

# Meánscoil Iognáid Rís

## School Self-evaluation Report – Literacy June 2015

### 1. Introduction

#### 1.1. Focus of the Evaluation:

A School Self Evaluation of Teaching and Learning was carried out in Meánscoil Iognáid Rís during the period September 2013 to May 2015.

**Numeracy: September 2013 to May 2015**

**Literacy: September 2014 to May 2015**

Literacy - Student attitudes to basic literacy were assessed in a group of first years. Strategies to improve the teaching and learning of these basic skills relating to Literacy and other subjects were reviewed.

This is a report on the findings of this Evaluation

#### 1.2 School Context:

**Meánscoil Iognáid Rís** is an all-boys Catholic voluntary secondary school under the Trusteeship of the *Edmund Rice Schools Trust*, formerly the Irish Christian Brothers. The school is managed by a Board of Management comprising nominees of the trustees, Parents and staff. Enrolment is currently over 920 students and this will increase to more than 950 students over the coming year. The school traditionally welcomes pupils from a wide catchment area and this mix of town and country from 16 feeder schools contributes greatly to the excellent atmosphere of the school.

TY is well established in the school with the number of students increasing to 125 from 100 in 2014. This programme has developed skills of independent learning in our students and innovative teaching strategies in our staff.

The school has five qualified Learning Support teachers and thirty eight students accessing support (low incidence) with 4.5 qualified Special Needs Assistants. We also benefit from the input of two Careers and Counselling staff and a Psychotherapist.

Resources are shared through an intra-web system within the school and also through the use of Google Drive.

A Development team has been established to work on School Self Evaluation and the new Junior Cycle (incorporating Literacy and Numeracy). The team consists of representatives from Maths, English, Science, Business, Religion, CSPE, Language, PE and History and will coordinate the work of the staff on these initiatives. All staff involvement in SSE is critical to the success of the scheme and the improvement of Teaching and Learning

### Findings:

#### Learner Outcomes:

- Comparison with National Norms in State Exams.  
The English exam results compare very well with the National Norms with greater numbers taking Higher Level at Junior and Leaving Certificate.
- Comparison of the STen tests in English Reading and Maths showed that our student cohort is slightly above the national norms for both.

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### Learner Experiences:

#### Parent’s Literacy Survey 42 respondents from 58 surveys = 72%

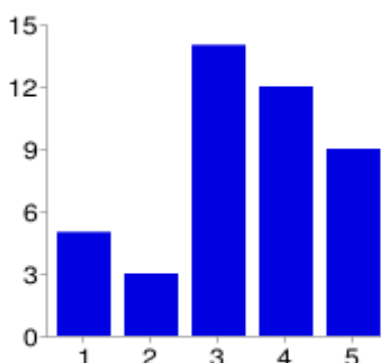
There was a strong agreement among parents on the importance of reading and the support in the home for reading and writing. Parents are very supportive of the school and of their own role in encouraging reading and writing at home. See ‘Strenghts’.

#### STUDENTS LITERACY SURVEY      APR 2015

Students from 1A and 1B were surveyed      Respondents: 43 - *Students could chose more than one option in some of the questions*

