St. Kevin's College

Ballygall Road East, Dublin 11

ST KEVIN'S COLLEGE
BALLYGALL ROAD EAST
DUBLIN 11
SCHOOL ROLL NUMBER: 60581M

School Self-Evaluation Report

NUMERACY

Evaluation period: *September/ 2014* to *June/ 2015*

Report issue date:

School Self-Evaluation Report

1. Introduction

1.1 The focus of the evaluation

A school self-evaluation of teaching and learning in St Kevin's College was undertaken during the period (September/2014) to (June/2015). During the evaluation, teaching and learning in the following subjects and programmes were evaluated:

- Numeracy

This is a report on the findings of the evaluation.

1.2 School context

St Kevin's College is an all-boys voluntary secondary school under the patronage of the Edmund Rice Schools Trust. We currently have an enrolment of 525 students and are Designated DEIS 2 by the Department of Education and Skills. St Kevin's College offers Junior Certificate and Leaving Certificate programmes and also the Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme (LCVP) and Leaving Certificate Applied (LCA). An optional Transition Year programme is also offered. All of our classes are offered in a mixed ability setting with some higher level and ordinary level banding introduced in 2nd year.

2. The findings

Learner outcomes

A Cognitive Ability Test (CAT) was administered to all 1st year students and the results for the cohort are in line with the national norms.

A Maths Competency Test for was administered by the numeracy link teacher and Maths department in September, which identified scope for improvement in the mastery of a range of specific skills in the cohort sampled.

All subject departments used the PDST tool for analysing results in te Leaving and Junior Certificate exams and analysed the trend over the last five years.

JC uptake of HL Maths is 36% compared with 51% nationally

LC uptake at HL is 14% compared with 24% nationally.

Findings from the attitudinal survey: 43% of students like maths and 47% have aspirations in sitting higher level for their Junior Cert.

Learning experience

The Numeracy Team designed a student questionnaire on attitudes to numeracy & engagement in learning. This was administered to 92 first year students. Findings:

- Students are engaging in independent & cooperative learning
- 91% of students think they will need maths when they leave school
- 22% of students believe they good at figuring out questions I have never seen before
- 28% of students said they are good at explaining maths in their own words.
- 83% answers correct for computation Language but only 21% for word problems involving fractions.
- 61% said there was usually more than one way to work out a problem.

Teachers' practice

- All subject departments completed the focus group for numeracy (p. 81 SSE guidelines) and teachers were given a questionnaire on attitudes to numeracy & engagement in learning. Findings:
- 95% believe Numeracy occurs in their subject
- There is awareness of numeracy amongst staff and they see themselves as having a role to play in developing numeracy skills with 81% of teachers believing that problem solving is part of every subject.
- Many teachers use a variety of methodologies
    - Work on their own
    - Work in pairs
    - Participate in whole class discussions at least once per week
- 86% of teachers state that students in their classroom receive regular written / oral feedback
- 74% of teachers believe students feel they understand maths best when they work in pairs and 48% of teachers said that in their classroom students work mostly in pairs
- 57% of teachers enjoy maths and 76% of teachers feel comfortable dealing with numeracy if it arises in their subject.
- However only 10% of Teachers feel there is a consistent approach to maths calculations and language across the school

3. Progress made on previously-identified targets improvement targets

During the review of our DEIS plan in 2015 the following was identified:

- The targets written in the old plan were not SMART. The Numeracy team reported that the targets were too vague, broad & general and as such it was difficult to measure impacts.
- One target was identified as being an action, as such it was not SMART. The concept behind the action demonstrated sound practice but should have been used as an action to achieve a target.
- Prior to the review a meeting was held with key members from the PDST. This provided us with the necessary information & skills to write SMART targets going forward.
- The monitoring & evaluation of targets in the old DEIS plan proved difficult due to the fact that targets were not measureable. Leaving & Junior Certificate results were used to gauge progress & were discussed in Maths Dept meetings.
- Many of the actions used demonstrated good practice. However, there impact in improving Numeracy was difficult do assess due to targets not being SMART.

4. Summary of school self-evaluation findings
This comes from your research carried out on the 1st/2nd years.

4.1 Our school has strengths in the following areas:
(List the main strengths of the school with regard to teaching and learning))

- 43% of students like Maths and 91% believe that they will need Maths after they leave school.
- Students are engaging in independent & cooperative learning.
- There is awareness of numeracy amongst staff and they see themselves as having a role to play in developing numeracy skills.
- Teachers are aware that problem solving is part of their subject and use a problem solving strategy.

4.2 The following areas are prioritised for improvement:
(Specify the aspects of teaching and learning that need to be improved)

- Developing common approaches to mathematical operations and language across the curriculum.
- Creating a numeracy rich environment.
- Ensuring that first year students improve their competence in a range of mathematical concepts and operations identified by the maths competency test, such fractions, probability and problem solving.
- Embedding a culture of estimate, claculate, check across the curriculum.
- Increasing the up-take of higher level maths both at junior and senior cycle.

4.3 The following legislative and regulatory requirements need to be addressed.
(Specify the aspects that need to be addressed)