St Oliver Post Primary School

Literacy and Numeracy

Summary Plans

2019-2020

Contents

Mission:

To develop a whole school approach to planning, implementing and reviewing literacy and numeracy, setting quality assurance targets against which the school will be measured in areas such as pupils' literacy and numeracy scores.

Objectives:

- To collate and analyze base-line literacy data from standardized STAR READER test at 1st and 2nd year;
- Research, evaluate and select a standardized test for numeracy;
- Develop a targeted approach for a Reading Recovery Programme;
- To integrate educational data; CAT4, DES results, SEN assessments, Psychological assessments and attendance records, analyze data to shape and inform individual student progression plans in literacy and numeracy;
- To develop a 'blanket-bomb; strategy to bolster the literacy and numeracy levels of all students;
- Develop quality assurance targets to monitor our literacy and numeracy progression as cohorts (1st yr, 2nd yr, TY);
- To further develop staff skills and ways of working with educationally disadvantaged students and their families; and
- To further develop the after school and holiday time support – for literacy and numeracy.

Actions

Diagnostic and screening

Collation of base line data:

The collation and analysis of the following data is paramount to assist the school in realising the level of education disadvantage, it will be used to inform a comprehensive literacy plan 2020-2024;

I.   Analysis of percentage of psychological assessments; 1st yr 2019-2020 cohort;
II.   Analysis of percentage with Learning Support; 1st yr, 2019-2020 cohort;
III.   Analysis of reading ages in 2nd yr, 2019-2020 cohort;
IV.   Create Case studies using holistic data for targeted responses - DOB, Reading age 1, Reading age 2, Numeracy scores, Attendance, CAT – SAS, psychological assessments, socio economic data, intergenerational education disadvantage;
V.   Reading analysis 1st yr cohort 2019-2020;
VI.   Analysis of 1st yr student progress over testing period in 2019-2020; and
VII.   Analysis of medical card holders in leaving cert and junior cert, 2019-2020 cohort.

Analysing diagnostic reading scores:

Star Reader programme will be used to ascertain the reading scores of each 1st year, second year and TY student (pilot group). Assessments will be done tri-annually and progress is will be tracked over the school year and into subsequent years. Reading scores will be shared with all students and their parents. Reading targets will be negotiated with the student and they will be reviewed regularly using data from the Accelerated reader programme and Star reading reviews.

Analysing diagnostic numeracy scores:

Currently there is no standardised numeracy testing in schools at second level. We need to employ a range of quantitative and qualitative methods to gain sufficient data to accurately plan and evaluate the impact of a numeracy initiative.

In 2019 we will research the online tests and make a recommendation for the registration of a pilot phase; to test all incoming 1st years in 2019.

CAT4 Quantitative Reasoning assessments are administered to most year groups.

In 2019 we will complete a statistical analysis of the Quantitative Reasoning scores for the 1st year cohort and use this data to shape a targeted numeracy response. The literacy/ numeracy focus group will review the data and make recommendations for 2020.

WIAT spelling test and Neale analysis:

These tests will be administered during and English class. This will facilitate year group screening at 1st year and re-testing later-on. Referrals will be made to the SEN department and results will augment other screening data for students, who are weak but fall outside the remit of the SEN department. These tests are used on entry to the student's post-primary education and we continue to administer these tests in 2nd year and 5th year

CAT4:

This is now being administered as a whole school approach. The CAT 4 reports and a simplified version of the SAS results will augment reading age reports, numeracy reports, school attendance data and socio-economic date, to help with a targeting strategy for students who need a literacy and numeracy intervention 2020-2024.

Whole school and targeted strategies for Literacy

Accelerated Reader:

All 1st have a timetabled instructional reading period in the graded library. During this time, the pupils select and read library books that match their individual ability levels and interests. When a pupil finishes a book, they take an Accelerated Reading Practice Quiz on the computer. This quiz assesses general comprehension of the book just read. The Accelerated Reader scores the quiz, keeps track of the results, and generates reports. English teachers use this data to monitor each pupil's practice, guide them to appropriate books, and target instruction. The reading progress is shared with students and their parents. Students are given regular feedback on reading programmes; number of tests taken and passes, number of words read and average scores for tests taken. Students are rewarded in assembly for their proficiency.

