

Literacy

Preparation for Teaching:

Teachers prepare short and long term plans and use their plans to guide teaching and learning. All short and long term plans are stored on the school Dropbox account to ensure continuity between class and SEN teachers and from year to year at the same class level. Learning outcomes and teaching approaches, activities and resources are identified in the plans. Curriculum objectives and the school plan are used to devise long and short term plans by teachers. Commercial products are only used with reference to curriculum objectives. Teachers plan for how they are going to assess the pupils learning.

Teaching Approaches:

Teachers employ a wide variety of teaching methodologies appropriate to the development of oral language, reading, writing and digital media literacy. Very good use is made of resources including ICT to support pupils in their learning. Teachers differentiate the lessons effectively to cater for the needs and abilities of all pupils. Teachers have expressed a desire for a review of the teaching and learning of reading and writing in the school.

Management of Pupils:

Collaboration between class teachers and SEN teachers takes place on a structured basis on the third Wednesday of every month. Team teaching/in class support is being used to support the development of Literacy. A variety of organisational groupings and settings are used in classrooms to support Literacy. A positive code of behaviour including an anti-bullying policy is implemented in a fair and consistent way. This is an inclusive school which respects all pupils regardless of background or gender. Teachers have high but realistic expectations of pupils' behaviour and learning and they communicate these to them.

Assessment:

Teachers employ a large selection of assessment tools to assess learning in Literacy – observations, checklists, curriculum objectives, questioning, self-assessment, tests and standardised tests. A screening test (MIST) is used in senior infants to identify children at risk of reading failure. The Test2R screening test is currently being piloted in the school for use in Senior Infants as a comprehensive alternative to the MIST test. The Drumcondra English standardised test is administered to all classes from first to sixth in May each year and results are reported to parents in the end of year report. NRIT tests are undertaken with second and fifth class each year.

Learning Environment:

A print rich environment is evident around the school. The school provides opportunities for pupils to write for real purposes and audiences. The school is decorated with displays of pupils work. There is an agreed approach to the teaching of cursive handwriting from Junior Infants to 6th Class. The reading culture in the school is well cultivated and maintained by a variety of reading activities/initiatives throughout the year including buddy reading and paired reading. The school library is staffed by a parent volunteer two days a week. Each class visits the school library at least once a week.





St Patrick's National School

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Roll No: 18040L

Slane, Co. Meath

Principal: Paul O'Donnell

Pupil's Engagement with Learning:

Pupils at all class level are actively engaged in their learning and the level of pupil interest and participation is high. Pupils report that they enjoy a variety of activities in English lessons – reading, writing stories, poetry and comprehension.

Parental Involvement:

Parents are very supportive of school Literacy initiatives. Parents are encouraged to support their child's reading through listening to reading for homework and paired reading. Parents are encouraged to become involved with book fairs, visits to the library and paired reading initiatives. A meeting takes place in October for parents of new Junior Infants to explain the primary school literacy strategy.

Whole School Evaluation September 2014

The WSE report stated the following in relation to English in our school "The overall quality of teaching, learning and pupil achievement in English is very good. A comprehensive whole school plan guides the implementation of each strand and supports continuity in teaching and learning throughout the school. Regular provision is made for discreet oral language lessons which focus on the development of language skills as well as extending vocabulary. Very good provision for poetry is in evidence. Positive attitudes towards reading have been nurtured and pupils demonstrate very good reading attainments overall. There is need to review some instructional material in some instances to ensure a more appropriate alignment with pupils' abilities. The effective use of novels and the explicit teaching of comprehension skills is commended. A whole school commitment to all stages of the writing process together with the systematic development of a suitable range of writing genres contributes to the very high standards of pupils' independent creative writing. Cursive writing has been successfully developed

Attainment in Literacy:

The Standardised Drumcondra Reading Test results for the last three years are as follows:

	At or Below 2 nd	3 rd – 16 th	17 th – 50 th	51 st – 84 th	85 th – 98 th	99 th
National Distribution	2%	14%	34%	34%	14%	2%
May 2014	0%	4%	19%	30%	41%	5%
May 2013	0%	7%	17%	34%	37%	5%
May 2012	1%	5%	24%	34%	32%	7%



Proud of our school's achievements



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Our school has strengths in the following areas with regard to Literacy:

- Reading initiatives to encourage reading – paired reading, buddy reading, DEAR, book fair, school librarian and revamped, fully stocked school library.
- New English curriculum plan in place
- Commercial products used with reference to curriculum objectives
- Good resources available
- Variety of assessment tools used
- Print rich environment – lots of sight vocabulary
- Good spiral phonics in junior classes
- Good variety of reading texts used
- Children engage in listening comprehension activities
- Good variety of reading material available in junior classes
- Diagnostic and standardised tests administered
- The process of writing is fostered and children write for real purposes
- Draft, edit redrafting are at the heart of the writing process
- A variety of writing genres are taught
- Children are given opportunities to write and display poetry
- Good cursive handwriting is fostered throughout the school
- Structured comprehension strategies taught through Building Bridges model.
- There is an agreed source of varied content for spellings and a variety of methods used
- Pupils are performing well above the national average for English reading and comprehension in standardized testing.
- Results of assessments are used to inform teacher planning



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