

A very big thank you to all the parents who took the time to complete our recent literacy survey, May 2013. You will be pleased to know that your contribution has been invaluable in informing our school improvement plan for literacy. This plan was approved by the Board of Management at their meeting on the 19th September 2013 and will be implemented throughout the school in the current school year.

We will be looking for your feedback on this initiative towards the end of the academic year and would also like to advise you that a similar survey on numeracy will take place in the near future.

In the meantime, if you have any concerns regarding literacy or numeracy please don't hesitate to contact your child's teacher.

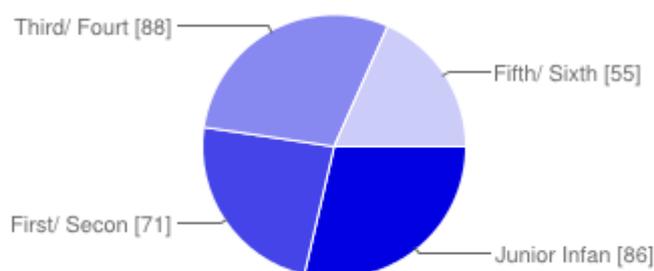
Best Wishes,

Catherine Coveney, Principal

300 responses

Summary

My child is in

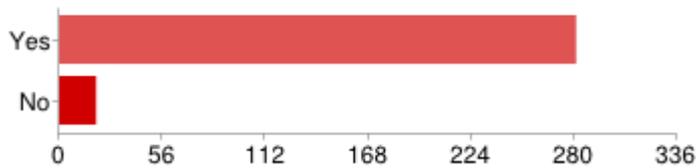


Junior Infants/Senior Infants	86	29%
First/ Second Class	71	24%
Third/ Fourth Class	88	29%
Fifth/ Sixth Class	55	18%

My child likes reading

Yes	232	77%
No	11	4%
Sometimes	57	19%

My child is doing well at reading

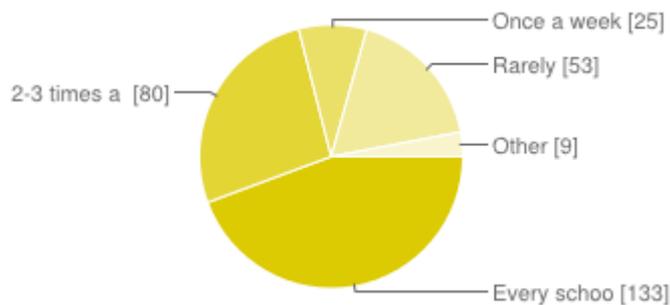


Yes	281	93%
No	20	7%

If you answered no to the previous question please say why.

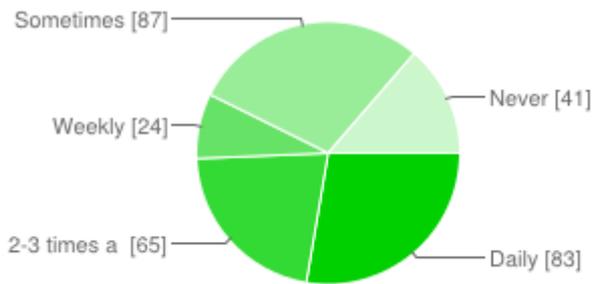
She has been encouraged greatly in class and loves reading every night. Mildly dyslexic Finds it difficult to focus Finds it difficult my child has a learning difficulty i answered yes Special needs My daughter requires extra help with her reading. He has difficulties with the spelling she can't read Has difficulty with fluency and struggles with recognition of words and am doing the Toe to Toe to help her. a bit slow at some words slow reader Child refuses to read anything other than school books Reading difficulties I'm not sure what well means. My child is doing ok- not poorly, or outstanding. Just learning and finds homework too much cannot read a word with more than three letters Junior infant can read but i feel a reader should have been provided earlier. My child can read but is not provided with a structured reading scheme She is finding it difficult to remember her sounds Finds or boring

I listen to my child reading aloud



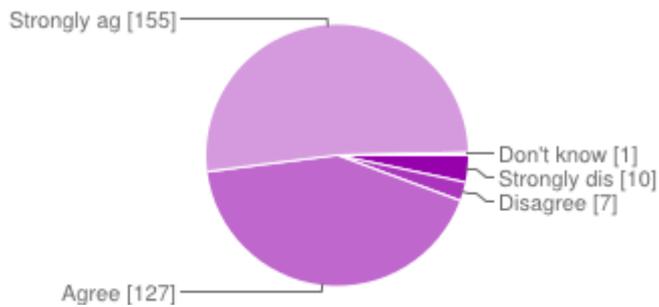
Every school night	133	44%
2-3 times a week	80	27%
Once a week	25	8%
Rarely	53	18%
Other	9	3%

