A.M.D.G.

CRESCENT COLLEGE COMPREHENSIVE S.J.

DOORADOYLE, LIMERICK V94 W6WB

ROLL NUMBER: 81014R

School Self-Evaluation Report

Evaluation Period**:** *2014-2015*

Report issued: *October 2015*

School Self-Evaluation Report

1. Introduction

1.1 The focus of the evaluation

A school self-evaluation of teaching and learning in **Crescent College Comprehensive, SJ** was undertaken during the period to **September 2014 to June 2015**. The focus of the evaluation was literacy and numeracy.

- ***Literacy and Numeracy as per the guidelines issued by the Department of Education & Skills***

This is a report on the findings of the evaluation.

1.2 School Context and Description

Crescent College Comprehensive S.J., which incorporates the Characteristics of Jesuit Education, seeks to develop a community of learning and academic excellence comprising teachers and parents collaborating to fulfil the potential of each individual pupil. This will involve teachers, parents and pupils working together to identify and develop an openness to religious, moral, social, intellectual, cultural and physical experience and to the word of God in all its dimensions. Each individual's talents will be developed to the level of their personal potential for the benefit of community and humanity.

Crescent College Comprehensive S.J. is a Catholic school under the trusteeship of the Jesuit Provincial and the Minister of Education and Science. The college acknowledges that the family is the primary educator and, through its commitment to the values of the school, shares the responsibility for the student's education. The school is grant aided by the Department of Education and Science.

Crescent College Comprehensive S.J. has dedicated teachers who are committed to high academic standards. The college provides a rich and diverse curriculum catering for the needs of each individual student. It strives for excellence also in the areas of social concern and spiritual values, sport and culture, wherein students are encouraged and challenged to realise their full potential as human beings in the Ignatian tradition.

The school's management structure consists of the Board of Management whose policies are implemented by the principal of the day. The principal is assisted by a deputy head, assistant principals and staff, academic and non-academic. The school has a pastoral care structure of Form Tutors and Year Heads. A comprehensive Guidance and Counselling structure is also in place.

The school is aided by the Parents' Association through its associated committees: Parents' Council, Parents' Social and Cultural Committee and Parent's Finance Committee. All parents of Crescent students are automatically members of the Parents' Association.

Curricular leadership is facilitated by a structure of co-ordinated departments. Student leadership is undertaken by elected school captains, senior prefects and the Student Council.

2. Legislative and Regulatory Checklist

In the course of this self evaluation, the Principal and Deputy Principal together with the Assistant Principals reviewed a number of Department of Education and Skills circulars that govern the day-to-day running of the school. A list of these circulars with a report on their status is contained in the next few pages.

**Appendix to School Self-Evaluation Report:
legislative and regulatory checklist**

Issue	Relevant legislation, rule or circular	Is the school fully meeting the requirements of the relevant legislation, rule or circular?	If no, indicate aspects to be developed
Valid enrolment of students	M51/93	☒ Yes ☐ No	
Time in school - Length of school year (minimum of 167 days for all year groups) - Length of school week (minimum of 28 hours for all year groups)	Circular M29/95	☒ Yes ☐ No ☒ Yes ☐ No	See Attached Calendar
Standardisation of school year	Circular 034/2011	☒ Yes ☐ No	See Attached Calendar
Arrangements for parent/teacher and staff meetings	Circular M58/04	☒ Yes ☐ No	See Attached Calendar
Implementation of national literacy strategy	Circular 25/12	☒ Yes ☐ No	
Implementation of Croke Park agreement regarding additional time requirement	Circular 025/2011	☒ Yes ☐ No	See Attached Calendar
Development of school plan	Section 21 Education Act 1998	☒ Yes ☐ No	See Strategic Action Plan
Guidance provision in secondary schools	Circular PPT12/05, Education Act 1998 (section 9(c))	☒ Yes ☐ No	
Whole-school guidance plan	Section 21 Education Act 1998	☒ Yes ☐ No	
Delivery of CSPE to all junior cycle classes	Circular M12/01 Circular M13/05	☒ Yes ☐ No	
Exemption from the study of Irish	Circular M10/94	☒ Yes ☐ No	
Implementation of revised in-school management structures	Circular M29/02, Circular 21/98, Circular 30/97, Circular 29/97	☒ Yes ☐ No	
Limited alleviation on filling posts of responsibility for school year 2011/12	Circular 53/11	☒ Yes ☐ No	

