



**St Benildus College
Upper Kilmacud Road,
Stillorgan,
Blackrock,
County Dublin.**

School Roll Number: 60261R

SCHOOL SELF-EVALUATION REPORT

Evaluation Period: September 2014 – June 2015

Report issue date: April 2015

Section 1 - Introduction

1.1 Background

The Programme for Government, 2011 sets out specific targets in relation to self-evaluation and school improvement. Similarly, the National Strategy to improve Literacy and Numeracy, *Literacy and Numeracy for Learning and Life*, requires “...all schools to engage in robust self-evaluation”.

1.2 S.S.E. Explained

The purpose of S.S.E. is to empower the school community to affirm good practice, to identify areas that merit improvement and to decide on actions that should be taken to bring about improvements in those areas. It gives schools the opportunity to tell their own story. S.S.E. enriches the learning and the teaching experience for the benefit of all concerned. S.S.E. is primarily about schools taking ownership of their own development and improvement. The introduction of S.S.E. heralds a major cultural shift in education which holds the possibility of widespread societal amelioration. Research from New Zealand, Scotland, Finland and Canada shows that engagement in S.S.E. processes leads to significant improvements in teaching and learning.

“How noble and good everyone could be if, every evening before falling asleep, they were to recall to their minds the events of the whole day and consider exactly what has been good and bad. Then without realising it, you try to improve yourself at the start of each new day.” (Ann Frank)

1.3 S.S.E. at St Benildus College

S.S.E. and Literacy and Numeracy are inextricably linked. Traditionally the Literacy and Numeracy levels of students at St. Benildus College compare very favourably to national averages yet we continue to strive for improvement. In the 2014-15 school year we are concentrating our efforts mainly on First Year Students but in the coming years the initiative will be expanded to include students from other year groups. The whole process will continue in future years and different areas of improvement will be targeted as the S.S.E. initiative unfolds.

1.4 The focus of the evaluation

A school self-evaluation of teaching and learning in St. Benildus College was undertaken during the period September 2014 to June 2015. During the evaluation, teaching and learning in subjects and programmes were evaluated:

- Literacy: L1 English.
- Numeracy: Understanding and using mathematics.
- Other aspects of teaching and learning across subject departments.

This is a report on the findings of the evaluation.

1.5 School context

St Benildus College is a Catholic Secondary School in the Lasallian tradition. Founded in 1966, the College was named after the De La Salle Saint, Brother Benildus of Clermont, France.

The College caters for young men from First Year through to Sixth Year and is situated on the Upper Kilmacud Road, midway between Dundrum and Stillorgan.

Set against a backdrop of the Dublin Mountains and located on a twenty-five acre site it has state of the art educational and sporting facilities. The Luas tramline intersects the College's playing fields and there is a tram stop on campus.

The mission of the College is to foster the intellectual, physical, social and moral development of each student. Academic achievement is stressed but participation in artistic and sporting activities is also strongly encouraged. The Irish language has a firm and secure place in the life of the school and many facets of Irish life, language and literature are studied and enjoyed.

Development of personal attributes such as politeness, general presentation, confidence in oneself and in one's abilities are deemed to be extremely important aspects of the educational programme.

1.6 S.S.E. initiatives prior to September 2014

- Teachers volunteered to engage in peer evaluation during February and March 2013.
- Inservice training delivered by D.E.S. Inspector Maureen O'Sullivan on February 28th 2013.

1.7 S.S.E initiatives implemented in the school year 2014-15

- The formation of a core group of teachers, comprised of the Deputy Principal and one teacher from each of the ten subject areas (as specified in the S.S.E. Guidelines), to help drive S.S.E. and to get the backlog of work in this area completed.