An adult reads to my child



Daily	83	28%
2-3 times a week	65	22%
Weekly	24	8%
Sometimes	87	29%
Never	41	14%

My child understands what they are reading

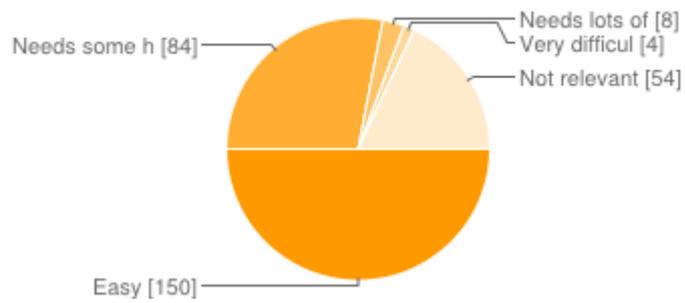


Strongly disagree	10	3%
Disagree	7	2%
Agree	127	42%
Strongly agree	155	52%
Don't know	1	0%

My child likes to write stories

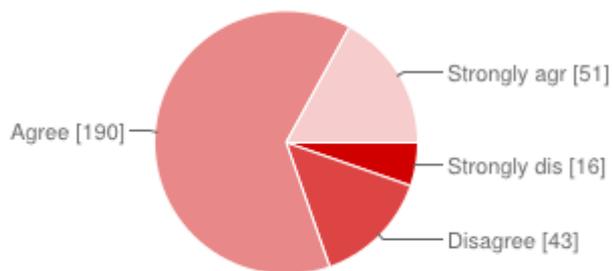
Yes	186	61%
No	70	23%
Other	48	16%

My child finds learning spellings



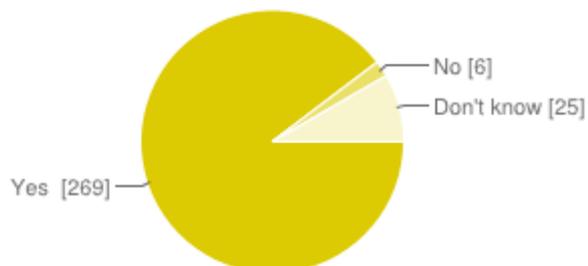
Easy	150	50%
Needs some help	84	28%
Needs lots of help	8	3%
Very difficult	4	1%
Not relevant - my child is Junior/Senior Infant	54	18%

I get good information from the school about how my child is doing in Literacy



Strongly disagree	16	5%
Disagree	43	14%
Agree	190	63%
Strongly agree	51	17%

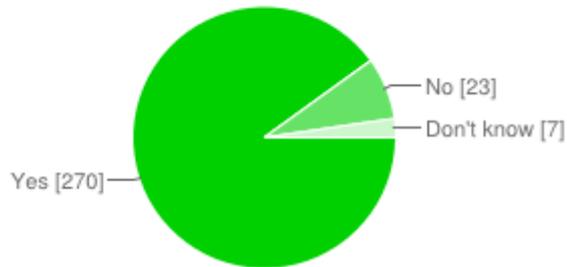
Do you think speaking and listening is part of the Literacy/ English curriculum



Yes	269	90%
No	6	2%

Don't know **25** 8%

My child can retell a story clearly

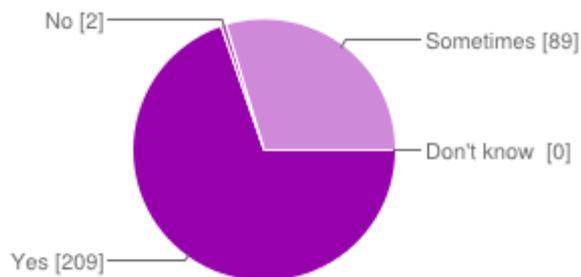


Yes **270** 90%

No **23** 8%

Don't know **7** 2%

My child listens to me and others well



Yes **209** 70%

No **2** 1%

Sometimes **89** 30%

Don't know **0** 0%

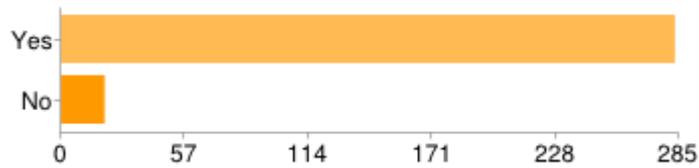
Do you think good handwriting and neat work is important?

