



## *St Olaf's National School*

Roll No: 19319 O

Principal: Gerard Murphy  
Telephone: 295 6513  
Fax: 294 1863  
E-mail: [olaf.info@gmail.com](mailto:olaf.info@gmail.com)

BalallyDrive,  
Dundrum,  
Dublin 16.

# School Self-Evaluation Report

Evaluation period: *Jan 2013 – Sept 2013*

Report issue date: *October 2013*

***School Self-Evaluation Report***

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 The focus of the evaluation

A school self-evaluation of teaching and learning in St. Olaf's N.S. was undertaken during the period January to September 2013. During the evaluation, teaching and learning in the following curriculum areas were evaluated:

- Literacy

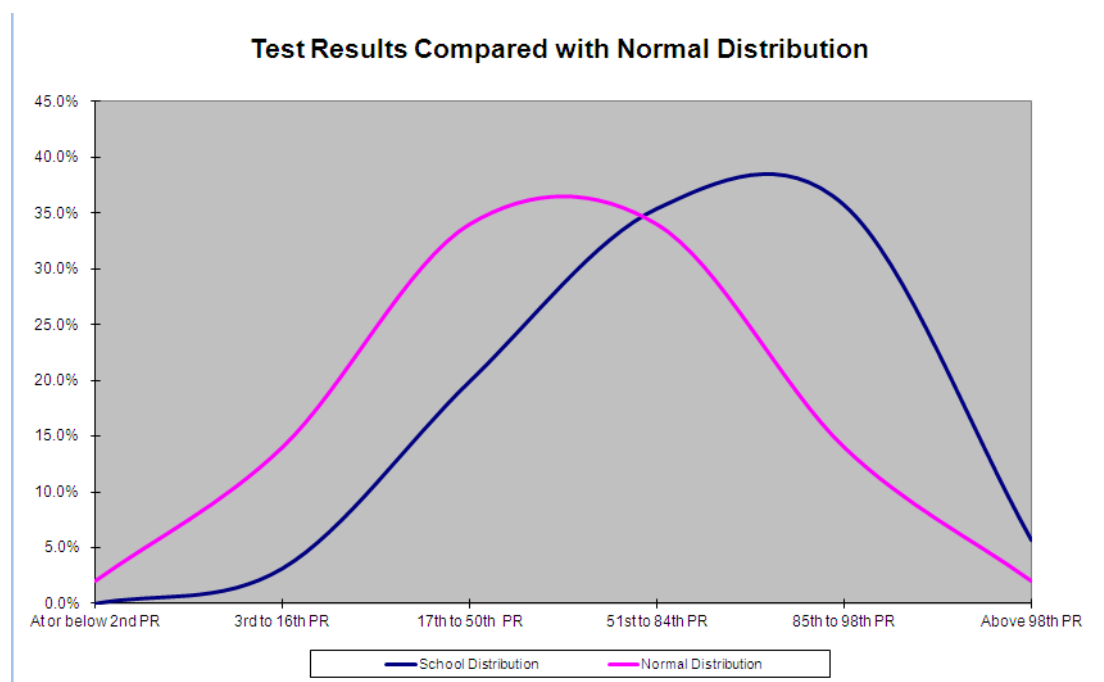
This is a report on the findings of the evaluation.

### 1.2 School context

Traditionally, St. Olaf's N.S. has placed a very high emphasis on literacy. In the year 2010 a new initiative was introduced which placed particular emphasis on early intervention. "Power Hour" involves four teachers simultaneously teaching small groups in both of our Senior Infant classes. New reading, familiar reading, writing and phonics/word recognition are the aspects of literacy covered at each station. This intensive intervention appears to be working very well in that very few children score poorly in standardised reading tests throughout the school. In fact, learning support in reading is offered to all children whose STen score is below 5.

