



Tarbert Comprehensive School

TARBERT COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL

TARBERT CO. KERRY

81006S

Summary School Improvement Plan for the School Community

Evaluation period: *September 2013 – June 2014*

Plan issue date: *June 2014*

Summary school improvement plan

1. Introduction

1.1 The focus of the evaluation

As part of our ongoing work in the school, we conducted a school self-evaluation of teaching and learning this year. We evaluated Literacy. For more information on how the evaluation took place, please see our School Self-Evaluation Report which is available on this website.

This school improvement plan sets out the actions that we will undertake in the school over the next three years in Literacy. The main purpose of these actions is to improve our students' learning.

2. Summary of school self-evaluation findings

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

Strengths

- The standard of teaching and learning in the school has been judged to be of 'a very high standard' (WSE/MLL report)
- The PISA 2012 results show the school to be above the national average in reading and digital reading
- Management and staff are committed to a whole school approach to the improvement of literacy and numeracy and have begun process of trialling and evaluating literacy strategies
- The school has a print rich environment and popular library area, both of which are conducive to promoting literacy
- The school communicates very effectively with parents and guardians in various ways, making it possible to involve them in their child's literacy

We have assessed these as our strengths because the MLL/WSE report on Tarbert Comprehensive praised the quality of teaching and learning in the school. PISA 2012 results demonstrated that Tarbert scored above the National average in the stated areas. We communicate effectively with parents/guardians through varied means such as journals, texts, newsletters, information evenings and via the school website. In this way we ensure that the school works in partnership with parents in the care and education of our students.

2.2 Our school has decided to prioritise the following **areas of development**:

Areas for development

- Based on survey given to first years we would like to improve the number of students who read for pleasure often
- Expand the focus on key words and vocabulary to all year groups. Increase the number of

students finding this focus 'helpful'

- Examine whether a link exists between disengagement and literacy standards among second year students
- Review of standardised tests used in the school

We have decided to prioritise these areas because a significant percentage of students surveyed (23%) stated they never read for pleasure we and we believe this can be reduced. While the student response to keyword strategies has been positive, such strategies were largely focused on first year classes - it is intended to extend this to all year groups. As regards the testing of second year students, the school is aware of the potential for disengagement during second year, and its possible impact on literacy. We aim to take steps to address this, initially by examining the testing itself and then with a targeted strategy for second years if such intervention is deemed necessary. Finally, the recent WSE/MLL report recommended that the school and subject departments should move towards time-bound action plans. It is intended to address this during the course of the current school improvement plan.

2.3 Our school has set the following **targets for improvement** which are related to pupils' achievement and has identified the following **actions** which will help in achieving those targets over the next three years.

Targets for Improvement

Actions

Reduce the number of students who 'never' read for pleasure from 23% to 19%

Focus to be placed on use of school library

Setting up of Senior book club initially, then junior book club

Dedicated reading time built into first year English classes

DEAR to be initiated once per term on a whole school basis

Increase the number of students finding the focus on keywords 'helpful' from 46% to 51%

Focus on of key words and key vocabulary strategies to be expanded to include all year groups

Examination of the decline in reading ages among some second year students to include a management review of standardised tests used by the school

Targeted reading and comprehension strategy – (tactical teaching). Teachers to avail of CPD in this area

Review of standardised tests used to determine efficacy and age-appropriateness of test

As a parent you can help us by being aware of the school's process of self-evaluation and the details of the School Improvement Plan. Parents can also support their children's literacy by regularly accessing information on literacy via the school website, the school newsletter or information evenings as appropriate, in order to keep abreast of the school's strategies to improve literacy. Finally, parents or guardians can help their children to improve their literacy by providing opportunities to read and engage with different types of texts and to discuss these at home.

2.4 We know we will have achieved our targets when:

- The majority of students regularly read for pleasure
- The number of those who 'never' read for pleasure has decreased by 4%
- The focus on keyword strategies has been extended to all year groups
- The percentage of students finding keyword strategies 'helpful' has increased by 6%
- We have completed our review of the testing of second year students and are satisfied that the tests used and the timing of those tests provide us with the most accurate and current information regarding the literacy levels of those students