#### 1. Students enjoyment of reading: student rated from 1 (I do not like reading) to 5 (I love to read)

- 1. 11%
- 2. 7%
- 3. 33%
- 4. 28%
- 5. 21%



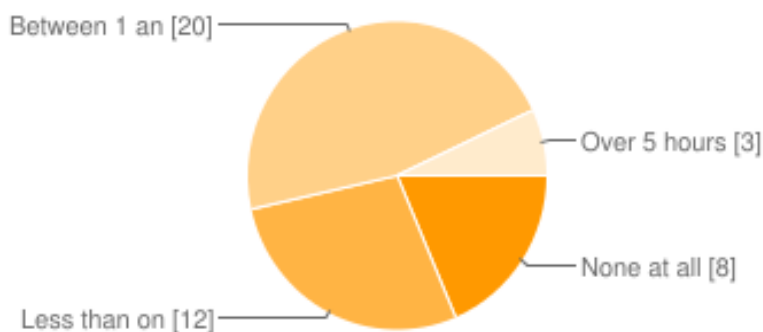
#### 2. Time spent reading per week

None: 19%

Less than one hour: 28%

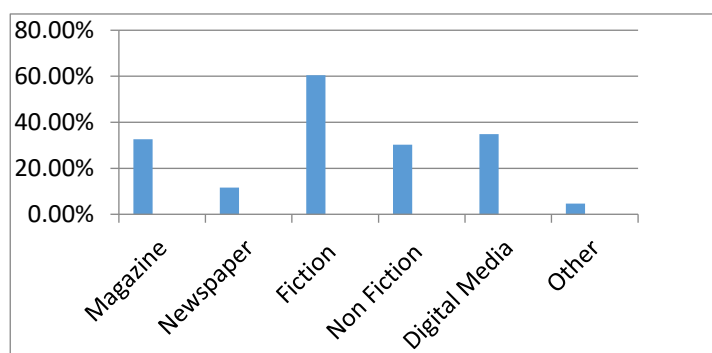
Between one and five hours: 46%

Over five hours: 7%



#### 3. What students enjoy reading the most (option to choose more than one)

- Magazine/Comic 33%
- Newspaper 12%
- Fiction books 60%
- Non-fiction books 30%



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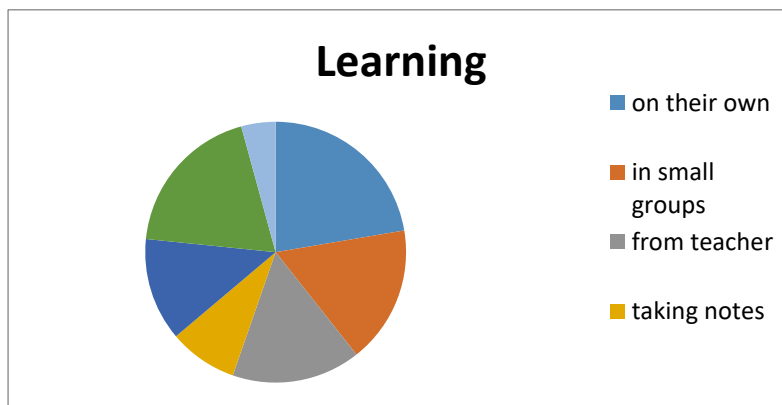
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Digital media (e.g twitter, blogs)	35%
Other	5%

### 4. Writing habits: (option to choose more than one)

- 30% of students like to write.
- 33% of students write regularly on digital media
- 33% of students make out their own notes to help them learn
- 19% of students do not like writing at all
- 16% of students check for mistakes when writing
- 33% of students believe their writing is neat and easy to understand
- 40% of students have good spelling skills

### 5. How students prefer to learn (option to choose more than one)



**On my own: 49%**

**Making my own notes: 28%**

**In small groups: 23%**

**Using technology: 42%**

**Listening to the teacher: 21%**

**Other: 9%**

**Taking notes: 19%**

### 6. Where do students source information from.. (option to choose more than one)

- Ask at home 42%
- Ask a teacher 38%
- Look it up in a textbook 35%
- Use the internet 63%
- Other 2%

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**7. Students are encouraged at home to read and write in free time**

1. 5%
2. 16.0%
3. 35%
4. 23%
5. 21%

*Rate from 1-5, where 1 is strongly disagree and 5 is strongly agree*

**8. Students are encouraged in school to read and write outside of the class**

1. 7%
2. 19%
3. 37%
4. 21%
5. 16%

*Rate from 1-5, where 1 is strongly disagree and 5 is strongly agree*

**Teacher Practices:**

Progress made in previously-identified improvement targets:

We are very satisfied with the progress made in the area of Numeracy – see the Survey below.

- Staff awareness raised over the course of several staff meetings
- The importance of consistency emphasised and argued about
- Confidence regarding Numeracy issues in the teaching staff was improved following agreement on several common methods. Posters on these methods in all classrooms.
- We carried out a staff workshop on methodologies identified by the Maths Department
- All staff members received a Casio scientific calculator and were asked to use this specific calculator and specific methods with Numeracy issues in class.
- Problem solving strategies and Team work are part of every discussion on Teaching Methodologies and are being encouraged at every opportunity.
- The language of AFL is becoming part of every conversation relating to pedagogy in the staff room
- Numeracy has been included in all subject meetings and in Subject plans for all Departments.

**SSE NUMERACY TEACHERS SURVEY 2 FEB 2015**

**Summary 46 responses**

**EVALUATION**

The second numeracy survey has shown improvements in all areas of numeracy.

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### *The most significant of these include:*

- A very sizeable improvement in the teachers feeling comfortable dealing with numeracy if it arises in their subject: from 4% to 85%
- A vast rise in the amount of teachers who believe numeracy occurs in their subject from a minority of 4% to a near consensus of 91%
- A steady increase in the belief that a consistent approach to percentage calculations exists across the school from 4% to 52%
- An emphasis on asking students to justify answers and explain rationale has increased in significance from 4% to 74%
- A rise in the positive promotion of maths throughout the school from 4% to 54%.
- Changes to classroom methodologies have also been noted with an increase in regular feedback to students and the use of real life problems to enhance understanding.
- The belief by teachers that students listen to their teacher in the classroom has grown considerably from 4% to 76%

### *Possible areas for improvement:*

- Just over half of respondents agree there is a consistent approach to percentage calculation across all subjects.
- Only 22% of teachers use group/pair work as a classroom methodology.

## 2. Summary of school self-evaluation findings:

### 4.1 Strengths:

- An English Department that is proactive and willing to share good ideas and practice
- A teaching staff willing to engage in school development programmes
- Lots of good practice in the area of Literacy developed over the last few years
- A student cohort entering school who achieve grades higher than the National Norms in both English and Maths
- High uptake of HL English at Junior and Leaving Certificate (71%)
- Almost 50% of students choose 'I enjoy reading' when asked (answer 4 or 5)
- 54% of students read more than one hour/week
- 60% of students read fiction
- 93% of parents believe that their son's standard of English has improved in Secondary
- 95% of parents are aware of their son's strengths and weaknesses in reading
- 95% of parents surveyed encourage debate and discussion at home

### 4.2 Areas for Improvement:

- 18% of students do not like writing at all
- Only 16% of students check for mistakes when writing
- 18% of students surveyed do not enjoy reading
- 19% of students surveyed said that they did not read
- **To be considered** 63% of students use the internet to answer a question, 42% of students enjoy learning using technology, 35% enjoy reading digital media most