



Powerstown Educate Together National School

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Our Self-Evaluation Report and Improvement Plan

1. Introduction

This document records the outcomes of year 1 of our current improvement plan, and an updated Action Plan for the academic year 2019-2020, including targets and the actions we will implement to meet the targets.

1.1 Outcomes of Year 1 of our improvement plan from June 2018 to June 2019

- Teachers are planning collaboratively for learning activities connected to a monthly theme
 - Planning groups (class teachers, SNAs and support teacher for a particular class level) meeting fortnightly to reflect on teaching and planning for coming two weeks
 - Monthly thematic plans have been developed to include a thematic web and curricular targets
 - New school planning templates were introduced to include SMART targets, emphasis on vocabulary development, PLC content. There was an emphasis on thematic learning. Teachers completed short-term plans, long-term monthly plans, monthly thematic webs (shared with parents), team-teaching plans and Cuntas Míosúil using our new templates.
- Based on feedback from our WSE in November, teachers have introduced more flexibility into the organisation of team teaching.
 - We engaged with sustained support from PDST in relation to team teaching. We discussed different styles of teaching, in addition to station teaching, e.g. parallel teaching, shadow teaching, whole-class teaching and withdrawal. We reflected on the purpose of team teaching and focused on our goals for improvement.
 - Previously teachers had been implementing station teaching three days per week for literacy and numeracy. Teachers are now selecting the most appropriate team-teaching model for the particular theme / topic and children they are teaching
 - Previously all classes of the same level were combined (e.g. 2 second classes) and then split into groups across the 2 classes for literacy and numeracy. Based on WSE and PDST feedback, teachers are now introducing more flexibility into this organisation.
- Inquiry-based learning has been implemented and further developed in a number of classes
 - Additional resources were purchased for classes from Junior Infants to First Class to support play-based, thematic learning
 - Visitors to the class, as well as excursions outside of the school, were planned according to the relevant monthly theme being explored in senior classes
- Collaboration with parents to support pupils' learning needs
 - Teachers, pupils and parents set targets for pupils on the Continuum of Support (COS) collaboratively
 - Most teachers shared monthly targets and progress reports with parents of children on the COS through Aladdin
 - Teachers and SNAs met with parents of children on the COS at least once per term to discuss progress and future learning targets
 - Teachers shared monthly plans on class blogs, Aladdin and through school website
 - Parents were invited to an information meeting in September to discuss the curriculum and school routines
 - Parents were invited into the school to participate in learning activities, for example, Science for Fun, Science Fair, Shared Reading, Maths Week, Sports Day, Intercultural May, Bricféasta na Gaeilge, School Musical. Parents also accompanied classes on excursions outside of the school, e.g. school tours, swimming lessons.

1.2 The focus of this evaluation

We reflected on our School Improvement targets from the previous year; on the progress that we have made and on further areas for improvement.

We gathered feedback in relation to teaching and learning in the school over the past year in the following ways:

- Feedback from PDST
- Feedback from Department Inspectors at WSE
- Feedback from parents through PTA, parent-teacher meetings, informal discussion with parents
- Teacher feedback at planning meetings, staff meetings, feedback forms
- Pupil feedback through class discussion

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

Specify the aspects of teaching and learning the school has identified and prioritised for further improvement.

- **Review planning and organisation in relation to the Continuum of Support Policy in the school**
 - Teachers felt unsure as to when a child should be moved from one level of COS to another. We need to clarify the criteria with NCSE.
 - Class teachers and COS teachers felt overwhelmed with the level of paperwork completed each month, i.e. progress reviews and updated targets for each child on COS. Some teachers may have had up to 30 plans to complete each month. Teachers felt that when this level of paperwork is being completed, it is not always purposeful.
 - Department inspectors stated during WSE that home targets should not be included in monthly plans as they cannot be controlled or assessed in school. We need to clarify with this NCSE.
 - Parents expressed that they would like homework to be more differentiated for children with additional learning needs.
 - Some parents expressed concerns that children with standardised test results below the 13th percentile did not make the expected progress.
- **Language acquisition of pupils who have English as an Additional Language (EAL)**
 - We have a high percentage of children with EAL in our school, approx. 90%. This is a significant need in our school.
 - WSE inspectors stated that due to the high level of need and the high level of resources allocated to the school in terms of EAL teachers, that this should be a priority of improvement in the school.
 - WSE inspectors advised the school to take on a more evidence-based approach to teaching and learning in relation to the language acquisition of pupils with EAL
 - Teachers have expressed the need for additional EAL resources in the school, e.g. resources for relevant themes, guidance on teaching vocabulary/grammar/reading/etc in a progressive manner according to language levels.
- **Inquiry-based learning in all classes from Junior Infants to Sixth Class**
 - This had been previously identified as an improvement target for our school and has been implemented very well from Junior Infants to First Class. We would like to further develop this approach and provide more support/resources to classes from Second Class to Sixth Class.
 - We have invested in great outdoor learning spaces on our school grounds. However, we feel that they are not being fully utilised to the best of their potential. We would like to expand on our use of the outdoor learning spaces in the school.
 - Our current plan has highlighted the need to develop opportunities for collaboration with outside personnel through field trips and organisation of visitors to the class. This was implemented very well in 5th and 6th class. We would like to provide more similar opportunities to other classes in the school also.

