

DEIS 2014 – 2017 PLAN

LITERACY GROUP

REPORT AT THE END OF YEAR 2

June 2016

The main aims of the Literacy Committee for 2015-2016 were:

- A: to improve the literacy levels of all students:
 1. by decreasing by between 5%-10% those reading under age 10 at point of entrance assessment by the end of second year;
 2. to decrease by between 5%-10%, by the end of second year, those reading between the ages of 10 – 12 years at point of entrance assessment
 3. To increase by between 5-10%, by the end of second year, those reading at age 15 or over at the point of entrance assessment
- B: to foster a love of reading and all aspects of literacy.

Reading Ages

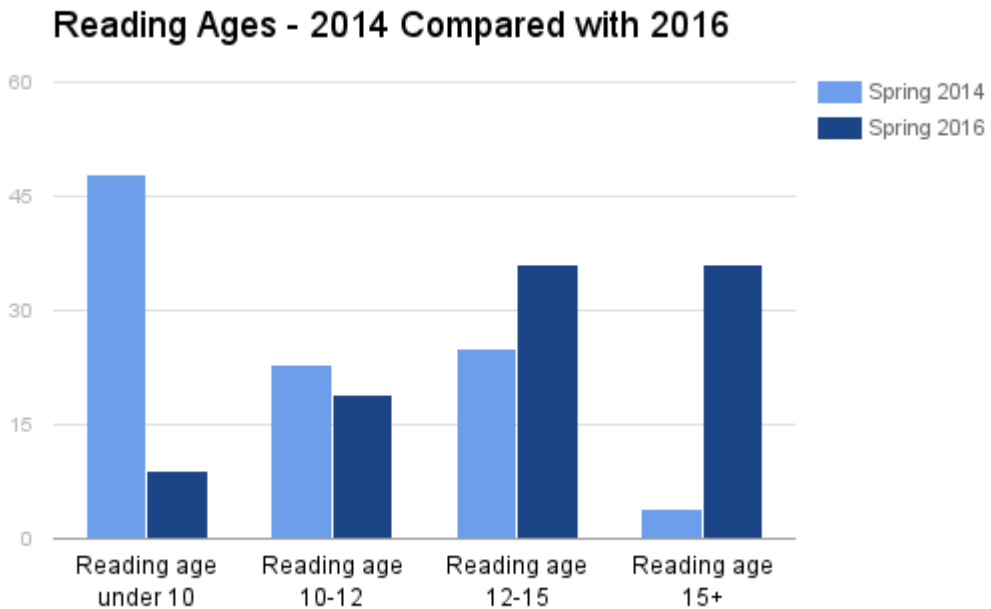
Second year students were tested in April 2016. This is the third academic year in which we moved retesting from the end of 3rd year to 2nd year, in line with DES plans. The results indicate the improvement from the point of first assessment at point of entry. The results are as follows:

The percentage of students reading at below 10 years was reduced from 48% at entrance assessment to 9% at the end of 2rd year. This is a reduction of 39%.

The overall percentage of students reading at between 10 years and 12 years at entrance assessment was reduced from 23% at entrance assessment to 19% at the end of 2nd year. **For those 15 students in this cohort for whom 2 sets of data were available, the comparison of their reading age in 2014 with that in 2016 records that 87% of the students are now reading at over age 12 years.** Compared to all other years for which we have records this is the greatest % increase recorded.

Other individual students have moved from the category “reading at under age 10” into “reading at between age 10 to 12”.

The percentage of students reading at 15+ increased from 4% at entrance assessment to 36% at end of 2nd year. This is an increase of 32%.



INITIATIVES SUPPORTING LITERACY DEVELOPMENT

WHOLE SCHOOL LITERACY CPD

Following input from the DEIS inspection in November 2015, CPD (2 hours) was organised through the PDST on literacy initiatives in all subject areas and for all teachers. Thank you to Fiona McEvoy who liaised with the PDST to organise the in-service.

DEVELOPMENT OF READING ROOM

The reading room was further developed in 2015-2016. An allocation from the JCSP budget was used to supply and replenish a stock of relevant magazines of interest to students. Ciara Doyle liaised with Natalie O’Neill, JCSP Coordinator, on this project.

