

SCHOOL SELF IMPROVEMENT  
PLAN FOR LITERACY,  
NUMERACY & ASSESSMENT  
FOR LEARNING 2016-2017

## School Improvement Plan for Literacy 2016-2017

### Ursuline College Sligo

- All subject departments have analysed Junior Certificate and Leaving Certificate results using the PDST tool and the findings are recorded in the respective subject department plans.

#### Summary of STen Scores for Reading

STen score	1-3	4	5-6	7	8-10
	Very Low	Low Average	Average	High Average	Very High
School	10%	18%	49%	11%	12%
National	23%	17%	37%	12%	11%

#### Summary of main strengths

- STen scores of the 1<sup>st</sup> year students for reading are above the national norms.
- Attainment in the majority of subjects at both JC and LC is above the national norms.
- There is a critical staff engagement in regularly implementing literacy/numeracy & AFL strategies in their subject areas.
- There is a willingness to share good practice.
- Students are becoming autonomous learners, i.e. using word banks and key word strategies independently.
- Students are developing a deeper understanding of the meaning of exam questions and hence are interpreting them more correctly.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students are beginning to work more effectively when given clear and constructive feedback on written homework and exams.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Summary of main areas requiring improvement</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Investigate the possibility of facilitating the use of digital media in a safe and responsible manner to encourage students to read for enjoyment.</li> <li>• Examine strategies to engage the weaker cohort of students who might be less inclined to use their free time to read for enjoyment.</li> <li>• Evaluate the implementation and effectiveness of the “Book in the Bag Scheme” in Transition year.</li> <li>• Examine the possibility of allocating a specific reading time for Transition Years.</li> <li>• Evaluate the use and effectiveness of the “Writing Wheel” strategy to help students review their basic writing skills in class and to check their written homework.</li> <li>• Evaluate the use and effectiveness of the Progress Tracker Booklet with students.</li> <li>• Continue the use of the Progress Tracker Booklet for students.</li> <li>• Decide on a whole school approach to AFL.</li> <li>• Build on the literacy resources in the Teacher Network to facilitate the sharing of literacy resources among subject departments and staff.</li> <li>• Continue to update the literacy notice board with recommended literacy strategies for use in all subjects.</li> </ul>

<b>Improvement Targets</b> <b>Re: Reading</b>	<b>Required Actions</b>	<b>Persons Responsible</b>	<b>Success Criteria/Measurable Outcomes</b>	<b>Timeframe for Actions</b>
<p>To focus on reading strategies which are aimed specifically at weaker 1<sup>st</sup> year students</p> <p>To examine possible ways to facilitate the use of digital media by students when reading for enjoyment</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="528 379 1066 647">1. To liaise with the teachers who teach English to the weaker cohort of students to facilitate specifically designed strategies to encourage reading for enjoyment.</li> <li data-bbox="528 1027 1066 1235">2. Establish a forum to discuss the possibility of allowing students access to digital media in a safe and responsible manner.</li> </ol>	<p>SSE core team English Department</p> <p>English Department School Management Library committee SSE Core Team</p>	<p>Make available a greater variety of reading material for students weaker students</p> <p>Increase the number of students in 1<sup>st</sup> year who read rarely by 2%</p> <p>To establish the use of digital media in library class and in Transition Year reading class.</p>	<p>September 2016</p> <p>October 2016</p> <p>October 2016 to April 2017</p>

<p>To evaluate the “Book in the Bag” Scheme</p>	<p>3. Survey Transition Years teachers and Transition Year Co-ordinator to specifically look at how this scheme might be run more effectively within the time constraints of Transition Year.</p>	<p>SSE Core Team Transition Year teachers Transition Year Co-Ordinator</p>	<p>Statistical data which will be recorded, collated and analysed</p>	<p>September 2016</p>
<p>To increase the percentage of Transition Year students who feel that the “Book in the Bag” scheme encouraged them to read more than they normally would.</p>	<p>4. Investigate the possibility of including a timetabled reading class for Transition Years.</p>	<p>School Management Transition year English teachers All transition year teachers</p>	<p>Weekly timetabled reading class</p>	<p>September 2016</p>

