



**SWORDS EDUCATE TOGETHER NATIONAL SCHOOL  
APPLEWOOD  
SWORDS  
CO. DUBLIN  
ROLL NUMBER 201450**

*School self-evaluation summary report for school  
community*

**Evaluation period: September 2012 to February 2014**

**Report issue date: *May 2014***

## **Summary School Self-Evaluation Report**

### **1. Introduction**

A school self-evaluation of teaching and learning in Swords Educate Together National School was undertaken during the period September 2012 to September 2013. This focused on the areas of literacy and numeracy. Following staff discussion and detailed analysis of the previous year's standardised test results in Reading and Mathematics, it was decided that our specific focus for 2012-2013 should be on literacy.

As an Educate Together school, Swords Educate Together National School is a co-educational, multi-denominational, democratic and child-centred school. In June 2011 we moved into a new school building with excellent facilities. Currently there are 444 pupils enrolled in the school. The teaching staff consists of 16 mainstream class teachers, 6 learning support/resource teachers and 1 shared learning support teacher (based in another school). The administrative principal is Fiona Rushe, the deputy principal is Karl Breen and there are currently four Special Needs Assistants on staff. We have two school secretaries (one full-time and one part-time), one part-time cleaner and two part-time caretakers.

Our school ethos is reflected in our school vision statement which states that No Child is an Outsider. As a school we strive to achieve high standards in teaching and learning as well as promoting our school's cherished ethos. We endeavour to provide a safe and supportive environment within which the children can reach their full potential. SETNS seeks to provide and promote a happy, safe, caring learning environment with parents, pupils and staff working together.

We have a number of programmes operating in the school including Aistear, Early Intervention Programmes, Building Bridges of Understanding and Peer Tutoring. There are a range of afterschool extra-curricular classes and Religion Classes operating in the school. Our school attendance levels are of a very high standard 96%. Our pupils' behaviour is excellent and this is strongly linked to our Positive Code of Behaviour Policy and school ethos. For more information on how we intend to improve our pupils' learning, please see our School Improvement Plan which is available on this website and accompanies this document.

#### **1.1 The focus of the evaluation**

We undertook a school self-evaluation of teaching and learning during the above period. We evaluated the areas of literacy and numeracy. We chose literacy as our area of focus for 2012-2013 because we felt that our pupils could improve their learning outcomes in this area. We also set out aspects of Numeracy for an area of focus in 2013-2014 all the while developing Literacy in our school.

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

## 2. Summary of school self-evaluation findings

We collected information from parents/guardians, pupils and teachers in preparing this report. We looked at how well our pupils were doing in Reading and Writing. We also reviewed standardised test results and teacher observation. Analysis of literacy levels indicates that in general children are achieving very high levels of attainment. Standardised test results indicate that children at all class levels from First Class upwards are performing significantly above national average levels. Children in Senior Infants are assessed in the 2nd term and results indicate that they are generally performing above average in all areas.

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

### Strengths

- The overall attainment of the pupils in the area of literacy is of a very high standard
- Pupils enjoy literacy activities and are motivated to learn
- A safe, stimulating learning environment is provided for pupils
- Motivated students and supportive parents – Book Fair, World Book Day, Spelling Bee, Library Activities, School Newsletter, Ipads (SEN)
- Pupils have limited access to ICT, however, where possible they are enabled to use it to present and illustrate their work e.g. word processing and photo stories
- Variety of approaches/methods/initiatives e.g. Numeracy Read Underline Draw Estimate (RUDE), Peer Tutoring, Early Intervention, Building Bridges of Understanding, First Steps Writing genres
- Collaborative Planning and Early Intervention Programmes
- Enthusiastic, diverse staff from different training colleges means a wide range of expertise and methodologies
- Good bank of resources in all subject areas
- New initiatives e.g. Building Bridges have had very positive outcomes.

We know these are our strengths because we conducted a review of teachers' practices with regard to teaching and learning and carried out surveys with parents and pupils.

