***Scoil Náisiúnta na Scríne***

**Our Self-Evaluation Report and Improvement Plan**

**Introduction**

Scoil Náisiúnta na Scríne is a vertical, co-educational, Catholic school with 135 pupils. It is a rural school which comprises 6 mainstream classroom teachers, two Special Education teachers, 1.83 Special Needs Assistants and one part-time secretary. The principal is a teaching principal with 29 administration days.

On the 24th April 2018, the staff at Scoil Náisiúnta na Scríne began a new cycle of the School Self-Evaluation process. The principal Ms. Wickham attended a training seminar with the Professional Developemnt Service for Teachers (PDST), the In-School Management Team (ISM) met to discuss the first steps and the staff as a whole met and explored the overall process of School Self-Evaluation.

**The Focus of this Evaluation**

Having undertaken projects in literacy and numeracy during the previous cycle, the school staff decided to focus on the area of Gaeilge within the school. This focus also enabled staff to proceed with the introduction of the new Primary Language Curriculum.

We undertook self-evaluation of teaching and learning during the period April 2018 to September 2018. We evaluated the following aspect(s) of teaching and learning:

* Learner outcomes
* Learner experiences
* Teachers’ individual practice
* Teachers’ collective practice

**This is what we discovered:**

* Attainment of pupils in Gaeilge compares favourably with national norms.
* Very positives attitudes across all the education partners, and a willingness to engage with our improvement plan.
* Excellent resources throughout the school made possible by the excellent community support the school receives.
* Skilled staff who complete comprehensive planning and evaluation, and who work tirelessly to improve standards in the school.
* While we are doing well with Gaeilge in general, there is a need to focus on and develop standards around oral Irish.
* Our new Irish scheme, which we are introducing on a phased basis, is working very well. Pupils are engaged in their learning and their enjoyment is evident.
* Parents are very supportive of our school and are willing to become actively involved in promoting the use of Gaeilge at home.

**What we did to find out what we were doing well, and what we could do better:**

* We introduced a standardised test for Irish: Triail Ghaeilge Dhroim Conrach.
* Teacher observations/assessment/discussion informed the planning stages.
* Teachers engaged in Continuing Professional Development to see how we could best proceed.
* Children from each class completed a short interview as Gaeilge and the results from this are being used as our baseline data.
* Parents completed a short survey during the Parent/Teacher Meetings (November 2018).
* Teachers are in the process of introducing the new Primary Language Curriculum. By engaging in this process, teachers were able to pinpoint specific learner outcomes that needed attention, along with the progression steps that the children should be working through in order to achieve success.

**What we are going to work on now:**

* Gaeilge sa Rang: for five minutes every day each class will drop everything and ‘Bí ag caint as Gaeilge’.
* Specific Irish questions and interactions are being taught to children so that they can experience success during these sessions, while also develop their conversation skills in general.
* Classroom environments are print rich and full of vocabulary to help develop conversation fluency.
* Our Conversation Corner is bilingual, incorporating simple Irish phrases that children can use.
* Irish is being used informally on a regular basis throughout the school for incidental interactions, messages etc.
* Every Friday we will select a student as Gaeilgeoir na Seachtaine. This child will get to keep a trophy at home for the week. The award will go to the student who is making the most effort to use their Irish.
* Every Friday we are going to have school assembly which will allow children to further develop oral Irish skills. Activities will include:
* Catch the ball and answer the question
* 30 seconds on the hot spot talking about a particular topic
* Traditional Irish song as well as a new Irish song from our new scheme
* Our News section
* Use the motto ‘Every teacher; every classroom; every day’ as a way of ensuring development of this project right across the school.
* Teachers working collaboratively to share experience and practice.

**What you can do to help:**

* Help your child develop a positive attitude towards Irish. Use phrases etc. at home (to be sent in January 2019).
* Ask your child about the work they are doing to improve their oral Irish.
* Follow us on social media to get an insight into what we are doing.
* Read the school newsletter which will have a section on School Self-Evaluation going forward.
* For 2nd-6th classes, listen to the audio recordings online of your child’s Irish reading from ‘Léigh sa Bhaile’ as a way of encouraging the use of the language.
* If the TV is on, encourage your child to watch one cartoon from TG4 as a way of hearing the language spoken naturally.

**Here is some information about how we are carrying out our work and about what the Department of Education and Skills requires us to do:**

***School time and holidays***

The Department requires all primary schools to have 183 school days each year.

This year we have 183 school days blocked out, from 29th August 2018 to 28th June 2019.

The Department sets out a standardised school year and school holidays.

This year we are taking all our school holidays within the permitted time.

The Department sets out arrangements for parent/teacher meetings and staff meetings. This year we will have parent/teacher meetings on 22nd November 2018 and three staff meetings, all in line with the Department’s regulations. We will also have a full day closure on 23rd November 2018 to facilitate in-service for teachers on the Primary Language Curriculum. As well as the personal time that teachers invest in planning and preparation, the staff engages in 36 additional planning hours outside of school time.

***Looking after the children in our school***

The Department requires schools to follow the *Child Protection Procedures* it has set down. Our Board of Management has agreed in writing to do this. We have a fully compliant and up to date Child Protection Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment. All teachers know about the *Procedures* and we have circulated our policy to the parent body. It is also available on our school website: www.screenns.ie

**Our Designated Liaison Person (DLP) is Ms. F. Wickham (principal) and our Deputy DLP is Ms. A. Dempsey (deputy principal).**

***Enrolment and attendance***

The Department requires schools to have and publish an admissions policy, to record and report attendance accurately, and to encourage high attendance and participation. The policy relating to our school is on our website and is available through the school office on request.

We keep accurate attendance records and report them as required. Our school has excellent records of attendance and we are very proud of the commitment of families to ensure good attendance.

***Positive behaviour for a happy school***

The Department requires schools to have a code of behaviour, and asks us to consult parents and children about it. We do this. Our code of behaviour describes and supports positive behaviour. We have a very clear and high-profile anti-bullying policy in our school.