Subject Area	Representative
Deputy Principal	O Mac Eoin
Guidance	B Hoyne
Learning Support	J Phelan
Irish	C Delaney
English	M Kennedy
European Languages	N Maher
Science & Maths	N Lowe & J Trimble
Business Subjects	A O'Malley
History & Geography	P Fahy & P O'Sullivan
Practical Subjects	C Fitzpatrick
RE, CSPE, SPHE	R Mulvihill

- The use of keyword notebooks in class – cross-curricular focus on vocabulary and terminology.
- The use of notice boards in First Year classrooms in order to display keywords, posters etc – creating a print rich environment.

- A focus on Literacy (spelling, punctuation & capital letters) & Numeracy (percentages, time & measurement).
- Standardised spelling tests (WRAT 4) were administered to all First Year Students in October 2014. These tests were repeated in April 2015 to assess students' progress.
- D.E.A.R. (drop everything and read) was introduced during the first ten minutes of the 08:25 class on Friday mornings.
- As a means of facilitating S.S.E. the staff engaged in I.T. training (Microsoft 365, Google docs etc) on 18/11/14 directly before the scheduled PTM.
- The core group worked on preparing the student, parent and teacher questionnaires using the templates contained in the S.S.E. Guidelines. This information was then passed on to all teachers at the regular subject meetings.
- Staff Meetings: Teachers engaged in discussions and the final preparations in relation to the student, parent and teacher questionnaires on the following dates 22/01/15 and 29/01/15.
- The Student Questionnaire was completed by students in First Year on 06/02/15.
- The Parent Questionnaire was completed by parents of students in First Year from 04/02/15 to 13/02/15.
- The Teacher Questionnaire was completed by teachers from 30/01/15 to 06/02/15.
- Staff Meeting: Teachers engaged in the analysis of the responses to the student, parent and teacher questionnaires on 25/02/15.
- A concerted effort was made to augment the numeracy skills of a small number of students who were experiencing difficulties. Through the Learning Support Department and through the recruitment of a new maths teacher, extra maths classes were created for students in first, second, third, fifth and sixth year. There are between five and eleven students in each of these classes.
- Similarly extra English classes are also provided for students from first to sixth year. The Learning Support Department constantly monitor students' progress and the classes change accordingly.
- Staff Meeting: An error analysis of the work of first year students was conducted on 19/03/15.
- Staff Meeting: On 14/03/15 the draft versions of the S.S.E. report and the S.I.P. report were presented and discussed and further recommendations came from the teachers.

Section 2 - The Findings

'When engaging in school self-evaluation, schools reflect on their aims, consider criteria for success within the school's context and ethos, and determine appropriate methods for judging the quality of educational provision in the school. It is an evidence-based approach which involves gathering information from a range of sources and making judgements with a view to bringing about improvements in students' learning.' (School Self Evaluation Guidelines Pg 12)

To provide 'evidence and information from a range of sources', students, parents and teachers were asked to complete questionnaires. The questionnaires were completed online using *Survey Monkey* and all responses were submitted anonymously. A comprehensive summary of the data and responses collected from each survey is provided below.

The Student Questionnaire:

On 06/02/15 all of the First Year classes were taken to the computer room to complete this questionnaire. The questionnaire contained 25 questions. In total 127 responses were collected. This represents 98% of the students in the year. The missing 2% is accounted for by students who were absent on the designated day.

Q1: I feel that I have settled in well at St. Benildus College.		
Agree 93%	Disagree 2%	Do not know 5%

Q2: In class my teachers explain difficult material clearly.		
Agree 77%	Disagree 7%	Do not know 16%

Q3: I take responsibility for my own learning.		
Agree 91%	Disagree 3%	Do not know 6%

Q4: If I find something difficult during class I will ask my teacher to help me understand it.		
Agree 79%	Disagree 11%	Do not know 10%

Q5: My knowledge and understanding of each subject is regularly checked through homework and classwork.		
Agree 73%	Disagree 14%	Do not know 13%

Q6: Regular class tests help me to learn and to make progress in my subjects.		
Agree 83%	Disagree 10%	Do not know 7%

Q7: I have learned from mistakes I have made in previous tests.		
Agree 89%	Disagree 6%	Do not know 5%