WORD OF THE WEEK

This initiative, co-ordinated by Siobhan O'Brien, was very successful. By using the plasma screens in the halls this literacy initiative succeeded in achieving high visibility. In 2015-2016 words for "Word of the Week" were invited from all departments. A section for Word of the Week and keyword is included on the mini-whiteboards supplied in each classroom. The Word of the Week was included in the weekly school diary circulated to all staff. Occasional spot prizes were given on the corridors and during lunchtime in the school library to students who knew, could spell and explain the meaning of the week's keyword. These keywords also formed the list for the annual Spelling Bee.

SPELLING BEE

This initiative for 1st and 2nd years was lots of fun and resulted in a real literacy "buzz". The final took place in late May in the cinema and was organised by Siobhan O'Brien. Winners this year were Rang Connacht.

CROSS-CURRICULAR LITERATURE AND ART PROJECT

This project, organised by Shirley Doyle and Leigh-Anne Seale, was highly successful. Trophies were presented to the winners by the Principal on the last day of term. A photo was published on the school website.

DEAR

Drop Everything and Read was successful this year with many students borrowing books to finish reading at home. The format fitted around the Mock Examinations. Shirley Doyle undertook to co-ordinate this initiative.

School Library

Once again this year an enhanced borrowing facility operated each lunchtime from Monday-Thursday through 2015-2016. Thank you to Brenda Sweeney who supervised the lunchtime opening every day. A record was kept of books borrowed. Also thank you to James O'Brien, a 5th year student, who as part of his community work for the President's Gaisce Award undertook a rota of morning and afterschool library opening hours. Many students used the library during lunchtime as a quiet, supervised place to read. The number of computers available to students in the Library was further increased by the Principal.

CECIL DAY LEWIS AWARD WINNERS

Aoife Cahill, 5th year won first prize and Anna Garcea, 6th Year, won second prize in the Cecil Day Lewis Creative Writing Competition (Senior Short Story Section) 2016. Michael McCormack won first prize in Junior Short Story Section of the competition. Three students also received certificates of high commendation for their entries. The school's involvement was co-ordinated by Shirley Doyle, Claire O'Connor, Lorraine Townsend and Breda Sunderland.

Book Clubs and Library Visits

Book Club activities this year included reading novels by Celine Kiernan and Oisín McGann, followed by trips to Athy Town Library to meet with the authors. This was organised by Breda Sunderland and Joanne Parry HSCL in conjunction with Athy Town Library and Kildare Library Services. Students from 1st to 5th year were involved.

In a separate venture, Leigh-Anne Seale brought 2 JCSP classes on tours of Athy Town Library which resulted in several students becoming members of the library.

Keyword Posters

The supply of **laminated** keyword posters proved a very practical initiative.

Book Boxes

The initiative, of having boxes of books available for classes to read when a teacher is absent, continued. Claire O'Connor coordinates this initiative.

FURTHER OBSERVATIONS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR 2016-2017

Following a review of the draft findings of the DEIS Inspection report (2015) the following are to be prioritised :

- Rotation of roles within the literacy sub-group to build capacity
- Define and document all roles
- Introduce the CAT4 from 2016-2017
- Define targets in relation to oracy
- Focus on promoting literacy targets in ALL subject areas

A new convenor for the Literacy Sub-Committee will be appointed in Autumn 2016 due to the retirement for Breda Sunderland.

Ciara Doyle will be Literacy Link Person.

Whole The attempts to engage students in events to celebrate World Book Day were unsuccessful, so upon review the literacy committee decided not to run with this initiative next year.

The Literacy Committee continues to be encouraged by the numbers of students who sit and read non-school material in areas of high visibility – eg the school hall – before school and during lunchtime. This is indicative of meeting the target to foster a love of reading.

In conclusion, the Literacy Sub-Group is very encouraged by the success of the initiatives in over-shooting targets set, and in particular with the following outcomes :

1. Of the 15 students for whom 2 sets of data were available and in the cohort “reading between age 10 and 12 years at point of entry”, the comparison of their reading age in 2014 with that in 2016 records that 87% of these students are now reading at over age 12 years.
2. The percentage of students reading at 15+ increased from 4% at entrance assessment to 36% at end of 2nd year. This is an increase of 32%.
3. The percentage of those reading at under age 10 was reduced from 48% at point of entry to 9% by the end of second year.