## 2. The findings

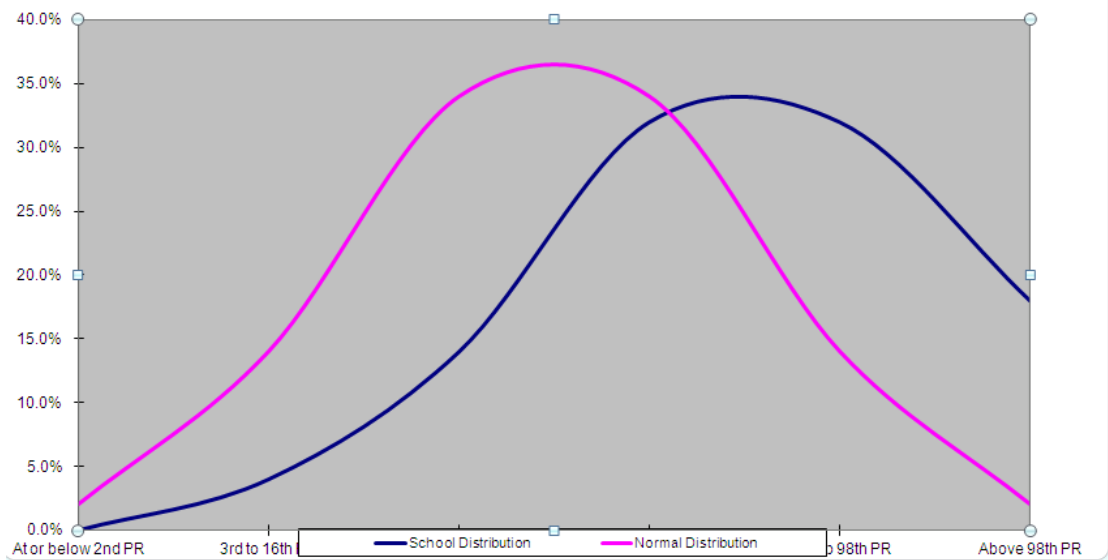
### Statistical Observations



The graph above compares our school's Standardised Reading Scores with the National Averages (Normal Distribution). The graph clearly shows our scores are

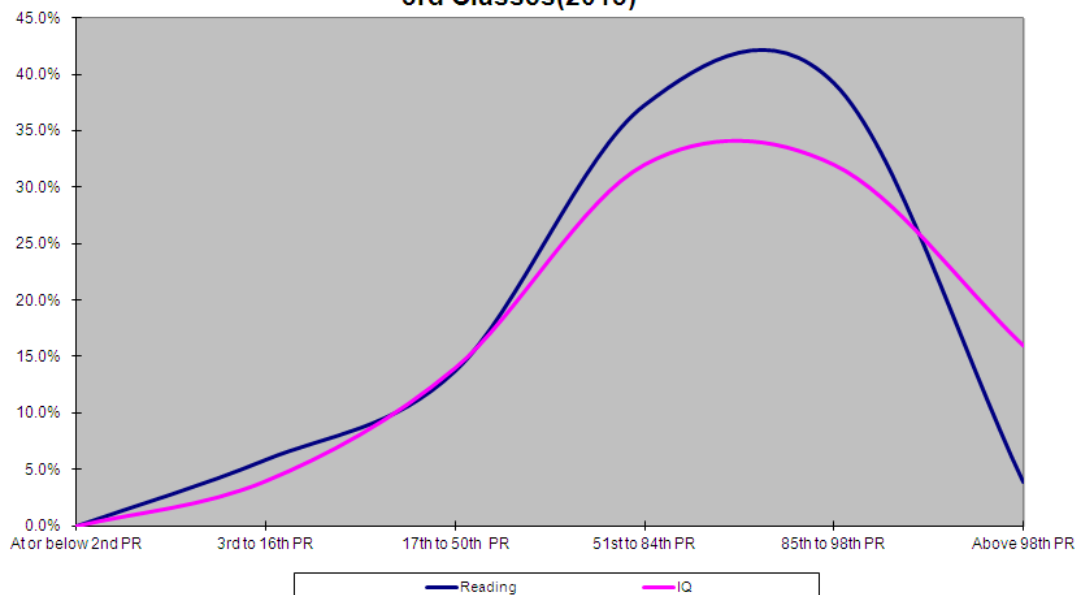
significantly better than the national average. This could lead to complacency. However, it appears that the ability of the pupils in our school may not be average. Let us focus on a random group within our school, namely Third Class.

