

Lusk Junior National School St MacCullin's

Our Self-Evaluation Report and Improvement Plan

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 Outcomes of our last improvement plan from 2012-2015

Lusk JNS St MacCullin's opened 1st September 2018. The following plan outlines the focus of our School Improvement Plan which was handwriting and the development of cursive writing.

1.2 The focus of this evaluation

We undertook self-evaluation of teaching and learning during the period *October 2018 to 2020*. (Whole school practices in relation to the development of handwriting were developed as a result and continue to be embedded in our school). We evaluated the following aspect(s) of teaching and learning in relation to **Language 1; specifically Handwriting**

Prior to the Targeted Intervention

- Teacher's Collective/Collaborative Practice
 - Professional Collaboration allowed a re-evaluation of the handwriting scheme in the school and the lack of consistency across streams in relation to same
 - Teachers collectively developed and implemented consistent and dependable practices to promote the teaching and learning of cursive handwriting across streams.
 - All teachers contributed to building whole staff capacity by sharing expertise through team planning and staff meetings and creating lists of appropriate fine motor activities and resources which were to be sourced.
- Teacher's Individual Practice
 - Teachers reflected on their own planning and preparation and assessment in relation to handwriting
 - Teachers responded to the individual needs within their classroom and differentiated teaching and learning activities as necessary when formally teaching handwriting and creating opportunities for fine motor skill development
 - Teachers selected teaching approaches appropriate to the learning objectives (as set out in our targets in School Improvement Plan) which were done on a weekly basis

During the Targeted Intervention

- Learner Experiences:
 - As a result of collaborative planning, children were given the opportunity to engage purposefully in meaningful activities that promoted handwriting and fine motor skills
 - Children were given the opportunity to see their progression from beginning stages at pre-test to their improvements at post-test (and throughout the year through observation of work in self-assessment folders and copy books etc) , which built their confidence and developed a sense of ownership and responsibility for their learning
- Learner Outcomes:
 - Children were motivated to make improvements by visually seeing their improvements and successes
 - Were given opportunity to develop the necessary fine motor skills to develop handwriting skills
 - Children were given the opportunity to achieve targets for handwriting as a result of ongoing skills development and support from their teachers and peers

2. Findings

- **Based on collaborative reflection, feedback and observations from teachers, the following was noted:**
 - The need for additional fine motor skills work was noted
 - Feedback indicated that there was an issue with the style of cursive writing/no set programme and suggestions were made to introduce a style of cursive writing that was more fluid.
 - Some letters are more difficult for children than others- there is a lack of fluidity in some letters e.g. w, s
 - There is a need for two alphabets to be on display in each classroom- a print alphabet and a cursive alphabet

- Handwriting awards/competitions could be used to encourage the development of cursive writing skills
- Need for consistency across the school in terms of approach to the teaching of cursive writing

2.1 This is effective / very effective practice in our school

- All children are engaged in the development of cursive writing skills

The following practices are already in place in terms of teaching and learning:

- **Promoting a culture of improvement, collaboration and innovation and creativity in learning, teaching and assessment**
 - Team teaching, team planning, modelling, teacher observations, Assessment of Learning and Assessment for Learning
- **Fostering a Commitment to Inclusion, Equality of Opportunity and the Holistic Development of Each Pupil**
 - Ongoing Differentiation for children with additional needs, EAL etc
- **Manage the Planning and Implementation of the School Curriculum**
 - Policies are updated on a regular basis in liaison with staff
 - Cuntas Míosúil are drawn up
 - Resources are allocated to support the development of the curriculum
- **Foster Teacher Professional Development that enriches teachers' and pupils' learning**
 - Peer/Team teaching is encouraged
 - Continuous Professional Development is encouraged
 - Research based initiatives are piloted

2.2. This is how we know.

- Teacher reflections and dispositions
- Reflection of above in cuntas míosúil
- CPD is encouraged
- Team Teaching is ongoing
- Active participation of all children in the various classrooms regardless of needs

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

- Consistency in the teaching of handwriting has been highlighted by teachers as a priority
- Collaborative planning is essential in putting our targets in place
- The development of fine motor skills is a pre-cursor to appropriate handwriting development and will be targeted
- The handwriting policy will be edited and the Go with the Flow scheme will be used as a guide to supporting the development of cursive writing.