Yes **293** 97%

No **1** 0%

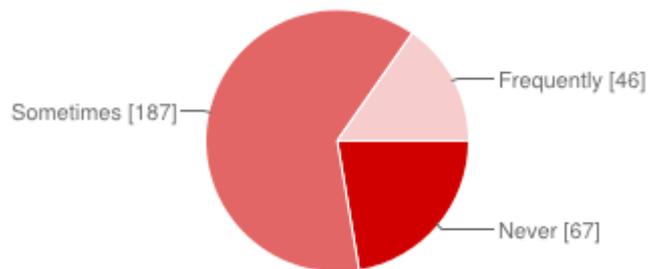
Other **7** 2%

Does your child have access to the internet at home for homework purposes?



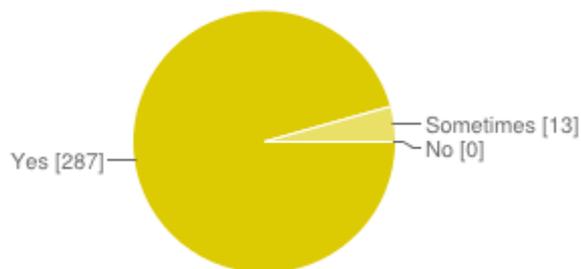
Yes	283	93%
No	20	7%

My child requires help with his/ her English homework



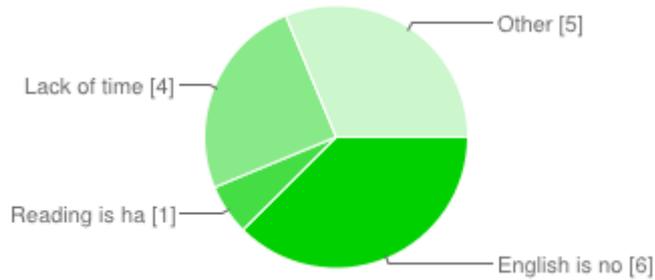
Never	67	22%
Sometimes	187	62%
Frequently	46	15%

I am able to help my child with their English homework



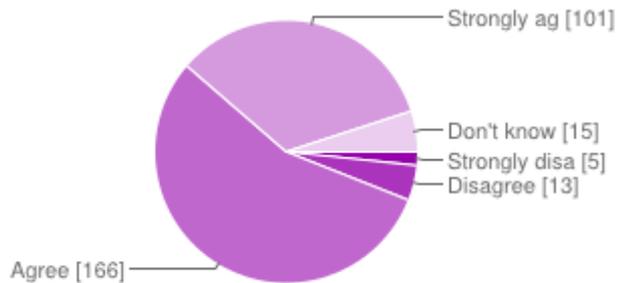
Yes	287	96%
Sometimes	13	4%
No	0	0%

If you answered sometimes or no to the previous question, please say why.



English is not my first language	6	38%
Reading is hard for me	1	6%
Lack of time	4	25%
Other	5	31%

I am happy with how Literacy is taught in the school



Strongly disagree	5	2%
Disagree	13	4%
Agree	166	55%
Strongly agree	101	34%
Don't know	15	5%

Have you any suggestions as to how the school could improve the teaching of Literacy

Provision of more advanced books for kids that have a love of reading With a child in junior infants I have never seen the class books or copies. My only knowledge is of handouts that come home & my own research on the programmes which are followed. It would be good if once a term the English & other workbooks could be sent home so we can see what the children are doing in class. Child in 4th class. Would benefit from book summaries , more comprehension homework. individual reading every day in front of class Perhaps more story writing for homework based on experiences and interests or themes. More dictionary thesaurus and comprehension homework To early to comment as Snr Infants age A little more homework, why not have homework on Fridays. No homework passes. More frequent changes in the reader sent home with infants. More practice of spoken English ? Instead of written projects give the children time to prepare a speech on a certain topic? Use reading comprehension workbooks (eg Creative Writer €5) , encourage relevant newspapers and magazines to be brought into the class and have the child re-tell the story they found interesting. More dictionary work. Use of Thesaurus to get children finding different words, Age related books in the class library. A better system for children taking books from the library. Another of my children use to swap books every Friday in 2nd class, two children get to be librarian every week and they loved this and read the