Issue	Relevant legislation, rule or circular		Is the school fully meeting the requirements of the relevant legislation, rule or circular?	If no, indicate aspects to be developed
Parents as partners in education	Circular M27/91			
Implementation of child protection procedures	Circular 65/11 Please provide the following information in relation to child protection		☒ Yes ☐ No	
	▪ Number of cases where a report involving a child in the school was submitted by the DLP to the HSE	4		
	▪ Number of cases where a report involving a child in the school was submitted by the DLP to the HSE and the school board of management informed	4		
	▪ Number of cases where the DLP sought advice from the HSE and as a result of this advice, no report was made	4		
	▪ Number of cases where the DLP sought advice from the HSE and as a result of this advice, no report was made and the school board of management informed	4		
Implementation of complaints procedure as appropriate	Section 28 Education Act 1998 Please provide the following information in relation to complaints made by parents during this school year		☒ Yes ☐ No	
	▪ Number of formal parental complaints received	0		
	▪ Number of formal complaints processed	0		
	▪ Number of formal complaints not fully processed by the end of this school year	0		
Refusal to enrol	Section 29 Education Act 1998 Please provide the following information in relation to appeals taken in accordance with Section 29 against the school during this school year			
	Number of section 29 cases taken against the school	1		
	Number of cases processed at informal stage	0		
	Number of cases heard	1		
	Number of appeals upheld	0		
	Number of appeals dismissed	1		

Issue	Relevant legislation, rule or circular		Is the school fully meeting the requirements of the relevant legislation, rule or circular?	If no, indicate aspects to be developed
Suspension of students	Section 29 Education Act 1998 Please provide the following information in relation to appeals taken in accordance with Section 29 against the school during this school year		Yes	
	Number of section 29 cases taken against the school	0		
	Number of cases processed at informal stage	0		
	Number of cases heard	0		
	Number of appeals upheld	0		
	Number of appeals dismissed	0		
Expulsion of students	Section 29 Education Act 1998 Please provide the following information in relation to appeals taken in accordance with Section 29 against the school during this school year			
	Number of section 29 cases taken against the school	7		
	Number of cases processed at informal stage	1 (Withdrew)		
	Number of cases heard	6		
	Number of appeals upheld	0		
	Number of appeals dismissed	6		

Appendix to School Self-Evaluation report: policy checklist

Policy	Source	Has the policy been approved by the Board of Management ?	If no, indicate aspects to be developed
Enrolment policy	Section 15(2)(d) of Education Act Equal Status Acts 2000-2011	☒ Yes ☐ No	
Code of behaviour, including anti-bullying policy[1]	Circular M33/91 NEWB guidelines Section 23, Education Welfare Act 2000 Guidelines on Countering Bullying Behaviour, 1993, Circular M33/91 Equal Status Acts 2000-2011	☒ Yes ☐ No	
Attendance and participation strategy[2]	Circular M51/93 Section 22, Education Welfare Act 2000	☒ Yes ☐ No	Issued 2015 Under Review 2015/16
Health and Safety Statement	Health and Safety Act 2005 Section 20	☒ Yes ☐ No	Statement /Reporting Completed – Other Info Being Prepared 2015/16
Data protection	Data Protection Act 1988 Data Protection (Amendment Act) 2003	☐ Yes ☒ No	Being Prepared 2015/16
Special education needs policy[3]	Education Act (1998) Equal Status Acts (2000 to 2011), Education (Welfare) Act (2000), Education for Persons with Special Education Needs Act (EPSEN)[4] (2004) Disability Act (2005))	☒ Yes ☐ No	Issued 2011/12 Under Review 2015/16
Social, personal and health education(SPHE)/Relationships and sexuality education (RSE) policy	Circulars 37/2010, 23/2010, M27/08, M11/03, M22/00, M20/96, M4/95	☒ Yes ☐ No	Under Review 2015/16
Substance use policy	Department of Education and Skills Directive; guidelines issued to schools in 2002	☒ Yes ☐ No	To Review in 2016/17
Internet acceptable use policy	Department of Education and Skills Directive	☒ Yes ☐ No	ACCS Guidelines
Child Protection Policy	Circular 0065/2011	☒ Yes ☐ No	Reviewed 14/15