3. Our improvement plan

On the next page we have recorded:

- The **targets** for improvement we have set
- The **actions** we will implement to achieve these
- **Who is responsible** for implementing, monitoring and reviewing our improvement plan
- How we will measure **progress** and check **outcomes** (criteria for success)

As we implement our improvement plan we will record:

- The **progress** made, and **adjustments** made, and **when**
- **Achievement of targets** and **when**

Parish of St. Maccullin



Our School Improvement Plan

Targets	Actions	Persons / groups responsible	Criteria for success	Progress and adjustments	Targets achieved
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<p>Handwriting Skills Performance</p> <p>Observations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children will hold pencil with appropriate tripod grip • Children will position paper appropriately • Children will sit with a straight back when writing <p>Correct Letter Formation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children will be enabled to follow the trace of a line • Children can trace on the line • Children will close closed letters • Children will ensure that looped letters are looped • Children will ensure that stick letters are sticks <p>Fluency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children's writing will be smooth (not choppy) • Pencil pressure of writing will be even • Words will be written as complete units • Letter connection will be smooth 	<p>Teachers will have discrete instruction time focusing on the development of fine motor skills in order to develop finger, hand and shoulder strength.</p> <p>Teachers will spend time focusing on pre-writing skills in order to support children's ability to move the pencil fluidly without taking a break.</p> <p>Children's left to right orientation will be consolidated as a result of pre-writing skills e.g. children will move the pencil between two points in a straight line, a curved, a zig zag and a waved line</p> <p>Teachers will focus an eight week intervention period where they will have formal fine motor development activities as well as a formal handwriting lesson every week.</p> <p>A pre-test observation record, as well as a post-test observation will be</p>	<p>Each class teacher will select a cohort of 6 children and use the handwriting checklist to measure their handwriting performance before the period of intervention and after the period of intervention.</p> <p>All children will engage in discrete lessons weekly that focus on handwriting skills and fine motor skills under the direction of their teacher.</p>	<p>Children will show increased hand/finger strength as a result of direct motor skill lessons.</p> <p>There will be an improvement from the pre-test checklist to the post test checklist in terms of performance observations, correct letter formations, fluency and letter size, slant and spacing</p>	<p>Focus on the development of appropriate tripod grip particularly in Junior Classes (we are finding that in older classes if this grip has been learnt inappropriately, then the children find it hard to revert to appropriate grip)- use of specialised pencil grips, triangular shaped crayons etc</p> <p>Transfer of Skills: Focus on the development of cursive writing in creative writing.</p> <p>Focus on which areas of writing need improvement by analysis of children's work e.g. capital letters, use of verbs/adjectives, full stops, etc and put a plan of action in each class to support this (to be decided by staff)</p>	<p>Handwriting scheme was redrafted.</p> <p>Results of targeted intervention:</p> <p>Following the 8 week intervention period, analysis of handwriting checklists revealed the following:</p> <p>2nd Class:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There was a 25% improvement in terms of performance observations (See Targets) 2. There was a 23.3% improvement in terms of Correct letter formation (see Targets) 3. There was a 35.4% improvement in terms of Writing Fluency (see Targets) 4. There was an 18.75% improvement in terms of Letter Size, Slant and Spacing (see Targets) <p>1st class post-test measures could not be analysed as a result of practice errors.</p> <p>Senior Infants:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There was a 44.4% improvement in terms of performance observations (See Targets)
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<p><u>Letter Size, Slant, Spacing: Lowercase letters are uniform in size</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uppercase letters will be uniform in size • Tail lengths will be consistent and will not interfere with letters on the line below • Tail lengths are consistent in height and are clearly taller 	<p>taken by teachers in order to measure improvements in handwriting over the 8 week period</p> <p>Redraft the handwriting policy in order to reflect our new handwriting scheme and objectives.</p>				<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. There was a <u>26.6% improvement in terms of Correct letter formation</u> (see Targets) 3. There was an <u>8.3% improvement in terms of Writing Fluency</u> (see Targets) 4. There was an <u>31.9% improvement in terms of Letter Size, Slant and Spacing</u> (see Targets) <p><u>Junior Infants:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There was a <u>31.4% improvement in terms of performance observations</u> (See Targets) 2. There was a <u>41.6% improvement in terms of Correct letter formation</u> (see Targets) <p><u>NB: Writing Fluency and Letter Size, Slant and Spacing</u> were not measured and analysed for Junior Infants</p>
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