School Self-Evaluation Report (2013-14)

1. Introduction

1.1 The focus of the evaluation

A school self-evaluation of teaching and learning in Coláiste Mhuire Co-Ed was undertaken during the period 12/2013 to 06/2014. During the evaluation, teaching and learning in the following subjects and programmes were evaluated:

- Literacy

This is a report on the findings of the evaluation.

1.2 School context

Coláiste Mhuire Co-Ed is a co-educational post-primary school under the patronage of Tipperary Education and Training Board (ETB). The original school was founded in 1948 and it moved to its current site in 1989. Including Post-Leaving Certificate (PLC) students it has an enrolment of 355 students. It serves a large rural and urban catchment area. The school is a participant in the Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools (DEIS) action plan for educational inclusion and as such benefits from the Home-School-Community Liaison (HSCL) scheme and the School Completion Programme (SCP).

The school is characterised by an open enrolment policy and an ethos of respect, effort, honesty and co-operation. In its mission statement, Coláiste Mhuire Co-Ed aspires to develop a caring and inclusive learning community that optimises the potential of each person. In keeping with its commitment to meeting the needs of the whole student population, the school offers the Junior Certificate and Leaving Certificate programmes, the Junior Certificate School Programme (JCSP), the Transition Year (TY) programme, the Leaving Certificate Applied (LCA) programme and the Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme (LCVP).

The SSE team meet weekly as part of the timetable.

Arising from staff and board of management discussions the school wrote to parents informing them of our approach to literacy in the first year of SSE. We also approached the town library with a request for age and ability appropriate reading lists which we gave to students.

2. The findings
Learner Outcomes

To establish where students were at we looked at Verbal Cat scores, reading ages and conducted an attitudinal survey of students.

Responses from a survey of students show that students do not read for recreational purposes. Some respondents said they do not like reading and report that they never read outside of school. Over 70% read text messages and over 55% read from the internet. 58% wanted to improve their reading.

70% of students felt they did not need extra help. In a focus group interview with these students they explained that through the use of their targeted learning support they felt supported.

42% of students say that they do not proof read their work.

Learner Experience
Due to work being carried out by our JCSP team we had already engaged with Make a Book Paired/Intergenerational reading, Reading Challenge, Targeting Resource Support, Reading corner and the use of SRA reading kits. While these initiatives were raising attainment for targeted groups it was felt that the scope of their use should be broadened.

A library class for each junior cycle class was also prioritised in the last academic year. This was shown in an attitudinal survey to have improved their pleasurable reading score by 11%.

70% of our students actively engage in digital literacy outside school.

70% of our students do not feel that they need extra help and cited the targeted learning support as a reason for this.

Our paired reading, intergenerational reading initiative was seen by teachers and adults involved to have great benefits. While students themselves feel that this is helping their reading (86%) it also has strong social and emotional benefits.

Teacher Practice
By analysing a sample of work from our Junior Cycle Students and interviewing teachers it was determined that most students display a good grasp of grammar, write in a small range of genres and show a limited use of vocabulary and need more oral and written preliminary work to ensure the writing has a logical flow.

At a staff meeting a consensus was reached that keyword posters should be more prominently displayed throughout the school.

It was also agreed that literacy would form part of subject planning with a particular focus on literacy initiatives in the school.

It was agreed with the JCSP core team that all staff would be made aware of funding around literacy initiatives and anchoring one literacy initiative in an area other than Learning support/English should be an annual priority.

3. Progress made on previously-identified targets improvement targets

N/A for year one as SIP not in place yet.

4. Summary of school self-evaluation findings

4.1 Our school has **strengths** in the following areas:

- Our JCSP programme has been of major benefit and though the resources used have helped to improve literacy levels.
- Library class for each junior cycle year (timetabled)
- Weekly timetabled meeting with SSE team
- Supportive staff
- Students have strong engagement with digital literacy
- Well stocked school library

4.2 The following areas **are prioritised for improvement**:
- Vocabulary instruction
- Differentiation of literacy for all students in the Junior Cycle (targeting commonly misspelt words) in all subjects
- To target an improvement in reading through the use of a library class for each English group in the Junior Cycle.
- To target an improvement in reading through the use of a red wall and DEAR
- To target students who fall below the 10th percentile in reading
- To improve spelling and grammar by 10% through the use of e-portfolios in first year English
- To improve presentation of students work using the Make a book JCSP initiative