book in the given week. As each book they read was put up on a chart and teacher gave a small reward every 4 books. These days a star towards a homework pass would work. Less photocopies each week I get enough to light a fire. Better more modern novels and more high interest material .My son finds the Irish times and RTE.IE more interesting than Jenny Goes on Holiday. We as parents and you as Teachers are competing in an ever evolving literacy society, where we have to compete with !2year olds participating in online battles in afganistan on XBOX and have to stimulate those imaginations with books. I suggest great school as St Laurences is that a bit of time reflection and monetary investment is put into books even the purchase of a dozen Kindles from Amazon.Also the lack of a school library is glaring when other schools in the town have them its just a room where children go to select a book once a week timetabled but something they will always remember like PE. My favourite memory in N.S. was going to the school Library.From Speaking to a fellow parent the stairs disused with a glass door that could be used Home-work to be related to class work making comics More feedback (apart from parent teacher meetings) i would suggest if the teachers feels the child is struggling in any dept maybe a quick note in there journal to advise their parents. I feel the children who do not require extra help in certain areas can sometimes struggle or those who are less vocal are overlooked. A better selection of books in class library (more interesting and suitable for boys as it can be hard to get them to read) School is excellent. Encourage child to read more funny stories as these type of books engage the child more and they discuss the contents with their friends. Diary of a Wimpy Kid the series being an example. Short funny sentences with cartoons. David Williams author is also excellent in this area. More feedback, apart from parent teacher meetings Perhaps the selection of books for free reading could be updated. Maybe an approach like power hour might be useful also I feel homework in xxxxxx class is very comprehensive . More emphasis on reading a lot, comprehension work, imaginative work using essays etc. to keep them interested & punctuation. Spelling and general knowledge quizzes More games for example shop games integrating literacy and handling money etc More comprehension skills are need and strategies for answering questions Smaller classes would help Teach spelling and writing as a game or through music. Children love games and singing. Singing and dancing while trying to spell a word is fun! More spoken English. In the older classes bring in debating. Spellbound Workbook - is there an alternative. I cannot see the benefit in a 20 minute word search coming home for homework. Writing out sentences would seem better time spent. Use of a creative writing workbook (EG Creative Writing) to encourage essay writing. Hard back notebooks given out for Irish in 2nd class was a fantastic idea. We get this notebook home in 5th and its great to see the progression. Could something similar be done in English. Where for example -Noun was written down with an explanation and examples. So children would have this book to look back on all the way through senior cycle. I was asked the other day what a conjunction word was and I had to look this up and English is my first language! provide books at an earlier stage at Junior infants I would like him to be encouraged more by the teacher to write stories , learning more poems, performing short plays etc. Encourage the idea of a book club & public speaking More essay writing, promoting imagination. Have more fun/relevant books More teacher feedback thro out year aside from parent teacher meeting Too early for me to comment No ensure words that are learnt for spelling test come up again 4/5 weeks later to see if the knowledge has been retained Would like to see more essay writing. I think smaller classes would make a difference and small reading groups would helpfn More outside education like plays , shows etc Sometimes the photocopied sheets for the homework are not very easy to read because the quality of the photocopy is not good. helping the parents understand the teachers learning technique can help the children at home too. More variety. More writing of stories, book reviews etc, perhaps competitions for short stories? teacher to correct written work- not self or other child Use of Poetry & Drama I would like to see a little more emphasis on handwriting, my experience to date is that it is not part of the homework and I would not mind seeing it become part of the homework at an early stage. encourage book clubs in class n I would like to get more feedback from our current teacher on an ongoing basis, to make sure progress is being made adequately and/or extra material introduced to keep the child challenged, they should get more solo projects more feed back necessary they are doing a good job More rotating reading aloud in class required to build skills and confidence Spelling Bees / Story-telling / Story or Poetry Corner / Essay Competitions Writing: I think mind mapping and planning should be used more frequently no More feedback from the teacher as to how our child is progressing. Our child is in room xx Illocution lessons Yes - spend more time on english literacy skills and less time on irish literacy Aextra lessons are a great idea see below No. In my experience it's great. I think smaller classes would help greatly After school book club improve errors in writing early to discourage bad habits; encourage children to tell stories aloud; spellings once learnt need to be put into practice to reinforce the learning process; homework should at the very least be checked that it is correctly taken down. (I am contantly appalled that the homework notebook, which is repetitive is

