

St Colman's Community College Midleton, Co. Cork

School Self-Evaluation Report 2013 - 2016



1. Introduction

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

1.1 The focus of this evaluation

A school self-evaluation of teaching and learning in St Colman's Community College was undertaken during the period September 2013 to May 2016 and subsequently reviewed. During the evaluation, teaching and learning in the following curriculum areas were evaluated:

- Literacy
- Numeracy

1.2 Outcomes of our last improvement plan from [Sept 2013] to [May 2016]

Learner Outcomes

- All subject departments use the PDST tool for analysing Junior Certificate and Leaving Certificate exam results. This gives an indicator of current standards and results compare favourably with national averages.
- The NGRT 1 standardised test was administered to first years and results were compared to STEN scores from 6th class. It was noted that there was a need to reduce the number of students with a reading age of less than 10 years on a standardised test (NGRT)
- Baseline data gathered informed a decision to develop an initiative to increase the number of students who like to read for pleasure by 5% (from 63% to 68%)
- Baseline data gathered from A COPS literacy initiative highlighted aspects of written work which needed development for example use of **full** sentences when answering questions and completing appropriate written tasks, paying particular attention to the formal aspects of language, such as spelling, grammar and punctuation. (see table)

Learning Experience

At a whole staff meeting, staff used the SSE Guidelines to reach a consensus on strengths, areas for improvement and priorities for action. Following feedback from the staff meeting the core Literacy and Numeracy groups designed student questionnaires on attitudes to literacy, numeracy & engagement in learning. The questionnaire was administered to 126 students taking three class periods in total. Parents were also surveyed to establish literacy attitudes in the home.

2. Summary of findings from surveys.

- 39% of first year students read for pleasure on a daily basis.
- 68% of first years stated that they liked to read but only 53% of TY students enjoy reading as a leisure pursuit.
- 40% of our first year and 36% of our second year students can write a compound-complex sentence with no mistakes in it.
- 65% of our first year students know the meaning of the subject specific keywords and only 0.7% of them can spell all of the words correctly.
- 29% of students surveyed say they are comfortable speaking in class.
- 41% say they ask questions in class.
- 62% think participating in class is group work.
- Baseline data was gathered from all 1st year students indicated that only 50% of students could correctly change a fraction into a percent.
- 75% of first year students can measure a line in cms
- 60% of first year students can change units.
- 75% of first year students can calculate the area of a rectangle.
- 25% of first year students can calculate the area of a triangle.
- 0% of leaving certificate students took into account setting time aside for reading and reviewing the exam questions.
- 37% correctly worked out the time for the question leaving out this review time.

