



**Tarbert Comprehensive School**

**TARBERT COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL**

**TARBERT CO. KERRY**

**81006S**

**Summary School Self-Evaluation Report for the School Community  
Numeracy**

**Evaluation period: *January 2014 – June 2015***

**Report issue date: *June 2015***

# Summary School Self-Evaluation Report

## 1. Introduction

The school, which has a current enrolment of 628, was established in 1973 and is comprehensive in the sense that it is a co-educational establishment catering for all ranges of abilities, embracing all social groupings, offering the widest possible range of subjects and being open to all religious persuasions. We promote a healthy work ethic and a love of learning in a spirit of collegiality and co-operation so that all may reach their full potential. For more information on how we intend to improve our students' learning, please see our Summary School Improvement Plan which is available on the school website

### 1.1 The focus of the evaluation

To date, school improvement has been informed by the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategy and by Department of Education guidelines. We undertook a school self-evaluation of Teaching and Learning in the school during the period January 2014 to June 2015. During this time, teaching and learning in the area of Numeracy was evaluated.

This report summarises the strengths that were identified and the areas that have been prioritised for improvement.

## 2. Summary of school self-evaluation findings

In March 2013 the Department of Education Inspectorate carried out a Whole School Evaluation of practises within the school, with the resulting report available in September 2013. The findings and recommendations of the report and results of the 2012 PISA assessment, published in 2014, informed the evaluation process in the school which began thereafter. These, along with analysis of standardised tests, results of state exams and reviews of current practice provided the basis for the self-evaluation of Numeracy in the school.

### 2.1 We found that our school has **strengths** in the following areas:

#### Strengths

- At both Junior Cert and Leaving Cert level, the uptake of HL Maths exceeds the national average
- Students in Tarbert consistently gain more points in Maths at LC level than the national average
- The school is committed to ongoing development and improvement, as evidenced by our review of standardised tests and engagement with the process of school self-evaluation.
- Steps have been taken prior to the implementation of the SIP to improve Numeracy in the school
- The school has a print rich environment and a busy and popular library, both of which are conducive to the improvement of both literacy and numeracy
- Teachers are encouraged and willing to engage in extensive CPD around new and existing initiatives in education
- Management and staff are committed to a whole school approach to school planning to improve quality of teaching and learning in the school, and have taken significant steps to date to improve numeracy in line with the national strategy
- Communication between the school and parents/primary caregivers is extensive and varied and presents opportunities to engage parents in their children's progress in meaningful ways
- Improvements in digital infrastructure over recent years have enhanced teacher practise and learner engagement

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. Our uptake of Maths at HL, and results in state exams compare favourably to national averages. We communicate extensively 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 We have decided to prioritise the following **areas for development**:

### **Areas for development**

- We aim to improve students' performance in the area of converting fractions to percentages via a whole school approach common across all subjects
- To implement the above, the Maths department will facilitate staff training in this particular area
- Over the course of the SIP we will review and develop our subject plans in relation to their Numeracy content
- We aim to maintain the percentages taking HL Maths at JC and LC level which compare favourably to the national averages
- We will continue our review of testing, and particularly in respect of the newly adopted CAT 4, to explore its uses in the area of identifying students in need of supports or interventions
- The school will take steps to improve student attitudes to maths and numeracy, specifically to increase the percentage of students who respond that they 'Like Maths', by 6% in the course of the plan. Suggestions for this include: whole school 'Numeracy Moments', similar to the DEAR in Literacy and actively encouraging students to engage with numbers based puzzles and games via the Numeracy Board

We have decided to prioritise these areas because a significant number of students tested in the PDST Maths competency test, and in a subsequent in-house survey, had difficulty with the conversion of fractions to percentages. A survey also revealed that a sizeable percentage of students (35%) do not like Maths. Teachers also requested CPD in the area of Numeracy. It is anticipated that a whole school approach and a focus on numeracy for enjoyment will improve students' attitudes and teacher engagement with the numeracy elements of their subjects. Where our review of the testing used for first years is in its early days, we hope that over time we will establish whether the current tests are effective in highlighting students' potential and achievement and allowing for targeted intervention where required.

**Appendix to Post-primary School Self-Evaluation Report:  
legislative and regulatory checklist – reporting to the school community**