**NNRIT Results Compared with Normal Distribution  
Third Class 2013**



The above graph compares our third class NNRIT scores with National Averages. The New Non Reading Intelligence Test (NNRIT) is a crude measure of IQ but can be a fairly accurate measure of ability. The graph clearly shows that the average ability of our pupils in third class is significantly better than the national average.

**Comparing NNRIT and Reading Percentiles  
3rd Classes(2013)**



The above graph compares our Third Class NNRIT scores with their Reading Scores. It shows that, in general, our third class pupils' performance in Reading is somewhat better than their ability except that fewer pupils had exceptionally high scores in Reading.

This may suggest that while many pupils can effortlessly correctly answer the easier questions on the test (the basics of reading); there may be room for improvement in enabling pupils to answer the difficult questions (Higher order comprehension).

### **Teachers' Observations**

Our school evaluation plan was discussed at Staff Meetings. It was decided to focus on Literacy. Various aspects of Literacy were discussed. Areas mentioned included Reading, Spelling, Functional Writing, Creative Writing and Comprehension. It was felt that the mechanics of reading were a particular strength in our school. Much work was already being undertaken in the areas of spelling and functional writing. Teachers of senior classes commented that many children were excellent spellers and very competent at functional writing. Creative writing can be idiosyncratic and improvement difficult to assess. Others felt that the best stimulus for creative writing was exposure to a wide array of reading material. There was general consensus that comprehension was an area we should address particularly in the senior classes. It was also felt that improving comprehension skills could impact on other areas of the curriculum e.g. reading History and Geography textbooks and word problems in Mathematics.

Mrs Fagan, our learning support teacher of Reading, has undertaken much research in the area of comprehension. She commented that, when answering comprehension questions, rubrics (*Find the keyword in the question.....Look for this keyword in the text...etc.*) are of limited value. Whereas such a rubric may work for the easier questions (*Who? When? Where?*), it was unlikely to work for more difficult questions (*Why?*) She felt that to answer questions involving inference, it was necessary to 'engage' with the text. She advised that we should teach children to read for meaning, to be questioning and attempting to predict.

### **Children's Attitude to Reading**

In May 2013, the children in third class were asked to complete an online survey on their attitude to Reading. The survey included both multiple choice and comment type answers.

A simple quantitative analysis revealed the following:

1. 70% of respondents liked Reading either 'a lot' or 'a bit'
2. 73% of respondents felt they were 'good' or 'very good' at reading
3. 75% of respondents felt they were 'average speed' or 'fast' readers
4. 95% of respondents said that they read outside school
5. 70% of respondents said there were good books in their classroom
6. 60% of respondents preferred reading themselves than being read to
7. 85% of respondents felt they understood better when they read silently
8. 85% of respondents said when they encountered an unknown word they would 'sound it out' or 'ask someone' or try to 'read it again'
9. 60% of respondents said they would read back if they didn't understand a passage

Overall, we felt the children had a very positive attitude to reading.

Qualitative analysis was also revealing. The children who read back when they didn't understand a passage were asked to comment as to why? Sample comments include  
"in case I miss anything"  
"I might understand it more"  
"so you'll know what it's about"  
"don't want to miss funny parts"  
"because I feel I missed something"  
"if you keep on reading, you just get confused"  
"so I know for myself"  
"so I can find out more"

It would appear that the 60% who read back were indeed 'engaging' with the text.

However 40% continued to read on despite not understanding the text. If this cohort could be encouraged to "engage" with the text, their understanding of the text (comprehension) should improve.

