**Virgin Mary B.N.S.**

**Summary School Self – Evaluation Report**

1. **Introduction**

Our school is a vertical all-boys D.E.I.S. band 1 school in Ballymun. There are 13 teachers in the school including the principal, 7 class teachers, 3 learning – support / resource teachers, a teacher in the Early Start Project and a Home School Community Liaison Teacher shared with the Virgin Mary G.N.S. We have three special needs assistants, a child care worker, an attendance promoter and a member of the School Completion Programme (B.E.S.T) also as part of our school staff. We have a number of programmes operating in the school including: Oral Language Programme, Maths Recovery, Reading Recovery, Paired – Reading, 1st Steps Literacy Programme, Incredible years Programme and transitions Programme. Pupils have opportunities to participate in Hip – Hop, choirs, guitar, boxing, swimming, Gaelic Football, Soccer, basketball, athletics and numerous other activities. Our Hip-Hop show was even featured on RTE 2 and our school team has won at Croke Park.

Our school attendance is excellent – averaging 92%. We are very proud of our pupils’ behaviour. The wonderful atmosphere in our school is often commented upon by visitors.

For more information on how we intend to improve our pupils learning, please see our School Improvement Plan (attached) and check out the school website.

* 1. **The Focus of the Evaluation**

We undertook a school evaluation of teaching and learning during the year. We evaluated Literacy and Numeracy. We choose these areas because of (a) the national focus on literacy and numeracy and (b) Because of the numerous programmes we have running in our school. We wished to evaluate their effectiveness and set new goals and targets. (c) Because of the Whole School Evaluation Report and follow up recommendations and the findings from a recent evaluation of our Early Start Project.

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

1. **Summary of School Self – Evaluation Findings:**

We collected information from parents, pupils and teachers in preparing this report. We used a variety of information – gathering methods which included:

* questionnaires
* focus groups
* standardised reading tests
* standardised maths tests
* analysis of data
* staff discussion
* analysis of scores of pupils in receipt of interventions in maths / literacy
* review of D.E.I.S Plans
  1. **We found that our school has strengths in the following areas:**

**Strengths**

* Literacy levels are very good. Taking our 1st class as a focus group (as they had been in receipt of numerous literacy interventions) our pupil’s literacy levels are above national norms.
* The school caters extremely well for pupils with literacy needs.
* The majority of pupils who received interventions in literacy improved literacy scores compared to the previous year eg. pupils who received reading recovery, power hour, in-class novel, differentiated group work.
* The staff are extremely well trained and motivated and programmes such as 1st Steps and Incredible Years, are used throughout the school.
* Content and flow of pupil writing has improved year on year, as is evidenced by our writing genre competitions.
* Pupil engagement with and enjoyment of literacy activities and writing genres has developed and improved.
* Pupil understanding of number has improved and pupil problem-solving has improved (numeracy)
* Mathematical processes
* Use of mental maths strategies and a systematic approach to problem solving is being used throughout the school.
* Pupil enjoyment of and engagement with numeracy activities has developed and grown over the past few years.
* Sustained improvement in overall school attendance annually.

We know these are our strengths because of our literacy and maths scores, continual assessment, genre writing competitions, questionnaires, “problem of the week” competitions in maths, pupil enjoyment of reading and use of the library.

* 1. We have decided to prioritise the following areas for development.

**Areas for Development**

* **Literacy**
* consolidation of improvement to date
* spellings and use of punctuation in written work
* comprehension strategies
* reading fluency
* **Numeracy**
* continuation of development of use of mental maths strategies and use of concrete materials to develop concept of numeracy
* consolidation and development of problem solving strategies
* consolidation of understanding and use of mathematical processes.