COLÁISTE MHUIRE CO-ED SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN	
Summary of main strengths as identified in first SSER in June 2014	• Our JCSP programme has been of major benefit and though the resources used have helped to improve literacy levels. • Library class for each junior cycle year (timetabled) • Weekly timetabled meeting with SSE team • Supportive staff • Students have strong engagement with digital literacy • Well stocked school library
Summary of main areas requiring improvement as identified in last SSE June 2014	• Vocabulary instruction • Differentiation of literacy for all students in the Junior Cycle (targeting commonly misspelt words) in all subjects • To target an improvement in reading through the use of a library class for each English group in the Junior Cycle. • To target an improvement in reading through the use of a red wall • To target students have reading difficulty • To improve spelling and grammar by 10% through the use of e-portfolios • To improve presentation of students work using the Make a book JCSP initiative

EVALUATION THEME	IMPROVEMENT TARGETS (RELATED TO STUDENTS' ACHIEVEMENT)	REQUIRED ACTIONS (RELATED TO TEACHING AND LEARNING THAT WILL HELP TO ACHIEVE THE TARGETS)	PERSONS RESPONSIBLE	TIMEFRAME FOR ACTION	SUCCESS CRITERIA/MEASURABLE OUTCOMES	REVIEW DATE
Learning Experiences (Learning Environment)	**VOCABULARY** Students will improve their vocabulary by 60% in all subject areas.	This will be measured using a test at the beginning of the school year and at the end of the school year and will draw on vocabulary from all areas. Keyword posters will be displayed in all classrooms	Literacy Link (PHi) Deputy Principal (CWa) Literacy Team Principal (DQ) Teaching Staff This test will be administered by their English teacher Teachers will use these posters to explicitly teach vocabulary	One year	There will be a 60% improvement in student's vocabulary test.	June 2015 Final review June 2017
		CSPE students will hold a competition to see who earns the most rice for 3rd world countries on FREERICE.COM	1st and 2nd year CSPE students Languages, Science, English, Geography, Humanities & Maths departments can use as a resources also.	Students to use FREERICE.COM in CSPE and other classes and at home with parental permission in 2013/14.	An increase in the number of students reading from digital media as measured in the student survey. Record of students performance recorded on FREERICE.com	

	Reading for pleasure Students will improve by 5% in SRS reading tests and will have an increased score on the reading for pleasure survey.	Students will have one reading class using the school library and will fill in the "my reading journal" over the course of their junior cycle.	English teachers		Students will express a greater desire to read for pleasure. There will be a 5% improvement on SRS scores (to be found in 13/14)	June 2015 Final review June 2017
		Drop everything and read. Once every 3 weeks everyone stops what they are doing and reads for a class.	All Staff		Students will express a greater desire to read for pleasure.	
		Intergenerational reading with a target group	Learning Support team		Students will express a greater desire to read for pleasure.	
		Red wall	First and Second year students and English teachers		Students will express a greater desire to read for pleasure.	
	Targeted students – students who fall below the 10th percentile in reading To reduce the % of students with significant literacy problems by 5% in each year group.	1. Prim-ed – The comprehension box, box 2 and 3 2. SNIP reading programme 3. JCSP novels and student workbooks 4. SRA reading laboratory 5. Brainsanck – 300 problem solving cards	Learning Support team	One year	Targeted students who fall below the 10% in reading will have improved by 5%	June 2015 Final review June 2017

		6. 13 mini-ipads and relevant literacy apps 7. E-reader & headphones (readalong)				
	Digital literacy project. To improve spelling and grammar by 10% through the use of e-portfolios	To use google drive to upload work in English to determine if it has an impact on grammar and spelling.	First year English and IT team teacher		Spelling and grammar will improve by 10%	June 2015 Final review June 2017
	Make a book To improve presentation of students work based on teacher perception.	To use the make a book project to encourage students to present work.	First year English and IT teacher		In an attitudinal survey teachers report that student work is better presented.	June 2015 Final review June 2017