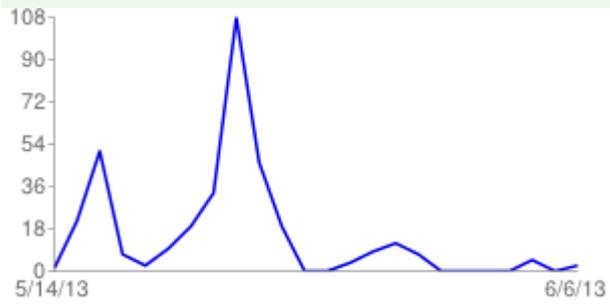
barely legible and full of mistakes Public speaking - learning to speak slowly and clearly I would like to see children being challenged according to their ability, so an able child would not get bored with the basic curriculum I think discussion of some current affairs would be very beneficial from fourth class up. Homework could be to read and do a synopsis on a newspaper article. Also discussion groups in class and basic debating skills more story writing/essays no its perfect homework should be corrected correctly by the teacher highlighting where mistakes have been made Would like Children to have more time to discuss what they are reading and also would be helpful if they were given the task of reading one book outside the school curriculum each month Maybe some more drama/short plays xxxx has got fantastic help with literacy in St. Laurences and his reading, spelling and general literacy has improved immensely. Development of creative writing, e.g. short stories for homework writing of stories at a young age and use of thesaurus from 3rd class upwards. Found the look, say, copy,cover,write,check & use method of learning spellings very effective when used. Providing more Reading material at Infant level Provide more structured reading scheme at infant level.in another school in Greystones she gets more homework and has had a weekly book since october of last year we are getting books home in last week that are shoddy and outdated from junior infants More writing activities More interactive we are very happy with the teaching of literacy in St. Laurences. I came across a programme called read write inc..... And was very impressed with it! Maybe worth looking at , BOOK CLUB Early intervention-resource time for those experiencing difficulty I would like Spoken English with confidence, Set up a book club and ask children to tell the other children about good books they read. Maybe this could be an after school club as some children might not want to be involved. Maybe also ask parents to provide a list of books that their children like and the list can be shared with the children. Should progress quicker at this stage or ensure enough challenging work for all levels For the senior cycle perhaps introduce debating once a week

Any other comments/ suggestions

no, very happy with the school but classes are so big now that its hard to give the attention needed More regular feedback from the teacher on how my son is doing it would have been greatly appreciated. He is having difficulties and I do not receive any feedback from the teacher. I do receive very frequent and accurate information from the Language Support Teacher, Ms. xxxx no I think DEAR time is a great idea to encourage reading of own/library books rather than just school readers. You have a fantastic computer room fantastic interactive whiteboards.Why not have a fantastic Library and continue a tradition of pedagogy thats been around from the ancient greeks Yes - too much time wasted on learing irish verbs etc (this method of teaching hasn't changed in over 30 years, it is boring,outdated and clearly doesn't work) - it would be better for students to have a 3 or 4 year course in non-compulsary oral iris rather than 12 years intensive teaching in a subject that roughly 98% of students will never use again. I would suggest a school library where the children went to it , set up like the computer room. Children once a week could have library time and pick out a book . My child could go an entire Keep up the great work Overall very pleased with the approach and the advice from the teacher. She is very encouraging and always willing to talk to parents about any areas of difficulty my child has encountered. Thank you.. Thanks you for all the work that you do My daughter had problems in early school years with reading but with excellent help from teacher she worked on building up her confidence to a stage where she caught up with her peers. Great school but not happy about reading they may not be ready at infant level but a book is a book from their teacher.Imagine the disappointment on a four year olds face when that book comes home with pages missing water damaged or not age appropriate No, thanks. It would be great if the 5th and 6th class teachers could liaise with the local secondary school english teachers to decide what level of english they expect on entry to 1st year. I feel my child is expected to achieve above 6th class standard at present, english should be enjoyed not endured.. Dictionary thesaurus need to be used more More feedback throughout year maybe they could write a play about what interests them be it football or xfactor etc Can we please have a similar survey for Maths at some time. These boxes for writing in comments are too small so please excuse any spelling or typing errors. Thank your for the opportunity to complete the survey. my child gets reading support for reading and spelling. I know I should read to him at night time but he would rather play with his lego. Would love more teacher input thro out year apart from parent teacher meeting. Very happy with English in the school No The selection of the first 2 books for third class reading was excellent - my daughter was very engaged and really enjoyed them. My son in senior infants is a very good reader but has not been challenged at all by the books he gets in school. Very happy with 4th class curriculum in english I am very happy with the attention and dedication of the teacher to literacy thanks for running an excellent school xxxx I think my child