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[1] Under the provisions of the Education (Welfare) Act (2000) (section 23) the school's code of behaviour should conform to the specifications stated.

[2] Under the provisions of the Education (Welfare) Act (2000) (section 22) the school's attendance strategy should conform with the provisions stipulated.

[3] Section 9 of the Education Act (1998) requires a school to "use its available resources" to identify and provide for the educational needs of those "with a disability or other special educational needs."

[4] The EPSEN Act requires that schools be inclusive of and provide an appropriate education for students with special educational needs.

REPORT ON LITERACY

Learning School Project

Action Research Project

Pre teaching tier three vocabulary to first year students.

Context

Our school is a coeducational post primary school in the west of Ireland. We have approximately 900 students with a range of socio economic backgrounds. We have no catchment area. Our project focused on literacy and our primary aim was to increase comprehension. Therefore, we needed to examine teaching and learning. We wanted to see how vocabulary was taught by teachers and focus on the learning outcomes of students. We focused on tier three subject specific words. We decided to focus on three subjects Science, Geography and History. We chose these subjects because the students are exposed to lots of new vocabulary in first year.

We used the SSE guidelines and gathered data, analysed data, planned the intervention, implemented and monitored the implementation, and evaluated the intervention. Our project aimed to assess how this vocabulary was being taught and to provide supports to the teachers of these subjects. We hoped that the intervention we devised would increase our student's comprehension in these subjects and therefore increase student learning outcomes. We worked with three classes for each subject. This meant that our project involved nine class groups. This meant that there was lots of work involved but this was necessary in order to have a reasonable sample size.

Rationale

As stated, our action project focused on first year students of History, Geography and Science. We decided to use three classes for each subject. This left us with nine class sets of data. In order for the project to be successful it was necessary to have the cooperation and engagement of the mainstream teachers. We explained the premise of the project to them and outlined what would be happening over the course of the year. The teachers that we approached were largely enthusiastic and eager to engage with the process.

We decided to investigate whether we could devise an intervention which would improve literacy amongst the first years in our school. The idea originated from the subject department meetings that we have once a week. As a dedicated SEN team we are acutely aware of issues around literacy and numeracy. At the beginning of the year we analysed data from the standardised tests that were undertaken the previous year. We noted that an area that clearly needed to be addressed was comprehension.

We decided as a team that in order to ascertain why this was happening we needed to gather qualitative and quantitative data.

Qualitative Data:
Each member of the team informally asked a number of subject teachers
- Did they explicitly teach key words to their students?
- What methodology/pedagogical tools did they use to teach "key words" in their subject

Information gathered from this process illustrated that no teacher taught "key words" explicitly or had a methodology that worked.

Quantitative Data:
Having liaised with the class teachers for these subjects we decided to test all of the first years on a unit that they had recently covered. The subject teachers decided what the most important key words were and we then tested each class group on this data. The results were very interesting. 25% of students scored 2 or less out of 10 across all subjects. We expected the results to show that the premise of our project was worthwhile but we did not expect such startling numbers. More aptly, neither did the subject teachers. We now had empirical evidence that an intervention was needed.

We had a number of goals which we hoped we would be able to achieve.
1. We wanted to increase awareness amongst teachers of the importance of pre teaching key words.
2. We wanted to investigate if pre teaching key words would improve student's comprehension and learning outcomes.
3. We wanted to investigate the benefits of using a word wall.
4. We wanted to investigate the benefits of using a semantic map.