Rules and regulations for schools are set out in a number of Education Acts, and in Circulars issued to schools from time to time by the Department of Education and Skills. The list below deals with important areas of school life and tells you what rules and regulations apply to them. You will find the Acts and Circulars mentioned on the Department's website, <a href="http://www.education.ie">www.education.ie</a> .	
Which area of school life is involved, and what are the regulations?	Is the school following the regulations fully?
<b>Enrolment of students</b> The Education Act 1998, the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, and Circular M51/93 set out the principles schools should follow in their enrolment policies	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Repeating a year</b> Students may repeat a school year in certain conditions and for particular reasons, such as illness. Conditions are set out in Circular M02/95	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>The school calendar and the school timetable</b> Schools must offer a minimum of 167 school days each year to all year groups. Circular M29/95 sets this down.  Schools must offer a minimum school week of 28 hours for all year groups. Circular M29/95 sets this down.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No  <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Standardised school year</b> School holidays are now standardised so all post-primary schools have holidays at the same time. The current school holidays circular is 34/2011	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Parent/teacher meetings and staff meetings</b> These meetings have to happen at certain times of the day so as not to interrupt teaching time or inconvenience parents. Circular M58/04 sets these out.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Implementation of national literacy and numeracy strategy</b> Schools are required to have a whole-school approach to literacy and numeracy development. Parents have an important role to play in this area. See <i>Literacy and Numeracy for Learning and Life</i> , and Circular 25/2012	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Agreement regarding additional time in school for teachers</b> Circular 025/2011 requires teachers to do an additional 33 hours of out-of-class work each year, so as not to reduce teaching time	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Development of school plan</b> All schools are required to have a school plan, giving their mission and vision, policies and priorities for development	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Engagement with school self-evaluation (SSE) process</b> The SSE process requires schools to evaluate how well they are doing, and where they need to improve. The voices of parents and students are very important to this evaluation process. See <a href="http://www.schoolself-evaluation.ie">www.schoolself-evaluation.ie</a> .	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Guidance provision in post-primary schools</b> The Education Act 1998 requires all schools to provide appropriate guidance to students. See Circular 09/2012 for the current arrangements.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Delivery of CSPE to all junior cycle classes</b> Civic, Social and Political Education is currently a compulsory subject in the junior cycle. All junior cycle students should have one CSPE lesson per week.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Exemption from the study of Irish</b> Some students may be exempt from studying Irish. See Circular M10/94	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

<b>Implementation of child protection procedures</b> The <i>Child Protection Procedures for primary and post-primary schools</i> (2011) oblige schools to ensure that: liaison persons have been appointed ; the procedures have been communicated to the whole school community; and the procedures are being followed	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Implementation of complaints procedure as appropriate</b> Section 28 Education Act 1998 provides for procedures to address complaints about a school	Complaints have been resolved or are being resolved <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Appeal in the case of refusal to enrol students, suspension, and expulsion</b> Section 29 Education Act 1998 provides for an appeal procedure in these cases. The school deals with them first. Where cases are not resolved at school level, an external appeals committee hears the appeal and makes a decision.	Appeals have been dealt with or are being dealt with <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>

**Appendix to School Self-Evaluation report: policy checklist – reporting to the school community**

<b>Schools are required to have certain policies in place as part of their permanent school plan. It is good practice for schools to consult with the school community in forming and reviewing many of these policies. The school board of management has to approve and ratify policies, and should ensure that they are reviewed on a regular basis.</b>	
<b>What area of school life does the policy deal with and what is the aim of the policy?</b>	<b>Has the policy been approved by the Board of Management?</b>
<b>Enrolment policy</b> Section 15 of the Education Act 1998 obliges schools to have and publish an enrolment policy that respects the principles of equality and parental choice	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Code of behaviour</b> Section 23, Education (Welfare) Act 2000, and the 2008 <i>National Educational Welfare Board Guidelines</i> set out regulations and good practice for schools to follow when drawing up and implementing a code of behaviour. This good practice includes consultation with parents and students.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Anti-bullying procedures</b> The Department's <i>Anti-bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-primary Schools</i> , 2013, set out the measures that schools are required to have in place.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Attendance and participation strategy</b> Section 22 Education Welfare Act 2000 requires schools to develop a strategy to support high levels of student attendance and participation in school life. Parents have a very important role and responsibility in this area.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Health and Safety Statement</b> All schools should have a health and safety statement that is regularly reviewed (see Section 20 Health and Safety Act 2005)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Data protection</b> School procedures relating to gathering, storing and sharing data on students should comply with data protection legislation - Data Protection Act 1988 and Data Protection (Amendment Act) 2003	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Special education needs policy</b> Various pieces of equality and education legislation, especially the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act (EPSEN) 2004, require schools to be inclusive of students with special educational needs and to provide for them appropriately using the resources available	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Social, personal and health education (SPHE)/Relationships and sexuality education (RSE) policy</b> Schools are required by various circulars to provide SPHE in the junior cycle and RSE throughout the school, and to have policies to support this provision.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Substance use policy</b> The National Drugs Strategy and Department guidelines require schools	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

to develop and implement a substance use policy in consultation with parents and students, and other relevant agencies	
<b>Internet acceptable use policy</b> Schools should have and implement a policy to instruct students on safe and responsible use of the internet. Parents have a key role to play in this area. See <a href="http://www.webwise.ie">www.webwise.ie</a> .	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Child protection policy</b> All schools should have a child protection policy that includes the <i>Child Protection Procedures</i> . The policy should be communicated to the whole school community.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Parents as partners in education</b> It is good practice for schools to have a parents' association, and to promote partnership between home and school. The board of management has an important role in supporting the parents' association.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Deployment of special needs assistants</b> Circular 71/11 allows for SNAs to be deployed flexibly to respond to the needs of schools and students.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No