Reading Rewards Initiative:

This is part of our reading recovery strategy. The reading rewards intervention is an initiative where students are given a reward for improving. Students who have improved either their reading age or whom have read the greatest number of words in the class, are rewarded in class and at assembly. The improvements are shared with parents also. The initiative supports reluctant readers as well as the most proficient readers.

TY pilot reading initiative:

The Reading Recovery Programme with TY will measure the reading age of each student tri-annually and track progress over the school year. The initiative will measure student improvement and where there is a deficit, the initiative will aim to have a ratio gain of 2, over the 12-month period. The reading scores will augment CAT4 and JC results to inform placement of students into appropriate 5th yr OL/ HO groups.

The school library:

This is a foundation for the school's literacy programmers and a catalyst for the development of lifelong readers, it is vital in encouraging young people to develop good reading habits. Well stocked, well managed school libraries, with access to books through structured library programmers that are directed towards the learning needs and interests of even the most reluctant and hesitant readers, can have impacts that are very significant on pupils. However, it is necessary for the long-term effectiveness and viability of the library that documentation, evaluation and research be on-going and a Library Plan must be put in place. A review of the school library, resources, policies and practices will commence in 2019-2020.

Graded library:

Our library utilises Zone of Proximal Development, or ZPD, to match pupils to appropriate books. Based on a concept developed by Russian psychologist Lev Vygotsky, the ZPD represents the level of difficulty that is neither too hard nor too easy and is the level at which optimal learning takes place. Our library uses the ZPD to grade books and make it easier for pupils to select a book appropriate to their reading capability. The STAR Reading diagnostic suggests a ZPD for each pupil and English teachers use this base-line data to match students reading capabilities with appropriate books. This means that there is a personalised starting place for reading practice and teachers can then monitor student performance.

Drop Everything and Read (DEAR):

During literacy week, every day for a week, everyone stops what they are doing and read for forty minutes. It is a shared experience, gets people talking about books and reading while conveying a strong message that the school believes in reading. Students read, principals read, teachers in the staff room read. Students can use their library book, personal book or select reading material from the boxes of books, magazines, and newspapers which are distributed to classes. Staff are also encouraged to read; a box of books and newspapers are distributed to the staffroom and the office.

Spelling Challenge (Key words):

This initiative is aimed at specific subjects, whereby teachers aim to help improve the spelling of key vocabulary. Spelling journals are used by junior students from 1st-3rd year to record spelling lists for key words, specific to a subject. These lists are upload, on-line for each year group, to provide students with an opportunity to practice the necessary spelling skills on-line to help them improve. Students sit their spelling test on-line and results are available to teachers and students. Spelling challenges can be completed at home or in-school. Individual teachers can also upload lists which are to their class group and assess them independently. Teachers can track student progress, identify what students are progressing well and identify students who are struggling.

Targeted Interventions for Numeracy

The following Numeracy interventions are currently used as part of our strategy; working with students diagnosed with SEN. Following analysis of the CAT4 Quantitative Reasoning scores, we will choose appropriate supports from the programmes below to shape our response to numeracy deficits at 1st year.

Maths Eye

An intervention used with students requiring targeted intervention. Developing a maths eyes resonates with the philosophy and approach to learning which underpin initiative in the Irish education system e.g. Project Maths. Having maths eyes encourages the use of the real world as a starting point for the relevant exploration in the maths world.

Numeracy Ninjas

A numeracy intervention currently being used as a targeted programme to bolster the numeracy skills of weaker students. It is designed to fill gaps in students' basic mental calculation strategies and also to empower them with the numeracy skills. The drive is to ensure that all students can leave school functionally numerate.

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Another numeracy intervention use with students struggling with numeracy. It offers personalised learning pathways ensure students work at their own optimal development. The programme allows for homework targets and rewards for completion of talks. It also provides alignment to the Primary School, Junior and Senior Cycle curricula for ROI schools.