would have benefited from more practice with letter sounds and names and writing letters before moving to words so quickly. He is doing the same words as my child in first class. He started with very little practice with writing and I thought he would do more drawing of lines before he started his letters. he found this very hard. Feedback from 4th Class teacher has been minimal and general this year. My child has a huge interest in reading but it is encouraged at home, not from the class. This child has a great capacity to tell a story and write a story very well but after big effort, receives very little feedback from teacher. My child seems to be strong in the area of literacy but her reading is only checked by the teacher twice/three times a week rather than daily. Also the stories in the readers seem rather pedestrian to us compared to the stories she chooses at home. Likewise the library books available in her classroom don't include the kind of longer novels she chooses for herself in the library/shop. While I appreciate that it is probably unlikely that the school will be able to have a dedicated library room for the foreseeable future, I wonder if a mobile library trolley could visit the classrooms and let those who wish borrow the books they feel would be appropriate for them. Also maybe a league of books read in each classroom could be started with score tables being promoted and prizes for those who take part (a bit like the walk on weds concept). Also many of the parents take part in book clubs monthly and maybe the PA could assist in running a monthly book club for the kids - am sure parents would volunteer to co-ordinate this if the school could provide a location. Finally, my daughter attended the write a book ceremony held by the Blackrock education centre recently and while there were lots of prizewinners from St Laurences it struck me that many of our school's entries were rather perfunctory in their presentation, illustrations, etc. Again maybe if this existing initiative was developed the kids might better understand what they are involved in. Again am sure this is the kind of activity that parents who volunteer could become involved in. I get the feeling that the English spoken needs to be improved upon, eg speak with confidence, loudly and clearly Make the above method a standard I think the teacher, Ms. xxxx, is doing an AMAZING JOB. My son's literacy skills have improved so much in only a few months due to her work and her regular feedback to us. I have to thank Mrs. xxxx as well for all the excellent work she has been doing with my son in order to reach the same literacy level as the rest of the students in his class. CONGRATULATIONS TO YOU BOTH FOR SUCH AN EXCELLENT WORK! Would love to see a copy of the literacy curriculum and get more regular feedback between parent/teacher meetings. Perhaps switch one of their written projects to a talk given by the child on a certain topic with a period of time given for preparation We are delighted with xxxx' progress and are indebted to St. Laurences for the early intervention and the resource teaching that he has received. Setting up a library at school I think the reading support provided is excellent once the child is identified as needing support. disappointed in time taken to identify issues around literacy The reading books my son brings home from school are very old and worn. More supervised and checked handwriting practise as we feel the handwriting has not progressed since Junior Infants i feel there could be more feedback during the year rather than just once a year at parent teaching meetings. I sometimes feel there can be any area that my child may not understand in her homework and she has either struggled in school with this and gets help from her teacher but does not fully understand and in some occasions she is convinced she has not done an exercise in her school day before. Would like more feedback on progress Completely happy with teacher/parent interaction with regard to literacy Continue as is. My Son was struggling in school with his reading and spelling, he was getting very stressed if he cudnt understand his work and due to the help of the schools learning support teachers and his teacher he is doing fantastic in his work and he's enjoying it too. My child has developed a live of words and sounds through the teaching of his class & I'm great full for this as I believe a good foundation in learning & literacy is necessary to encourage learning through out their future. Children in lower percentiles seem to get assistance quickly but those who do not find the work challenging do not have a more advanced path to follow. There should be a structured program in place. Have one child having no problems with schoolwork and another struggling with English in particular. It is difficult to know what to suggest and although we are helping the child who is struggling, that only works when she is not too tired as it takes her so long to complete her homework. I like my child signing in every morning, it helped hugely with him learning how to write. However, I feel that the topic should be changed weekly, for example write about weather one week, an after school activity another week, their favourite foods another week and so on. Thanks! I'm overall very happy with the literacy and teaching in general in the school. The standard of education and caring is high. Not at present Very happy 3rd class Curriculum Set up school library A suggested reading list to be given to pupils once a month Can we please have a similar survey for Maths at some time. These boxes for writing in comments are too small so please excuse any spelling or typing errors. Thank your for the opportunity to complete the survey.

Number of daily responses



NB: Please note names and classroom numbers have been removed to protect the privacy of individuals.