2.2 We have decided to prioritise the following **areas for development**:

### Areas for development

- The development of reading approaches with particular emphasis on comprehension strategies
- The development of writing with particular emphasis on the writing genres
- The development of Oral Language approaches with particular emphasis on oral language games and approaches
- The development of spelling lists and strategies/skills
- Development of the Aistear Framework
- Textbooks – judicious use of and review of textbooks in light of book rental implementation
- Review of maths language and problem solving strategies e.g. RUDE

We have decided to prioritise these areas because they are areas of focus arising from evidence gathered from assessment of Literacy and Numeracy in SETNS.

**Appendix to 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?
<p><b>The school calendar and the school timetable</b> Circular 11/95 sets down the length of the school year - minimum of 183 days</p> <p>Circular 11/95 sets down the length of the school day 4 hours 40 minutes (infants); 5 hours 40 minutes (1<sup>st</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> classes)</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>
<p><b>Parent/ teacher meetings and staff meetings</b> Circular 14/04 sets out the arrangements for these meetings</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>
<p><b>Implementation of agreement regarding additional time in school for teachers</b> Circular 0008/2011 requires teachers to do an additional 36 hours of out-of-class work each year, so as not to reduce teaching time</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>
<p><b>Standardisation of school year</b> Circular 034/2011 gives the dates for school holidays</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>
<p><b>Valid enrolment of pupils</b> Sections of the Education Act 1998 and the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, and the Rules for National Schools set out the conditions for pupils to be validly enrolled in a school</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>
<p><b>Pupils repeating a year</b> The circumstances in which pupils may repeat a year are set out in Rules for National Schools, and circulars 11/01 and 32/03</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>
<p><b>Development of school plan</b> Section 21, Education Act 1998 requires all schools to have a school plan</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>
<p><b>Engagement with SSE process</b> Circular 39/2012 outlines the school self-evaluation process and what it requires of schools</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>
<p><b>Time for literacy and numeracy - assessing and reporting literacy and numeracy achievement</b> Circular 56/2011 sets out initial actions required in the implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategy</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>
<p><b>Exemption from Irish</b> Circular 12/96 sets out the circumstances in which children are exempt from studying Irish</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>
<p><b>Implementation of child protection procedures</b> Circular 0065/2011 and the Child Protection Guidelines 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</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>
<p><b>Implementation of complaints procedure as appropriate</b> Section 28 Education Act 1998 provides for procedures to address complaints about a school.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>Complaints have been resolved or are being resolved <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p><b>Appeals in the case of refusal to enrol students, suspension and expulsion (permanent exclusion)</b> Section 29 Education Act 1998 provides for appeals procedures in these cases, which are dealt with first of all by the school. Where cases are not resolved at school level, an external appeals committee hears the appeal and makes a decision.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>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"/></p>

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

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.	
What area of school life does the policy deal with and what is the aim of the policy?	Has policy been approved by the board of management?
<b>Enrolment policy</b> Section (15)(2)(d) 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 National Educational Welfare Board Guidelines set out regulations and good practice for schools to follow in drawing up and implementing a code of behaviour	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Anti-bullying policy</b> <i>Anti-bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-primary Schools</i> , 2013 sets out regulations and good practice for schools to follow in drawing up and implementing an anti-bullying policy	<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 pupil attendance and participation in school life	<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 pupils should comply with data protection legislation - Data Protection Act 1988 Data Protection (Amendment Act) 2003	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Internet acceptable use policy</b> Schools should have and implement a policy to instruct pupils on safe and responsible use of the internet. See <a href="http://www.webwise.ie">www.webwise.ie</a> for guidelines	<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 pupils with special educational needs and to provide for them appropriately using the resources available	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Relationships and sexuality education (RSE) policy</b> Schools are required to have an RSE policy and to implement it in line with Relationships and Sexuality Education: Policy Guidelines (1997)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Substance use policy</b> The National Drugs Strategy and Department Guidelines require schools to develop and implement a policy on substance use, in partnership with parents and other agencies	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Child protection policy</b> Circular 0065/2011 sets out requirements (see above for details of policy and implementation)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Parents as partners</b> Circular 24/91 requests schools to set up a parents' association, and promotes partnership between home and school	<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 the school	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Other</b>	