### **3. Progress made on previously-identified improvement targets**

- **Literacy decoding skills significantly improved due to Power Hour / RR**
- **Visual Arts programme significantly enhanced / extended to incorporate all strands of Curriculum.**
- **PE / Music equipment stocks replenished / storage facilities improved**
- **Resource Presses provided at Staff Room Corridor**
- **ICT – New Computer Room with 30 new PCs**

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

#### **4.1 Our school has **strengths** in the following areas:**

*(List the main strengths of the school with regard to teaching and learning))*

- Our average scores in Std Tests in both Literacy & Numeracy significantly exceed the National average. Literacy decoding skills v strong in general.
- 'Literacy Hour' & Reading Recovery programmes working v well
- 'Maths Power Hour' introduced to J & S Infants. RM maths programme.
- Resource / LS team

#### **4.2 The following areas are prioritised for improvement:**

*(Specify the aspects of teaching and learning that need to be improved)*

- Comprehension strategies – Building Bridges of Understanding / Other? (LS – PDST)
- School Library – restock and investigate use of technology for borrowing books – scanners etc. (Aladdin?)
- Classroom Libraries – ideas for improving stocks / use of class library?

#### **4.3 The following legislative and regulatory requirements need to be addressed:**

*(Specify the aspects that need to be addressed)*

- (SEN Policy, Data Protection, Parents as partners, Attendance & Participation strategy) – all need to be formally approved by BOM

Issue	Relevant legislation, rule or circular	Is the school fully meeting the requirements of the relevant legislation, rule or circular?	If no, indicate aspects to be developed
Time in school - Length of school year - minimum of 183 days - Length of school day 4 hours 40 minutes (infants); 5 hour 40 minutes (1 <sup>st</sup> -6 <sup>th</sup> classes)	Circular 11/95	√ <input type="checkbox"/> Yes  √ <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	
Arrangements for parent/ teacher and staff meetings	Circular 14/04	√ <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	
Implementation of Croke Park agreement regarding additional time requirement	Circular 0008/2011	√ <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	
Standardisation of school year	Circular 034/2011	√ <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	
Valid enrolment of pupils	Section 9(1), 15(2) and 23 Education Act 1998 Sections 20 and 21, Education (Welfare) Act 2000 Rules 55, 64, 108 and 123, Rules for National Schools Circular P24/02 Staffing Schedule for current school year	√ <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	
Retention of pupils	Rule 64 Rules for National Schools Circular 11/01 Circular 32/03	√ <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	
Development of school plan	Section 21, Education Act 1998	√ <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	
Appointments to posts of responsibility	Circular 07/03 Circular 053/2011	√ <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	
Time for literacy and numeracy - assessing and reporting literacy and numeracy achievement	Circular 0056/11 Initial Steps in the Implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategy	√ <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	
Exemption from Irish	Circular 12/96	√ <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	
Implementation of child protection procedures	Circular 0065/2011  Please ensure the following in relation to child protection	√ <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	Do we need to fill in actual numbers here? Reports made to BOM at each meeting so numbers change regularly!
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Number of cases where a report involving a child in the school was submitted by the DLP to the HSE</li> </ul>		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Number of cases where a report involving a child in the school was submitted by the DLP to the HSE and the school board of management informed _____</li> <li>▪ Number of cases where the DLP sought advice from the HSE and as a result of this advice, no report was made _____</li> <li>▪ Number of cases where the DLP sought advice from the HSE and as a result of this advice, no report was made and the school board of management informed _____</li> </ul>									
Implementation of complaints procedure as appropriate	<p>Complaints Procedures, Section 28 Education Act Primary Boards of Management Information Manual November 2007</p> <p>Please consider the following in relation to complaints</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes								
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Number of formal parental complaints received _____</li> <li>▪ Number of formal complaints processed _____</li> <li>▪ Number of formal complaints not fully processed by the end of this school year _____</li> </ul>				<p>0</p> <p>0</p> <p>0</p>					
Refusal to enrol	<p>Section 29 Education Act 1998</p> <p>Please provide the following information in relation to appeals taken in accordance with Section 29 against the school during this school year</p>	N/A								
	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 80%;">Number of section 29 cases taken against the school</td> <td style="width: 20%; text-align: center;">0 <input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Number of cases processed at informal stage</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Number of cases heard</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Number of appeals upheld</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Number of appeals dismissed</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> </table>				Number of section 29 cases taken against the school	0 <input type="checkbox"/>	Number of cases processed at informal stage	<input type="checkbox"/>	Number of cases heard	<input type="checkbox"/>
Number of section 29 cases taken against the school	0 <input type="checkbox"/>									
Number of cases processed at informal stage	<input type="checkbox"/>									
Number of cases heard	<input type="checkbox"/>									
Number of appeals upheld	<input type="checkbox"/>									
Number of appeals dismissed	<input type="checkbox"/>									
Suspension of students	<p>Section 29 Education Act 1998</p> <p>Please provide the following information in relation to appeals taken in accordance with Section 29 against the school during this school year</p>									
	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 80%;">Number of section 29 cases taken against the school</td> <td style="width: 20%; text-align: center;">0 <input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Number of cases processed at informal stage</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Number of cases heard</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Number of appeals upheld</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Number of appeals dismissed</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> </table>				Number of section 29 cases taken against the school	0 <input type="checkbox"/>	Number of cases processed at informal stage	<input type="checkbox"/>	Number of cases heard	<input type="checkbox"/>
Number of section 29 cases taken against the school	0 <input type="checkbox"/>									
Number of cases processed at informal stage	<input type="checkbox"/>									
Number of cases heard	<input type="checkbox"/>									
Number of appeals upheld	<input type="checkbox"/>									
Number of appeals dismissed	<input type="checkbox"/>									

