

SCHOOL SELF EVALUATION/ SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

- A school self-evaluation of teaching and learning in Numeracy was undertaken in our school, commencing in January 2012.
- Staff adhered to guidelines from the Department of Education in '*Literacy and Numeracy, Learning for Life*'; information on which is available on the Department of Education's website.
- Following extensive review of pupil performance in mathematics our school self-evaluation findings showed that we have strengths in the areas of the teaching of concepts and facts, computation procedures, learning settings and support for individual pupils. To complement these areas staff are agreed that 'Word Problems' is to be a priority area for review.
- A 'School Improvement Plan' has been put in place to facilitate same, with a comprehensive set of measures in place to enhance our performance in the area of solving word problems.
- Our work within the Department of Education's guidelines is ongoing. This school year we are focussing our review/school self-evaluation on 'Literacy'.

'COREWORDS' Spelling system.

The teaching and learning of Spellings begins informally in Junior Infants and formally in Senior Infants. Some time ago we embarked on an initiative to improve pupils' spellings. We call this system our 'Corewords'.

- Our programme advocates a change in the teacher's role from one of giving spellings to one of teaching spellings.
- It is of little benefit if the pupil gets full marks in a weekly spelling test and then cannot reproduce the same words correctly in a regular class- based writing exercise.
- Our programme takes the drudgery and stress out of weekly (Friday!) spelling tests.
- This programme is based on supporting the weaker speller and the proficient speller, the latter often being successful at spelling.
- Children are helped to understand that the correct spelling of frequently used words is important.
- To achieve progress the work done with the child is systematic, consistent and positive.
- Precedence is given to common, or core, words.

- One of the strategies we use for learning English Spellings, from First Class upwards, is...*Look at the word/Say the word/Picture it/Cover and write it/Use the word in a sentence.*
- To explain this strategy in greater detail....

A) LOOK! The child looks at the word

B) SAY!

It is very important to check that the child is pronouncing the word correctly. If the child mis-pronounces this will lead to difficulties with spelling.

C) PICTURE!

The child checks to see if the word has any common roots e.g. *ought* in *bought*, *fought*, *thought*.

Teacher may give children a memory sentence (Mnemonic) to help children with spelling e.g how do I spell 'every'?

Every Van Enters Red Yards.

These learning sentences should not be dismissed. They are a memory aid to help the child remember spellings. These memory sentences are gone over frequently in class.

D) COVER! The child will then cover the word, and...

E) WRITE! The child writes the word.

F) CHECK! The child checks to see if her/his spelling is correct.

G) USE! The child will use it in a sentence.

Parents will notice that sentences are dictated to the children incorporating as many as possible of the spellings that have been learned. This continues to reinforce the spellings.