



**Sacred Heart Secondary School,
Clonakilty,
Co. Cork.
62170B**

**School Self-Evaluation Report
Revised Literacy Strategy**

June 2015

Summary of main strengths as identified in the last SSE

1. 24% of students improved their NGRT scores in 2015- 4% higher than target.
2. Reading for leisure increased to 78% in 2014- 13% higher than target.
3. The average number of students doing Higher Level English over the last three years is 87% - 2% higher than target.
4. The average percentages attaining A, B and C grades at Higher Level English over the last three years is:

A: 18%

B: 42%

C:25%

Our average percentage of A grades dropped by 1% while there was no change in attainment of B and C grades.

Summary of main areas requiring improvement as identified in last SSE

Continue to improve general literacy of students through continuing use of proposed strategies in last SSE.

Following:

- (a) discussions with Frances O'Donoghue, Transition Year Literacy teacher,
- (b) teacher observations and
- (c) findings of current 3rd years' NGRT results,

it has been decided to **place emphasis on explicit vocabulary instruction** for the coming three years (September 2015-2018) in order to advance students from partial comprehension towards precise comprehension.

Improvement targets

To improve results in school-generated vocabulary tests by 20% among incoming 1st years on an annual basis.
(These vocabulary tests will replicate the NGRT-style questioning which includes cloze tests and multiple choice questions.)

Required actions

- 1st Year English teachers will administer the vocabulary tests in September 2015, 2016 and 2017 in 1st year English class. FOD will advise on age-appropriateness of these tests and make suggestions based on past NGRT tests.
- Dedicated pages will feature in Student Journals to facilitate their recording of WOW words. These new words should be regularly recorded by them. SPHE teachers of 1st year (AMB & BW) will bring these important pages to their attention at the beginning of the year. They should record the word, define it, offer synonyms and write a sentence using the word. *See Fig. 1 below.
- Continue 'tried-and-tested' strategies proposed in SSE 2013:
 - Pre-teaching of vocabulary in *certain* subjects;
 - Exercises on spelling (Look, Trace, Copy, Cover, Write, Check);
 - Mnemonics (learning techniques which aid information retention);
 - Use of strategies such as KWL, BUG (**Box** the Question word, **Underline** the important words, write answer and **Glance** back);
 - SQ3R;
 - Determining importance through underlining words and not lines;
 - Think Aloud.
- 'Spellings count' will continue in house exams;
- Encouraging students to use the library and partake in reading leagues and readathons;
- Default Strategy for promoting higher level uptake of English at JC and LC level;
- Timetabling a literacy class for all TY students;
- Word of the Week will continue to be organised by a Transition Year student.

Persons responsible	All staff including the Literacy Committee
Time frame for action	September 2015-2018
Success criteria	1. An annual 20% improvement among 1 st years in school-generated vocabulary examinations. This will commence in September 2015.
Review Date	Ongoing with a formal review in May 2018

***Fig. 1.Student Journal Template for recording of WOW words.**

<i>WOW word</i>	<i>Definition</i>	<i>Synonym</i>	<i>Sentence</i>
<i>clandestine (noun)</i>	<i>something carried out in secrecy</i>	<i>cloak-and-dagger concealed</i>	<i>Their clandestine meetings went undiscovered for two years.</i>