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Our Self-Evaluation Report and Improvement Plan

Introduction

The purpose of this evaluation is to assess the effectiveness of our language teaching practices, identify areas for improvement, and ensure that our language curriculum meets the needs of all students. The evaluation focuses on the areas of language development, teaching and learning strategies, resources, and student outcomes.

Context

At Derrylamogue NS, the Primary Language Curriculum is an essential part of our academic offering. The curriculum includes both English and Irish, ensuring that all students develop proficiency in these languages. Our primary objective is to promote communication skills, literacy, and critical thinking, which are fundamental to the students' overall development and success.
The New Primary Language Curriculum, emphasizes the development of listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. In particular, it stresses the importance of engaging pupils with a variety of texts, including poems and rhymes, to develop their phonological awareness, vocabulary, and creativity.

Methodology

The evaluation was carried out using a combination of the following methods:

- **Classroom Observations:** Observing lessons across all grade levels to assess teaching practices and student engagement.
- **Teacher Self-Assessment:** Teachers provided feedback on their teaching strategies, resources used, and their perceptions of student progress.
- **Student Feedback:** Students participated in surveys and informal discussions about their experiences with language learning.
- **Parent and Guardian Input:** Feedback was gathered through surveys and meetings with parents to understand their perspectives on their children's language learning.

Findings of this evaluation

This is effective / very effective practice in our school

List the main strengths of the school in teaching and learning.

Curriculum Implementation - English Poetry and Rhymes: Teachers have been consistently incorporating poems and rhymes into English language lessons. The variety of texts used supports the development of phonemic awareness, rhythm, and rhyme recognition. English poems are selected to reflect diverse themes, styles, and authors, which helps broaden students' understanding and appreciation of poetry.

Student Engagement English Poetry: Most students exhibit high levels of engagement when participating in activities involving English poems. Rhymes are particularly popular in early years, and students enjoy activities such as choral reading, dramatization, and reciting poems from memory. There is noticeable excitement during poetry-based lessons, and students are encouraged to share their interpretations of poems.

Irish Poetry: While student engagement in Irish poetry lessons is generally positive, students often express more enthusiasm for English poems. This is attributed to their higher proficiency in English, which leads to a greater sense of confidence. However, teachers have observed that Irish poems that relate to students' lived experiences or involve more interactive activities, like songs, tend to be more engaging.

Literacy Development Reading Fluency and Comprehension: The use of poetry has proven beneficial in improving students' reading fluency and comprehension. Rhyming poems, in particular, help young students build phonetic skills and word recognition. In both languages, students are encouraged to explore the meanings behind poems and engage in discussions to improve their comprehension.

Writing Skills: Exposure to different poetic forms has inspired students to experiment with their writing. Activities like creating their own rhymes and writing simple poems have proven effective in encouraging creativity and improving students' writing skills. In English, this practice is particularly well-developed, though more structured opportunities for creative writing in Irish are needed.

Inclusion of Irish Language Confidence in Irish: The teaching of Irish poetry helps develop students' language skills and fosters greater confidence in using Irish for both spoken and written communication.

Areas for Improvement:

- Irish Poetry and Rhymes: Teachers aim to choose age-appropriate poems that connect with cultural themes and language development. However, more frequent and structured use of Irish poems could enhance students' fluency and comfort in speaking the language.
- More frequent practice with poetry in Irish, combined with strategies that reinforce language skills (e.g., repetition, songs, visual aids), could support higher levels of language acquisition.
- Teachers, especially in the Senior end of the school find it hard to find poetry in both English and Irish that is appealing for the children.
- Children in the middle/ senior end of the school don't enjoy learning poetry- if they could see a reason for learning it, they may be more enthusiastic eg. for a school performance

This is what we are going to focus on to improve our practice further (*Specify the aspects of teaching and learning the school has identified and prioritised for further improvement.)*

- Compile a selection of poetry in both English and Irish for teachers to choose from at each school level.
- Each class will do a performance in front of the whole school once a year of two poems they have enjoyed learning during the year.

3. Our improvement plan

On the next page we have recorded:

- The **targets** for improvement we have set
- The **actions** we will implement to achieve these
- **Who is responsible** for implementing, monitoring and reviewing our improvement plan
- How we will measure **progress** and check **outcomes**

As we implement our improvement plan we will record:

- The **progress** made, and **adjustments** made, and **when**
- **Achievement of targets** (original and modified), and **when**

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN *The teaching of poetry and rhyme in both English and Irish* September 2024- September 2026	
Action Plan Co-ordinator:	Orla Burke
Targets	• All children will be able to recite 5 poems (a combination of English and Irish) at the end of each school year • List of relevant poetry compiled that can be accessed easily by all staff

Actions	**Persons' Groups responsible**	**Timeframe**
• Staff will compile a list of poetry that can be chosen from at each class level. • Poems to be typed and stored with all teachers having access to same. • Teachers will choose a total of 5 poems/ rhymes that will be learned throughout each school year. • Children will recite two poems- one in English and one in Irish for the whole school at the end of each school year.	All Staff Secretary Each class teacher Whole School	October- December 2024 December 2024- January 2025 December 2024 and again in September 2025 June 2025 and June 2026

Monitoring strategies/ Approaches

- At staff meetings, progress will be discussed- if anything needs to change this will be discussed and minuted at meeting
- Children will practice reciting learned poetry frequently throughout the year
- At the end of the first year of this plan, teachers will discuss progress, including if selected rhymes and poetry are at the right level for the children/ need to change and if this is the case the list of poetry compiled will be edited.

Evaluation/ Criteria for success

(Are we making progress? / How do we know?)

- As a school, we will have a list of poems to choose from for each class grouping
- At the end of the year, can the children recite poems in both English and Irish
- Survey of the children- Did they enjoy learning and reciting the poetry learned in this school year?
- Teachers will consciously be teaching poetry to their class

Necessary adjustments throughout implementation process • • •				
Targets	**Achieved**			
List compiled of poetry that can be taught at each class level	**Yes**		**No**	
Survey of the children- Did they enjoy learning and reciting the poetry learned in this school year?	**Yes**		**No**	
Teachers are consciously teaching poetry in both English and Irish to their class	**Yes**		**No**	

Signed: Orla Burke **Date:** 19/6/25

Principal

Signed: [signature] **Date:** 19/6/25

Chairperson