Furthermore, and perhaps most importantly, the SEN department wanted to encourage subject teachers in improving the literacy and learning outcomes of students by working collaboratively.

Methods

What Sort of Data was Collected?

Our project utilized both qualitative and quantitative data. We needed to ensure that potential improvements were measurable. We needed a starting point in order to ensure that this was the case. As stated, all of the first year students were tested on a unit which they had previously covered in class. The class teacher picked out the ten key terms that were essential to that unit. Members of the SEN team then formulated and administered the tests to each group. The results of each class group was analysed and discussed with the teachers and a member of the SEN team. After we had gathered that data it was clear that it would be worthwhile to proceed with the intervention.

After extensive consultation with NEPs, LSP advisors, teachers and discussion among the SEN team it was decided that we would focus on using a word wall and semantic maps as resources. Where needed we supplied the classroom teachers with the materials for the word wall. In addition to this we agreed on a template for the semantic mind map. We liaised with the teachers of the groups and we agreed to go into their classrooms to model the instruction.

Triangulation:

The data that we gathered from the retests would need to be triangulated. We decided that we would need to survey the teachers involved as well as a sample of the students. This qualitative data would give our project extra validity and we decided early on that this would be necessary.

Success and Challenges

Challenges:

- Getting a cohort of teachers from a number of different subject areas to agree to take part in the project.
- Organising "key word" boards to be put in suitable locations in classrooms.
- Ensuring that teachers who agreed to take part in the research project followed the guidelines given.
- Organising time for the teachers from the SEN department to team teach a class with subject teachers how to use the semantic map.
- Tried to be very prescriptive with the methodology at the beginning but had to learn to Trust teachers and give teachers the freedom to use their professional judgement.

Success:

- Successful collaboration between the SEN team and 7 subject teachers across History, Geography and Science.
- Positive learning outcomes for students were presented at a whole staff meeting which stimulated dialogue and interest amongst a wider range of staff.
- The Action Research project served as a catalyst for teachers to question and evaluate their own teaching practice based on hard data.
- The project demonstrated at a whole staff meeting that a small change to a teaching practice had a significant effect on the learning outcomes of students of all abilities.

Findings/ Outcomes:

 We faced a number of challenges throughout the course of this project. Time was a major issue in a number of different ways. Teachers are busy people and it was often difficult to find the time to liaise with them. Additionally, some teachers were reluctant to engage fully with the process as they felt that it consumed too much time in the classroom. We were able to overcome these difficulties insofar as we have one dedicated planning class per week as an SEN team. This allowed us to touch base regularly, delegate work in an equitable manner and ensure that we were all keeping on top of things.

Without doubt this process has been worthwhile. This can be seen from the improvements in the scores from the retests. It can also be seen from the testimonies of the teachers and students. Ultimately, the data speaks for itself as there was a marked improvement across all subjects. Clearly, the process does work. The class teachers were surprised at the extent to which there was improvement across the board. Clearly this process was beneficial to all

students. There was a preconception that this action project was pitched towards the weaker students. In many ways it was but the data demonstrates that the process also benefited the 'high flyers' in the class room. Many students who scored 6 or 7 in the first assessment achieved full marks in the second assessment. We decided that after the intervention had taken place we would test the students under the same conditions as the original class. In addition to this we agreed that we would survey teachers and students on their experience of the programme.

Learning for Subject teachers:

Overall this process was very beneficial for the subject teachers.   Ultimately, the intervention worked. The data demonstrated that all students took something from the process and this is something that the subject teachers were very happy with. The subject teachers were exposed to new methodologies and this is something that we hope will have a lasting effect.

Learning for SEN team:

This process was hugely valuable to the SEN team. We were vested in this fully from the start and we learnt a huge amount from it. Three of us are relatively new to the school and it was helpful for our development as professionals to be involved in a process in which we were taking the initiative in initiating an intervention with our peers. We work well as a team and this process helped us to consolidate our working relationship. It is invaluable to have people you trust and who are 'on the same page' as you within the school community.