2.1 Teaching and Learning practice

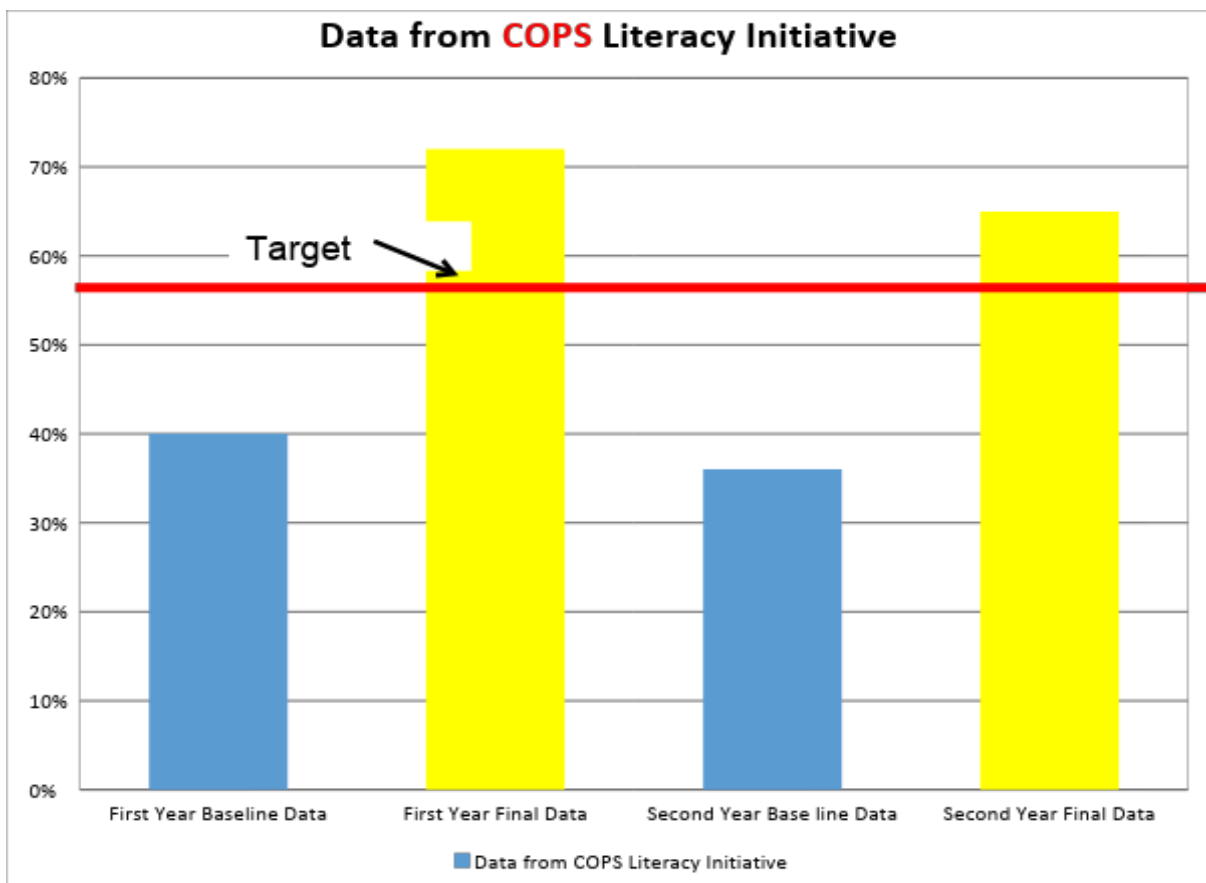
- The school environment is very positive and teacher classrooms enable print rich environments that are conducive to Teaching and Learning.
- The school has a broad, balanced curriculum. (WSE)
- There are strong links with parents and the community – Parents Association, Home School Liaison, School Completion Programme, SEN team, Class teacher communication with parents, School Journal.
- The school atmosphere is very positive.
- The good practices of JCSP are used throughout the school by all teachers with a focus of teaching & learning.
- Formal subject meetings take place twice to three times a year during Croke Park hours to enable whole school planning and development work to take place.
- Informal subject department meetings also take place.
- Attainment in the majority of subjects at both JC and LC is increasing steadily.
- Team teaching is practiced in the school.
- SEN students are well catered for- all students on the SEN register are provided with resource hours one on one basis or in small groups. The SEN core team meet weekly
- There is willingness to share good practice – this is evident within departments who use digital media such as google classroom or google docs to share and create resources.
- Students are getting opportunities to develop oral language (e.g PowerPoints) and many are confident working in pairs and small groups.

2.2. This is how we know

Summary Student Surveys and evidence from Literacy Initiatives

- 71% of our first year students like to read for pleasure, an increase of 8% from baseline data.
- Of particular satisfaction was the significant increase in the number of students in Ronan, Saoirse and IV who now say they like to read for pleasure.
- 72% of our first year and 65% of our second year students can write a compound-complex sentence with no mistakes in it.
- 32% of our second year students still have difficulty writing compound-complex sentence with a zero error count.
- 70% of our First Year students read for pleasure during the Easter Holiday
- 95% of our First Year students posted a suggestion on the **Red/Read Wall**.
- 90% of our TY students posted a suggestion on the **Red/Read Wall**
- 96% of our first years know the meaning of the assessed keywords and 66% could spell the words correctly
- We met and exceeded our target of 90% for meaning and 50% for spelling.
- 98% of our first year students made an oral presentation to their class in spring term 2016.