<p>To foster and adopt a whole school approach to reading for enjoyment.</p>	<p>5. Survey the incoming cohort of 1st years and Transition year students in relation to “Reading for Enjoyment”.</p>	<p>SSE Core Team</p>	<p>Statistical data which will be recorded, collated and analysed.</p>	<p>September 2015 to May 2015</p>
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<b>Improvement Targets</b> <b>Re: Writing</b>	<b>Required Actions</b>	<b>Persons Responsible</b>	<b>Success Criteria/Measurable Outcomes</b>	<b>Timeframe for Actions</b>
<p>To evaluate the use and effectiveness of the “Writing Wheel”.</p>	<p>6. Survey students and teachers in relation to how often they use it and how useful they find it.</p>	<p>SSE Core Team  Cohort of Junior Cycle students  Cohort of Junior Cycle teachers</p>	<p>Statistical data which will be recorded, collated and analysed.   This information will help SSE team make informed decision about the use of the Writing Wheel.</p>	<p>October 2016   October 2016</p>
<p>To continue to foster a culture of good and best practice in relation to the sharing of literacy strategies.</p>	<p>7. Use of key examination words to help students identify and comprehend examination questions. These key words will be available in student journals.</p>	<p>All 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3rd year teachers  Literacy Link Teacher</p>	<p>Improvement in how students interpret examination questions.</p>	<p>September 2016 to May 2017</p>

<p>To continue to inform the staff of the most up to date developments in literacy strategies.</p>	<p>8. Develop subject specific terminology within subject departments.</p> <p>9. Maintain folder on the Teacher Network to facilitate the sharing of literacy resources among subject departments and staff.</p> <p>10. Continue to update the literacy notice board with recommended literacy strategies for use in all subjects.</p>	<p>All subject department teachers</p> <p>Subject Department teachers</p> <p>SSE Core Team</p>	<p>Subject specific writing wheels.</p> <p>Literacy strategies in the Literacy Folder on the Teacher Network.</p> <p><i>“Literacy Strategy of the Month”</i> on the Literacy Notice Board in the staffroom</p>	<p>September 2016</p> <p>September 2016 to May 2017</p> <p>September 2016 to May 2017</p>
<p><b>Monitor and review</b></p>	<p>This will be carried out continuously over the course of the year.</p>			

**School Improvement Plan for Numeracy 2016-2017**

**Ursuline College Sligo**

- All subject departments have analysed Junior Certificate and Leaving Certificate results using the PDST tool and the findings are recorded in the respective subject department plans.
- Competency Maths test were carried out and the results analysed for all 1st years.

**Summary of main strengths**

- Attainment levels in Maths are above national norms.
- The majority of students display very positive attitudes towards Numeracy.
- Students at all levels took part in a variety of activities during Maths Week e.g. estimating the number of sweets in a jar, participating in table quizzes, creating mathematically themed posters.
- A designated class has been allocated within the weekly TY Maths Timetable for Problem solving where mathematically based puzzles are a valued resource.
- A Games Room has been established in the school where students can enjoy playing chess, draughts, building jigsaws etc. which all help to develop their mathematical skills.
- Transition Year students have been involved in setting up and running mini-companies and have entered many Business Award Competitions.
- There was a focus by teachers to make students calculate the percentage grade of their test results. This showed evidence of improvement over the year. Many students automatically converted their grade and did so easily.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The whole school approach to numeracy was the use of a Progress Tracking Booklet which meant that all students had to plot their test results in a graph for each subject. Teachers felt that this worked very well at the beginning of the year as it allowed students to visualise their progress. It acted as a motivator for many students to improve their grade as they wanted to see the upward trend on the graph.</li><li>• Many subjects employed subject specific numeracy strategies which improved overall skills and accuracy over the course of the year, e.g. Home Economics – accuracy of weighing ingredients improved, History – using timelines to plot key events in WW2.</li></ul>
<b>Summary of main areas requiring improvement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Improve the percentage of students taking Higher Level Maths at Junior Cert.</li><li>• Decrease the percentage of students taking Foundation Level Maths at Junior Cert.</li><li>• Improve students’ problem solving skills.</li><li>• The Progress Tracker might not always serve as a motivator for weaker students if they are constantly plotting poor grades.</li><li>• Some students were uncomfortable using it initially as they did not want other students to see their results plotted on the graph, particularly if they did not perform well.</li><li>• Some students lost or mislaid their Progress Trackers or forgot to bring them to class.</li><li>• Constant reinforcement was needed with some subject specific strategies used. Particularly in relation to practical subjects where practical classes are more sporadic and time between practical classes meant that some skills were forgotten.</li></ul>

