St. Laurence's National School

OUR SELF-EVALUATION REPORT AND IMPROVEMENT PLAN

In the last year, we have looked at teaching and learning in our school to find out what we are doing well. This is what we discovered:

- Children are highly engaged and enthusiastic with regard to oral language.

- Parents largely reported that they were happy with the standard of oral language their children are receiving in the school and that the school was performing well in this area.

- We have a proactive, willing and skilled staff who are open to engaging in CPD, professional upskilling and using new ideas and methodologies. Staff felt that children are exposed to a print rich environment.

This is what we did to find out what we were doing well, and what we could do better:

- Pupil survey

- Teacher survey

- Parent survey

- Design and completion of a Teacher Observation checklist on three pupils per class to determine a baseline with regard to oral language learning.

- Language Committee (one representative per class level) discussions and analysis of data.

- Whole staff discussions.

This is what we are now going to work on:

-Developing the children's skills of **Retelling and Elaborating** using appropriate **Sentence Structure and Grammar** (Learner Outcome 4 and 11 of the new Primary Language Curriculum). This will focus on the children's ability to retell and elaborate upon stories using appropriate vocabulary, as well as emphasising sentence structure and grammar.

-Implementation of two specific oral language development programmes across the school – **Rainbows, CJ Fallon (J.I – S.I.)** and **The Five Components of Effective Oral Language Instruction, PDST (1st – 6th).**

-Enhancing the teachers' content knowledge and understanding of the new Primary Language Curriculum and development of skills to practically use it in their setting. This will involve **weekly explicit** oral language lessons for your children.

-Collaborative planning and discussion amongst teachers in order to increase oral language development across the school.

-Meaningful communication with parents regarding oral language.

This is what you can do to help:

-**Engage** with the resources for the **Five Components of Effective Oral Language Instruction** and **Rainbows programmes**, which will be available on the school website. **Practically use** this **specific vocabulary** in everyday interactions with your child. You can find out what **monthly text type** (Five Components) or **fortnightly unit** (Rainbows) your child is currently working on from **their teacher**. The Five Components material gives samples of expected language which you can use as a base for working on with your child, while Rainbows differentiates the vocabulary into basic, core and stretch categories.

-Encourage your child to **speak for a purpose**, for example presenting an oral report, using the language of debate etc. Oral language comprises of speaking confidently and employing listening skills. However, it also involves sometimes overlooked skills such as sequencing and use of specific language, can your child use connectives appropriate to their age level – although, meanwhile, however etc? Are they overly-reliant certain words – um, and, then etc?

-Discuss your child's oral language development with their teacher.

-Bring forward any ideas/concerns which you may have to the school management.

Here is some information about how we are carrying out our work and about what the Department of Education and Skills requires us to do.

School time and holidays

The Department requires all primary schools to have **183 school days** each year.
This year we will have 182 school days, from 31st August 2018 to 28th June 2019. One day is a training day for the teachers – New Language Curriculum

The Department sets out a **standardised school year and school holidays**.
This year we took all our school holidays within the permitted time.

The Department sets out arrangements for **parent/teacher meetings and staff meetings**.
This year we had parent/teacher meetings and staff meetings, all in line with the Department's regulations.

Looking after the children in our school

The Department requires schools to follow the *Child Protection Procedures* it has set down.
Our board of management has agreed in writing to do this.   YES / NO
All teachers know about the *Procedures* and we have told
all parents about them and how we follow them.   YES / NO
Our Designated Liaison Person (DLP) is Carol Mooney and our Deputy DLP is Ann-Marie Martin

Enrolment and attendance

The Department requires schools to have and publish an admissions policy, to record and report attendance accurately, and to encourage high attendance and participation.

We have an admissions policy and it is published.   YES / NO
We reviewed (and updated) our admissions policy in: October

We keep accurate attendance records and report them as required.   YES / NO

We encourage high attendance in the following ways:

- By creating a positive, supportive, welcoming school environment where all children feel valued
- Encouraging all children to participate in school life
- Identifying the needs of individual pupils
- Intervening early, offering personalised support and engagement with families and their children
- Working with families and children to address emerging problems of poor attendance and behaviour.
- Talking about attendance at assemblies and encouraging the importance of good school attendance

- Setting up reward systems when needed.

This is how you can help:

- Set high standards for your child in relation to attendance and punctuality
- Engage with the school if there is a problem about your child's attendance and support plans to address the problem
- Ensure that your child regularly attends and arrives at school on time;
- Avoid taking your child out of class unless there is a valid reason
- Try to be involved in as many aspects of school life as you can

Positive behaviour for a happy school

The Department requires schools to have a code of behaviour, and asks us to consult parents and children about it. We do this.   YES / NO

Our code of behaviour describes and supports positive behaviour.   YES / NO

We have a very clear and high-profile anti-bullying policy in our school.   YES / NO