Learning for students:

Without doubt this process has been beneficial for our students. As well as now having a better grounding in the units than they would have done without the intervention they were now equipped with a skill set when encountering new vocabulary. The semantic map enabled the students to utilise their skills of prediction and association and we know that this is something that they will take with them going forward in their learning.

Learning for Whole school, including management:

Our aspiration has always been that this action project would influence the wider sphere of the school. The testimonies of the subject teachers will be vital in this regard. The subject teachers who really took this project on board reaped the rewards of it. Teachers generally like to talk and this positivity will be no doubt shared amongst their peers. Management bore witness to this positivity as well as the subject teachers who spoke about their experiences at staff meetings. Management were extremely accommodating throughout and we would have little doubt that they appreciated the validity of the action project.

Conclusions and recommendations:

We are very happy with how the process has developed within the school community. Buy in was varied from very strong from by majority of teachers. Two teachers "paddled their own canoe" but this is something we anticipated from the start. Ultimately however, as the data proves, we did manage to make a difference. Three of the teachers who took the project on really engaged with it in a meaningful way and they were delighted with the fact that their students showed such levels of improvement.
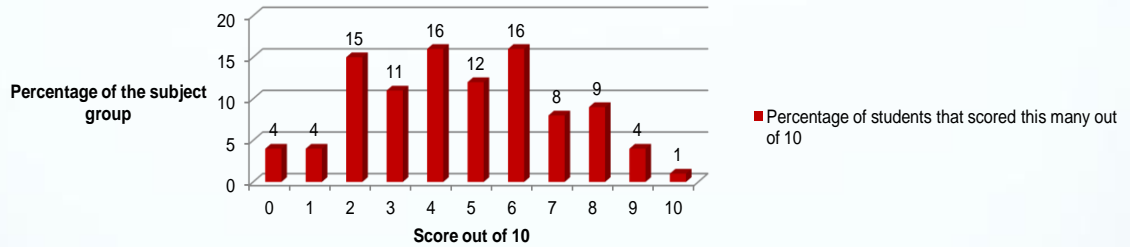
Recommendations:

The aim has always been that if the instruction was shown to work that it would be something that teachers would incorporate into their long term plans. We always hoped that the pre teaching of tier three vocabulary would out live the course of this project in our school. We believe that the testimony of the teachers who did engage with the project in a meaningful way will inspire others to do so in the future.
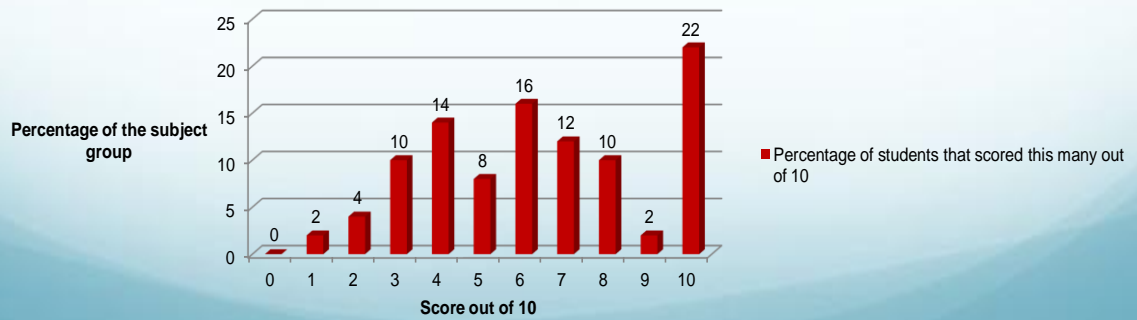
Our feedback sessions from the subject teachers have been invaluable. One of the key things that we learned is that the process is not prescriptive. Different aspects of the project worked well for different classes and the subject teachers were genuinely positive about certain aspects of the project. We plan to follow up on the project early in the 2015/16 academic year. This will be at the first staff meeting of the year. We hope that the positive experiences of the teachers who were involved in the process will be the focal point of this.