<b>Improvement Targets</b> <b>Re: Numeracy</b>	<b>Required Actions</b>	<b>Persons Responsible</b>	<b>Success Criteria/Measurable Outcomes</b>	<b>Timeframe for Actions</b>
<p>To increase the percentage of students taking the higher level Maths paper at Junior Cert by 1%</p> <p>To encourage students to develop the skills to monitor their own progress through their test results.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Adopt a common approach to problem solving strategies within the Maths Department.</li>   <li>2. Survey students in relation to their use and the effectiveness of the Progress Tracker Booklet</li> </ol>	<p>All Maths Teachers</p> <p>SSE Core Team</p>	<p>First year end of term Maths results.</p> <p>Statistical data which will be recorded, collated and analysed.</p> <p>This information will help SSE team make informed decision about the use of the Progress Tracker Booklet.</p>	<p>September 2016 to May 2017</p> <p>September 2016 to May 2017</p>

	3. Build on the numeracy rich environment in the school environment	Maths Teachers Numeracy Link Teacher SSE Core Team	Development of posters and charts for use in the school environment.  Activities for staff and students during Maths week.	September 2016 to May 2017
<b>Monitor and review</b>	This will be carried out continuously over the course of the year.			

**School Improvement Plan for Assessment for Learning 2016-2017**

**Ursuline College Sligo**

- All subject departments have analysed Junior Certificate and Leaving Certificate results using the PDST tool and the findings are recorded in the respective subject department plans.
- All subject departments had included an AFL strategy in their subject plans 2015-2016

**Summary of main strengths**

- Many teachers used peer to peer assessment which worked very well. It was felt that because it was being utilised across several subjects' students become more familiar with it. It improved the accuracy of their home work as they were definitely more careful with general layout of answers to achieve more marks.
- Providing students with AFL comments on their written work was successful as students were more likely to make amendments to help improve their grades.
- Providing exemplar material for students so that they could see the success criteria worked very well. In relation to written work it enabled students to set achievable goals and consequently their answers were more focused and developed.
- Some subjects insisted that corrections of homework were done before handing in new homework. This did make students more careful when doing homework assignments as they did not want to have to correct work due to carelessness. They paid good attention to feedback given and often sought clarification from the teacher. Overall over the year the standard of their written homework improved.

<b>Summary of main areas requiring improvement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sometimes students were not satisfied with the feedback they were given by other students and wanted the teacher to correct the work again. This reinforces the need for other students to be very clear with the quality of their feedback.</li><li>• Some teachers felt that if they were not correcting the work it was harder for them to get sense of the progress made by the student.</li><li>• Need to reinforce that amendments need to be made when feedback is given. Some students have a tendency to make the same mistakes. This can often be linked to absenteeism as students need to be present to reinforce the strategies being utilised in class.</li></ul>
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<b>Improvement Targets</b> <b>Re: AFL</b>	<b>Required Actions</b>	<b>Persons Responsible</b>	<b>Success Criteria/Measurable Outcomes</b>	<b>Timeframe for Actions</b>
<b>To encourage students to evaluate, assess and give feedback on the work of their peers</b>	<b>Whole school approach to peer assessment strategies to be included in subject department plans</b>	<b>Subject departments SSE core team</b>	<b>An improvement in how students give and receive feedback.  Improvement in accuracy and presentation of their written work</b>	<b>September 2016 to May 2017</b>