

## SCHOOL SELF-EVALUATION REPORT – NUMERACY

### 1. INTRODUCTION

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

A school based self-evaluation of teaching and learning was undertaken during the period December 2014 to May 2015. During the evaluation, teaching and learning in the following was evaluated:

- The quality of learning outcomes for students – Attainment levels of first year students in numeracy

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

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#### **School context.**

De La Salle College Waterford is an all-boys Catholic school. It is a learning community where all students are valued and educated in preparation for a meaningful life. The school offers the Junior Certificate, Junior Certificate Schools Programme (JCSP), Transition Year, Leaving Certificate Applied (LCA) and Leaving Certificate programme to its students. We have an enrolment of 1200 students in 2014/2015. The schools catchment area includes Waterford City, Co. Waterford (East), South Kilkenny and South Tipperary.

### 2. The Findings.

Numeracy encompasses the ability to use mathematical understanding and skills to:

- Solve problems
- Meet the demands of day-to-day living in complex social settings.

Numeracy involves being able to

- Think and communicate quantitatively,
- Make sense of data,
- Have a spatial awareness,
- Understand patterns and sequences
- Recognise situations where mathematical reasoning can be applied to solve problems.

We collected information from parents, pupils, teachers, Principal and Deputy Principals in preparing this report.

The evaluation (based on a numeracy questionnaire for students, an attitudinal questionnaire for students, regular informal discussions between teachers and senior management team, the CAT and incoming assessment tests) indicate that while the majority of students are doing well, a significant minority of students are experiencing difficulties in numeracy.

First-year students were also surveyed in order to ascertain their attitudes and dispositions to numeracy.

- 86% of students like maths.
- 91% of students feel that their Maths teacher has a positive attitude towards Maths.
- 63% of students realise that their maths skills and procedures are used cross curricular.
- 41% of students reported that the same words are used to describe the same mathematical concepts amongst all teachers.
- 86% of students could see the relevance of maths to their everyday life.
- 95% of students believed that they could improve their numeracy skills – it is believed that this is a good place to start.

Overall student attitudes to numeracy is quite positive.

The outcomes of discussions among staff at subject departmental level were shared with the whole staff, stressing the importance of numeracy across all subject areas. The numeracy needs of the different subjects, the expectations and concerns of teachers regarding the promotion of numeracy in his/her subject area and the strategies that teachers currently used were discussed. There was a whole-staff agreement that continuing CPD on different types of strategies that could be used to enhance student attainment in numeracy was required.

#### Summary of School Self-Evaluation findings

Our school has strengths in the following areas:

- The students attainment in standardised tests compare favourably with national norms.
- The majority of students including those with special education needs have made progress.
- A strong staff commitment to promoting numeracy.
- Good support from the learning support department.
- Good structures to support students
- Maths Department have track record of engagement.

The following areas are prioritised for improvement:

- To develop a numeracy rich environment throughout the school.
- To design and implement a programme for first and second year students with the aim of improving their ability in the area of fractions.