Our Improvement Plan

Timeframe of this improvement plan is from [Sept 2019] to [June 2019]

Targets	Actions	Persons / groups responsible	Criteria for success	Progress and adjustments	Targets achieved
<p>1. Inquiry-based learning to be implemented with cross-curricular links evident in teachers' planning</p>	<p>Teachers to collaborate with relevant outside personnel to further develop teaching around a monthly theme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant visitors to the class or relevant field trips to the local area, e.g. visit to local park/shop, visit to local library, visit from local person or parent – at least one per term • Teachers to continue to engage in external initiatives, e.g. Bizworld, Science Fair, Debating • Collect information from parents and/or family members in relation to their skills, knowledge base, interests using a Google Form and share with teachers for use in relation to monthly themes • Compile a list of useful contacts for local people / experts / organisations that could share their expertise in school <p>Further develop inquiry-based learning from first class to second class</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invest in and/or develop relevant and appropriate resources to support exploratory, child-centred, inquiry-based learning • Support teachers in planning meetings, provide PDST support as required. <p>Expand on the use of outdoor learning spaces</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased use of outdoor Aistear space for Junior and Senior Infants – discuss with staff and parents as to how to get more use from this space throughout the year, e.g. buy waterproof clothing, further develop resources to link learning areas with relevant themes. • Develop a timetable for the use of outdoor spaces by all classes, e.g. Forest School, Literacy and Numeracy area, Storytime chair, grass areas, garden and geodome. Provide staff with additional support (CPD, resources) to promote the use of these spaces. 	<p>All staff, James to support</p> <p>Róisín to collect info from parents and share with staff</p> <p>Aoife / Helena to support with planning and purchasing resources</p>	<p>All classes to engage with one relevant visitor/trip per term</p> <p>Enquiry-based learning for SESE/Arts in all classes at least one day per week</p> <p>Use of outdoor learning spaces by all classes at least once per term</p>		

<p>2. Teachers work very effectively with each other and with parents to support pupils with identified learning needs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage with NCSE support visits to reflect on planning and organisation for the COS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Clarify how often learning targets should be reviewed and shared with parents ○ Establish the difference between short-term and long-term planning within the COS ○ Ensure targets are SMART so that learning is meaningful and progress is evident ○ Clarify when a pupil should move between levels of the COS ○ Ensure that children who are falling below the 13th percentile in Literacy or Numeracy are receiving targeted support to help them make clear progress during the school year • Class teachers, support teachers, SNAs and parents collaborate to ensure children with identified learning needs are provided with adequately differentiated work, <u>including differentiated homework.</u> • Teachers to share SMART targets (approx. 3) with SNAs and parents to ensure consistent and focused support 	<p>Barbara from NCSE to support with reflection and review of policy, planning</p> <p>COS team to feed back to staff</p> <p>Aoife / Helena and Róisín to support with implementation of policy</p> <p>All staff to engage with COS policy</p> <p>COS teachers to take responsibility for differentiated homework for pupils getting access to EAL or learning support</p>	<p>Observable progress in children's learning targets at the end of the year</p>		
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<p>3. Pupils with English as an Additional Language (EAL) will achieve the stated learning objectives for the term and year</p>	<p>Assessment and tracking progress of pupils with EAL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessment of pupils listening and speaking in September using the Primary School Assessment Kit (PSAK) to establish baseline language levels; assessment of reading and writing skills for older pupils using relevant assessment tools, e.g. PSAK/PM. This baseline should be used as a starting point for teaching and instruction. Talkboost is available as an additional assessment tool for target groups. Grouping and prioritising children for EAL instruction in-class or through withdrawal based on PSAK scores Building language portfolios for children who are accessing EAL support which they can use to build evidence of their learning and share with class teacher, support teacher and parents Track the progress of pupils accessing EAL support according to the language levels throughout the year using the <i>Up and Away Programme</i> <p>Develop and expand on school resources for teaching topics and themes to pupils with EAL:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resource manuals with guidance on the content to be covered by children who are scoring at different language levels, i.e. from A1 to B3 Develop a resource bank for teaching different language topics and themes that can be shared across the school, e.g. flashcards, books, games, ICT links, etc. COS team to share resources, links and ideas with parents, classroom teachers and SNAs. Access CPD or support from PDST/NCSE in relation to relevant and appropriate resources for EAL Use of SESS online library/book borrowing service to access a variety of books and resources related to the teaching of English 	<p>COS teachers and class teachers to collaborate on planning and resource development</p> <p>Róisín / Aoife / Helena to investigate and purchase relevant and appropriate resources</p> <p>COS teachers to assist pupils with the development of language portfolios. Class teachers, pupils and parents to participate and collaborate in this.</p>	<p>Observable progress in children's language scores, e.g. PSAK</p> <p>Measurable progress in children's language attainment according to <i>Up and Away</i> targets and tracking documents</p>		
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