



**Newpark**  
Comprehensive School

Newpark Comprehensive School,

Blackrock, Co. Dublin

Roll Number: 81001

**1). School Improvement Plan Results Summary from  
2015/2016**

**2.) School Self-Evaluation Summary Report for the  
School Community.**

Evaluation Period Spring 2016 – May 2017

Report Issue Date: June 2016

# **Results of School Improvement Initiatives 2015/2016**

*The focus of our school self-evaluation in 2014/2015 was on Transition Year and on Numeracy. We set targets for achievement in both areas and outlined clearly the actions necessary for those targets to be achieved and identified those responsible for the actions. We carried out surveys after these initiatives to ascertain what, if any, improvement was evident. The results are below.*

## **Transition Year Results**

- Our target was to increase the number of students passing T.Y. from 83.8% to 90%. Our target was exceeded with 91.54% passing this year.
- We wanted to increase student satisfaction levels with Arts Week from 3.1 (out of a maximum of 5) to 3.8. While we improved the rating to 3.45 we did not quite reach our target.
- We also wished to increase the student satisfaction rating for In Dublin week from 2.9 to 3.6. We achieved this target of 3.6 exactly.
- We also aimed to increase parental understanding of the way the year is structured to 70%. This was exceeded with 92% of parents reporting clear understanding of the way the year is structured.

## **Numeracy Results**

### ***Problem Solving***

The first of the improvement targets for numeracy was to increase problem solving abilities in current second year students from 38% to 48%. The students were assessed during their first year (2015) while studying a common level course and again in April 2016 when following either a Higher or Ordinary level course in their second year.

The results show that HL students improved their problem solving abilities by 3% (from 38% to 41%), while the ability of OL students dropped to 26% (a decrease of 12%).

In September 2015 a problem solving module was introduced to the first year timetable with a view to improving skills and abilities in this area. This initiative appears to have been very successful. First year students' competencies were assessed in problem solving in September 2015 and again in May 2016. The results found an increase in problem solving abilities from 30% to 44%.

### ***Teacher Attitudes to Maths***

The next improvement target was to improve student perception of all teachers' attitudes to maths. First year students were surveyed in 2015, and again in 2016 when in second year. An analysis of the results shows an improvement of 2% (30% of second year students now feel that their teachers like maths).

Initiatives adopted by all teachers, such as the S.A.L.T. method for drawing graphs and a common approach to the calculation of percentages for test results have contributed to this increase.

## **Summary School Self-Evaluation Report**

### **1. Introduction**

Newpark is a caring, friendly, co-educational school that provides an atmosphere for constructive and creative learning for students of all backgrounds, ethnicities and abilities. It is a supportive and compassionate community in which students are provided with every opportunity to achieve their chosen goals. Newpark is proud to equip its students with a balanced outlook on life, work and leisure.

Care is taken to develop an effective working relationship between teachers and students where respect and tolerance are central. This student centred environment is supported by an extensive student support system of Form Teachers, Year Leaders, Guidance Counsellors, Nurses and Chaplains. Newpark fosters close links with parents and guardians and has a vibrant Parent Teacher Association (PTA). This group is active in fundraising and providing a forum to support parents. Former students and staff participate in the life of the school through their encouragement and support for various events. A number of courses which reflect Newpark's comprehensive educational ethos are offered: the Junior Certificate Programme; the Transition Year Programme; the Leaving Certificate Programme; the Leaving Certificate Applied Programme and the Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme. A partnership established between the French government and Newpark in 1995 has led to the provision of a European Section for students with a French family background or a potential for language acquisition. There are 77 teachers and 840 students. Our attendance levels are 93% and the vast majority of our students behave very well. For more information on how we intend to improve our students' learning, please see our School Improvement Plan summary which is available on the website.

#### **1.1 The focus of the evaluation.**

We undertook a school self-evaluation of teaching and learning with a focus on the quality of feedback students receive on their written work during the year 2015/2016. We evaluated aspects of feedback which students find helpful and/or unhelpful as part of the learning process. We chose these because we felt our students could improve their learning outcomes if we know what they find most helpful. As the quality of feedback is well recognised as one of the most important components in student learning it was felt that it was an opportune time to review our practices in conjunction with the students and teachers. .

The German Department also piloted the Fit in Deutsch A1 program in T.Y. and found an improved focus on learning by the students. All students who participated passed the internationally recognised exam.

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

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

We surveyed students in second and fifth year. We also surveyed the whole teaching staff.

We found that our school has strengths in the following areas:

- Many students read and understand the feedback given by teachers.
- Students are very clear about the kind of feedback they find helpful.
- Teachers use a wide range of assessment practices.
- The school report and parent teacher meetings are widely regarded by teachers as useful mechanisms for giving feedback to parents.
- Teachers use a variety of ways for giving students feedback.
- The German dept. found that the TY students doing the Fit in Deutsch A1 program were more engaged than TY students in previous years.

We know these strengths because the data within the school has been analysed, teachers and students have been surveyed as outlined above.

### **3. Areas for development**

- Increase the number of students who read the feedback, who reflect on it and who use it to improve their learning.
- Increase the number of students who understand and use the success criteria for any given task.
- Increase the focus, engagement and confidence of TY students of German by working towards and achieving an internationally recognised certificate which develops the skills of listening, reading, writing and speaking.

We have decided to prioritise these areas because our research has indicated that while many students use feedback to improve their work, a significant cohort do not read it, reflect on it, don't understand it and don't use it consistently. The majority of students indicated that they did not always know what to do to succeed in a given task and that is why we have set a target for improving the use of success criteria.

The teachers of German observed that the benefits, to the students of German who participate in the program, are very valuable.