Results - History

History results (Testing 1)

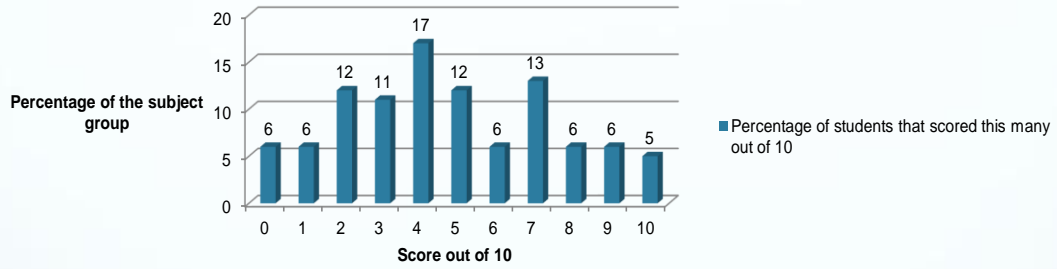Percentage of the subject group

Score out of 10

■ Percentage of students that scored this many out of 10

History results (Testing 2)

Percentage of the subject group

Score out of 10

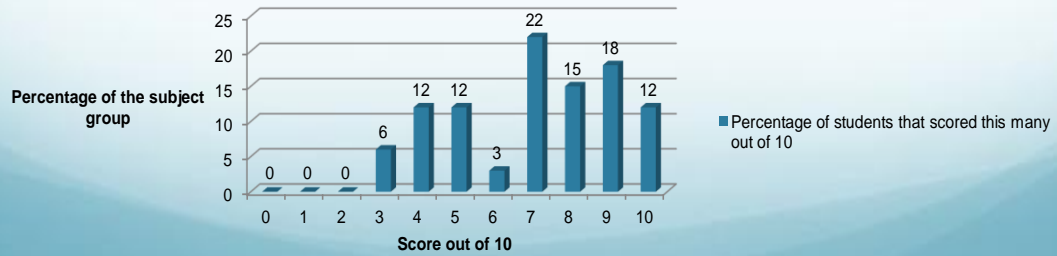■ Percentage of students that scored this many out of 10

Results - Science

Science results (Testing 1)

Science results (Testing 2)

Teacher Questionnaire

1. **On a scale of 1 to 5 how would you rate the pre-teaching key word strategy in helping your students understand your subject vocabulary.**

    1) **Number one been not effective at all**
    2) **Somewhat effective**
    3) **No opinion**
    4) **Effective**
    5) **Very effective.**

Please Circle your answer.

1_____2_____3_____4_____5

1. **Did pre-teaching key words cause challenges in your teaching?**
    Circle your answer   Yes   or   No
    Please comment

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2. **Was there advantages to pre-teaching subject specific key words?**
    Circle your answer   Yes   or   No
    Please comment
    _____
    _____
    _____

3. **Would you to recommend pre-teaching key words to other colleagues?**
    Circle your answer: Yes   or   No

4. **How frequently did you engage in pre-teaching key words?**

    _____
    _____
    _____

REPORT ON NUMERACY

"In school education, numeracy is a fundamental component of learning, discourse and critique across all areas of the curriculum"

(Stephens, 2009)

"Maths learned in isolation remains in isolation"

(Cockcroft, 1982)

2014/2015

In September 2014 a numeracy presentation was given to all staff on how to incorporate numeracy into our everyday teaching and into all our subject areas. The focus was that whole school collaborartion is key to consistent approaches to numeracy across all subject departments. Developing positive attitides and an awareness of numeracy is the responsibility of the whole school community. The role of the numeracy teacher is to help promote numeracy in the school.

It was decided that a whole school common approach to fractions and percentages would be adopted. All teachers when giving back tests would leave the result as a fraction and the student would change the fraction to a percentage using a common method. (Estimate– Calculate –Check).

It was also decided that all teachers would include numeracy across all subject areas and examples were given of 'numeracy moments' in different subjects. The focus would be on developing positive attitudes to numeracy, developing students problem solving abilities and to encourage a numeracy rich environment in all our classrooms.

Click on Icons below to open Power Point presentation:

Numeracy.pptx   Numeracy 2.pptx