pupils' learning. By asking questions of themselves about how teaching takes place and how well pupils are learning, teachers can readily identify what needs to change within the school to get better outcomes for their pupils.

A school self-evaluation of teaching and learning in Literacy was undertaken in Holy Family Senior School during the period May 2012 to June 2013. Teaching and learning across the whole school was evaluated. The school gathered evidence through pupil questionnaires, parent focus groups, standardised test results and teacher observations.

The focus of this SSE report (School Self Evaluation Report) centered on reading success; particularly in relation to reading attitudes and reading comprehension.

Below is a summary of Holy Family Senior School's School Self Evaluation report. The full report is available in the school front foyer or on request. This report summarises the strengths that were identified and the areas that have been prioritised for improvement.

#### **Summary of School Self Evaluation Findings**

Our school has strengths in the following areas:

- Our school standardised test results show whole school improvements in Literacy. A number of different initiatives have been put in place to support this, including paired reading, peer tutoring, use of SRA Reading Lab and Accelerated Reader. The number of children in the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> STens (Average and low average ) has decreased significantly which is positive as these pupils have progressed to higher up STens.
- We have seen an increase in the number of children who are achieving STens of 8, 9 and 10 (Above average). Currently we have 21% of the children on these higher STens which is above the national standards.
- All classrooms/learning settings are organised in a manner that supports learning. They are appropriately laid out for lessons, well-resourced and orderly. Pupils have access to necessary resources including ICT.

- A positive reading culture has developed supported by the development of class libraries. The classification of the school library has added to this.
- High quality, standardised posters and displays are in evidence in all classrooms to support the teaching of writing genres and reading comprehension strategies.
- First Step Writing is well established in the school. This programme supports the development of writing skills through a structured approach. The children are confident in using the different genres in writing. All staff are trained in this specialised programme.
- Pupils indicated that there was a positive attitude and enjoyment of reading through use of ICT particularly Accelerated Reader in 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> class
- Established mentoring programme for (NQTs) Newly Qualified Teachers and new staff supporting a whole school approach to literacy.
- Long and short term planning around literacy are prepared with clear learning outcomes, are available for all teachers, on the school network, to ensure progression.
- Collaborative Planning, Literacy Committee (focus group meetings) help with the co-ordination of a focused literacy programme with continuity and progression throughout the school.

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

- Reading comprehension with particular reference to vocabulary extension.
- Continued incentives to promote reading for pleasure
- Increased engagement in active learning (Peer Tutoring programme, Buddy Reading Initiatives, Guided reading)
- Varied teaching and learning methodologies are established to achieve curricular outcomes (First Steps programme, SALF (Self Assessment and Learning Folders) for assessment , AR( Accelerated Reading), SRA Reading Labs and differentiated teaching approaches)

We, the staff and Board of Management value the school self evaluation process which is a major new innovation in the Irish school system. Further details about the process can be found on [www.sse.ie](http://www.sse.ie)

We are currently working on our School Improvement Plan in Maths focusing on the identified areas of Word Problem Solving and Measurement

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