		<input type="checkbox"/>		
Expulsion of students	Section 29 Education Act 1998			
	Please provide the following information in relation to appeals taken in accordance with Section 29 against the school during this school year			
	Number of section 29 cases taken against the school	0 <input type="checkbox"/>		
	Number of cases processed at informal stage	<input type="checkbox"/>		
	Number of cases heard	<input type="checkbox"/>		
	Number of appeals upheld	<input type="checkbox"/>		
	Number of appeals dismissed	<input type="checkbox"/>		



**Appendix to School Self-Evaluation Report:  
legislative and regulatory checklist**

Policy	Source	Has policy been approved by the board of management?	If no, indicate aspects to be developed.
Enrolment policy	Section (15)(2)(d) Education Act 1998	√ <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	
Code of behaviour <sup>1</sup> including anti-bullying policy	Circular 20/90 DES Guidelines on Countering Bullying Behaviour 1993 NEWB Guidelines Section 23, Education Welfare Act 2000	√ <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	
Attendance and participation strategy <sup>2</sup>	Section 22 Education Welfare Act 2000 Equal Status Acts 2000-2011	√ <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	
Health and safety statement	Section 20 Health and Safety Act 2005	√ <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	
Data protection	Data Protection Act 1988 Data Protection (Amendment Act) 2003	<input type="checkbox"/> No	Needs to be ratified by BOM
Special education needs policy <sup>3</sup>	Education Act 1998 Equal Status Acts 2000- 2011 Education (Welfare) Act 2000 Education for Persons with Special Education Needs Act (EPSEN) <sup>4</sup> 2004 Disability Act 2005	√ <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	
Relationships and sexuality education (RSE) policy	Relationships and Sexuality Education: Policy Guidelines (1997)	√ <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	
Child protection policy	Circular 0065/2011	√ <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	
Parents as partners	Circular 24/91	<input type="checkbox"/> No	PA Policy?
Public service (Croke Park) agreement – special needs assistants	Circular 71/11	√ <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	
Other			

<sup>1</sup> Under the provisions of the Education (Welfare) Act (2000) (section 23) the school's code of behaviour should conform to the specifications stated.

<sup>2</sup> Under the provisions of the Education (Welfare) Act (2000) (section 22), the school's attendance strategy should conform with the provisions stipulated.

<sup>3</sup> Section 9 of the Education Act (1998) requires a school to "use its available resources" to identify and provide for the educational needs of those "with a disability or other special educational needs."

<sup>4</sup> The EPSEN Act requires that schools be inclusive of and provide an appropriate education for pupils with special educational needs.