Baseline data in mid-September 2014 prior to the launch of the COPS Writing Strategy, Target data and Final Data



Numeracy

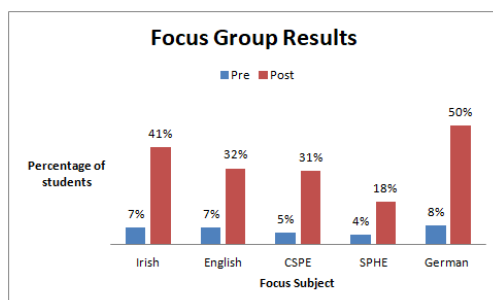
Summary Student Surveys and evidence from Numeracy Initiatives

- At the end of the initiative, 79.57% (113 /142 first year students) could successfully convert a fraction to a percent. This exceeded our target of 50% and we reached the blue-sky target of 80%. See Table.

Converting a fraction to a percent.

	Baseline	Target	Final Data
Percentage of first year students that can measure a line in cm:	75%	85%	91%
Percentage of first year students that can change units:	60%	80%	87%
Percentage of first year students that can calculate the area of a rectangle:	75%	85%	90%
Percentage of first year students that can calculate the area of a triangle:	25%	60%	55%

- All teachers feel confident in their own numerical skills after the converting a fraction to a percentage initiative and therefore are more likely to engage with this initiative in their own subject areas.
- 37% of students correctly worked out how much time to spend on an exam question based on the amount of marks given to the question, this will improve exam technique and makes students feel more comfortable sitting state examinations.
- The target of 70% allowing for review time and reading exams was reached.
- All subject teachers were asked to encourage students to see numbers, shapes and patterns in any pictures or photos they used in class, this initiative was very successful as we exceeded a target of 50%.
- The whole staff approach to the Maths Eyes initiative was very successful as teachers felt comfortable with the use of everyday maths.
- Students had a more positive approach to Numeracy in the Maths Eyes initiative- this was highlighted by the many entries in both Junior & Senior Competition Categories.
- 76% of Transition Year students can now plot and scale graphs.
- Our 7th Numeracy target was to increase student awareness of numeracy across the curriculum in CSPE, SPHE, Irish, English and German. The results indicate that this target was exceeded. See Table:



2.3 This is what we are going to focus on to improve our practice further

Specify the aspects of teaching and learning the school has identified and prioritised for further improvement.

- The school environment is very important. The practice of displaying posters showing a link between their subject and numeracy contributes to a positive student attitude to numeracy and promotes greater awareness of numeracy across the curriculum.
- The print rich environments develop literacy skills.
- Teacher attitudes greatly contribute to the success of initiatives. If teachers themselves are confident/comfortable promoting the initiative then students are more likely to experience success across the curriculum. The literacy team will support subject departments in implementing initiatives to ensure a greater number of students are reached.
- There is a decline in reading for pleasure among our senior students – this is largely due to the use of technology – a focus on reading for pleasure – Drop Everything and Read initiative
- The keyword initiative needs to be implemented by all teachers across all subjects.
- To build self-confidence when speaking in class. A continued focus on students reading aloud and presenting work.
- Students were enthusiastic and motivated by Maths Eyes Initiative. The competition was a fun activity that incorporated numeracy. The Numeracy Team will aim to incorporate more numeracy competitions for future initiatives.
- Numeracy resources used in JCSP are useful tools for promoting numeracy and reducing Maths Anxiety. The school has completed a number of numeracy initiatives in recent years- Maths Lab, Number Millionaire, Maths games.
- Initiatives to improve teaching and learning – self-assessment and peer-assessment strategies will be incorporated into lessons in a number of subjects to support student learning.
- Research will be undertaken in team teaching - this research will inform us about the benefits of team teaching and will look at the team teaching strategies that are most effective.