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| Newtown N.S.  Newtown, Ardee, Co. Louth  School Roll Number: 03275H  **School improvement plan**  Plan issue date: 2015 |

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| **Summary school improvement plan**  **1. Introduction**   * 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 English and continued to work on our maths. For more information on how the evaluation took place, please see our School Self-Evaluation Report which is available on our website: [www.newtownnsardee.com](http://www.newtownnsardee.com).  This school improvement plan sets out the actions that we will undertake in the school over the next three years in English. The main purpose of these actions is to improve our pupils’ learning.  **2. Summary of school self-evaluation findings**  **2.1** Our school has **strengths** in the following areas:   |  | | --- | | **Strengths** | | * Jolly Phonics working well in the Junior classroom * All classrooms and learning support room have a well-stocked library, with new books added yearly * All classrooms and learning support room have a good supply of paired reading or parallel reading books * Children encouraged to join local libraries * Junior classes involved in paired reading at home with parents nightly * Teachers are enthusiastic and interested in literacy and attend CPD on this area * Teachers use a range of methodologies including: including play, guided activity and discovery and teacher modelling * Lessons are planned to meet the needs of different learning styles and levels of ability * PAT and SNIP programmes used with support pupils * Exciting writing/free writing carried out in each class grouping * Novels covered with all classes from 1st to 6th each year * World Book Day celebrated yearly * Book Fair run by school bi-annually with help from Parent Association * Book Club run in school – 4 or 5 times yearly. * Standardised Testing and diagnostic testing used to inform teaching and planning. * Range of Diagnostic test used by learning support teacher * Plenty of self-assessment carried out by pupils on a daily basis * Teacher use a wide range of assessment techniques on a daily basis * ICT resources used in literacy eg stories, e books, lists , encyclopedia research etc. * Children are able to confidently speak and write about a topic of personal interest * Children write in a variety of genre and have a good grasp of grammar * Children love to read for pleasure * Standardised test results in English reading show that 75% of our pupils are above the 51st percentile which is above the national norm of 50%; and 6.7% of our pupils are at or below the 16th percentile while this figure is16% nationally. * Throughout all classes students display a good grasp of grammar and write in a range of genres. However, their writing and oral language shows a limited use of vocabulary. * Parents indicated that 95% of our children like to read for pleasure * Parents indicated that the most frequent strategy used when they come across a word they do not understand is to ask their parent (60%) while only 12% use a dictionary. * 82% of parents correct their children when they use slang or baby words. * Teachers observed that children in all classes are generally able to recite, recall and sequence stories in oral and written form. * Across all classes students have a positive attitude toward reading with 92% indicating they like to read for pleasure. * Over 56% of our pupils indicate in their questionnaire that they use slang words both in writing and speaking. * Over 81% of pupils in their survey say they use the criminal words (said, nice, happy, went, look and walked) in their writing and speaking, while 74% of pupils find themselves using words like “stuff”, “yoke” or “thingy” when speaking because they do not know the correct words. Teacher observation confirmed that the children expressed that they do not have the language they need when expressing themselves and describing items or events * Teachers Literacy lesson’s catered for different learning styles and incorporate a variety of teaching methodologies. Teachers feel that most students are motivated and confident in their learning. Assessment for learning is used to guide teaching. ICT and team teaching are used in class. |   We know these are our strengths because of our surveys, our standardised testing results, teacher observation and our teachers’ commitment to continuous professional development and the utilisation of new ideas and methods in the classroom.  **2.2** Our school has decided to prioritise the following **areas of development:**   |  | | --- | | **Area for development** | | * Oral Language and Vocabulary/development * Maths – Tables, mental maths and problem solving – to be continued |   We have decided to prioritise this area in English because development of language and vocabulary was highlighted through teacher observation, feedback from children and parents and assessment of oral language using the Drumcondra Reading Profiles  **2.3** Our school has set the following **targets for improvement** which arerelated to pupils’ achievement and has identified the following **actions** which will help in achieving those targets over the next three years.   |  |  | | --- | --- | | **Targets for Improvement** | **Action** | | * By 2017 pupils will be able to speak independently in a varied of spoken text types using appropriate language features, vocabulary and speaking and listening skills * By 2017 pupils will be able to self-assess their progress in oral language against pre-determined success criterea and identify further learning goals (eg 2 stars and a wish) | * Continuous Professional Development for teachers * Introduce staff to the PDST Oral Language resource- Five components of Effective Oral Language Instruction * Teachers will timetable and plan for discrete oral language time * Send the 10 Top Tips for Parents home to each family * Teachers familiarise themselves with the Drumcondra English Profiles * Teachers will select three pupils for tracking per class level based on results from Vocabulary section in Drumcondra Reading from 2nd-6th and teacher observation from Infants – 1st Class. * Track and monitor the selected pupils using the Drumcondra English Profiles for Oral Language * Word of the Week will continue on a whole school basis. Teachers may reward use of Word of the Week through praise, encouragement, merit stickers, etc * Encourage children to use alternative words for the ‘Criminal Words’, orally and in their writing. * Teacher modelling of non-verbal behaviours of speech-tone, intonation, pitch, pauses, pronunciation, proximity, eye contact and expression in order to equip the pupils to express themselves in an effective manner. * Actively encourage use of alternative words (synonyms) both orally and in their written work. * Show and Tell as a daily initiative from Junior Infants -2nd Class, assessed using 2 stars and a wish. * The introduction of a one-minute talk on designated topics, which they research as part of their homework, from 3rd – 6th Class on a daily basis, assessed using 2 stars and a wish. * Teacher collaboration on what is working/not working well in oral .language in each of our classes at the beginning of every staff/Croke Park meeting. * Each classroom has a listening/speaking display poster * Each classroom library is replenished on a yearly basis * The Infant room has a designated role-play area * Teachers will explicitly teach children to take turns when in groups. * Each discrete oral language lesson is started with an auditory memory exercise. |   As a parent you can help us by encouraging and helping their children with reading to and with them, listening to them, asking about the Word of the Week and encourage using it at home, encourage them to use alternative words for the criminal words, getting them to retell what they have read or heard, encourage using a dictionary, prepare their Show and Tell or help with their research on their one minute talk. There is a wide range of English websites with games and activities for all ages on our school website. Go to [www.newtownnsardee.com](http://www.newtownnsardee.com) and click on the Links page.  **2.4** We know we will have achieved our targets when there is a broader range of vocabulary used, when criminal words are being used less and less, when pupils can use the different genres of language with ease and there is an improvement in the Drumcondra Oral Language Profiles . |