Q8: I feel that I have a better understanding of a topic when the teacher makes use of ICT (computer, tablet, projector etc.)		
Agree 74%	Disagree 6%	Do not know 20%

Q9: Which one of the following is most difficult for you?		
Organising myself (books, copies, locker etc.)	Understanding new things (topics, ideas, vocabulary, methodologies etc.)	Studying (writing notes, summarising chapters, revising etc.)
13%	24%	63%

Q10: In class I get opportunities to work with other students.		
Agree 78%	Disagree 16%	Do not know 6%

Q11: I like working in pairs or in small groups.		
Agree 84%	Disagree 13%	Do not know 3%

Q12: I write down my homework in my school journal.		
Always 66%	Sometimes 33%	Never 1%

Q13: One of my parents checks my homework journal every night.		
Agree 15%	Disagree 70%	Do not know 15%

Q14: I try my best at my homework even if I find it difficult.		
Always 76%	Sometimes 24%	Never 0%

Q15: I check back over each part of my written work (homework & classwork) before I finish it.		
Always 17%	Sometimes 76%	Never 7%

Q16: I take care with capital letters, punctuation and spelling in all my written work.		
Always 53%	Sometimes 42%	Never 5%

Q17: I would like to use a 'traffic light system' to indicate to my teacher how well I understand written exercises. Drawing a green light for work I understand very well. Drawing an orange light for work I have some difficulty understanding. Drawing a red light for work I find very difficult.		
Agree 50%	Disagree 30%	Do not know 20%

Q18: When my work is good I would like to be given praise by my teacher in the following way:		
Orally	A written comment in my copy	Orally and with a written comment in my copy
32%	29%	39%

Q19: My parents discuss my school reports and parent teacher meetings with me.		
Agree 91%	Disagree 4%	Do not know 5%

Q20: I am familiar with the school rules and I have read the St. Benildus College Code of Behaviour, which is in my homework journal.		
Agree 86%	Disagree 8%	Do not know 6%

**Q21. I like the following aspects of St. Benildus College.... Please comment.
(Sample responses below)**

1. The atmosphere. The teachers of the college. The way the school system is.
2. The good selection of sports.
3. I like the teachers and that they can make any subject fun and interesting.
4. I like option classes and the breaks.
5. I like the variety of activities, facilities, atmosphere and the cafeteria.

**Q22. I do not like the following aspects of St. Benildus College. Please comment.
(Sample responses below)**

1. The amount of homework and study every night and the heavy school bag.
2. First years have small desks.
3. The uniform. Very early start. No half day like other schools.
4. There is only one football team. There is no rugby team. The lunch hall is freezing. There is no hockey team.
5. Very little computer time.

Q23. My teachers help me with my learning in the following way(s). Please comment. (Sample responses below)

1. Using the computer, playing games, doing extra fun activities.
2. Telling me where I went wrong in tests or exams, helping me understand things I am not 100% sure on.
3. I like when the teacher has time to help me.
4. My teachers answer all my questions and we get regular tests.
5. Make me repeat it orally, giving us homework and tests.

Q24. The school could help me with my learning in the following way(s). Please comment. (Sample responses below)

1. Using computers more often. Making songs.
2. Making lessons more fun. Doing stuff on the computers. Going on trips because we haven't gone anywhere this year
3. Discuss with me where I am not so strong in my learning and things I need to work on.
4. Give us more revision and less homework. Help us to study. Give more notes.
5. Let me use a computer.

**Q25. I like D.E.A.R (Drop Everything and Read) because. Please comment.
(Sample responses below)**

1. I don't read much so D.E.A.R. encourages me to read every Friday
2. I hate reading.
3. It is a much needed opportunity to read and it takes ten minutes away from class time.
4. It is a nice break from work that we do in normal classes but i would prefer if it was in the middle of the day as it would make it better
5. I like D.E.A.R (Drop Everything And Read) because it helps me to relax and helps my literacy skills.

The Parent Questionnaire:

The Parent Questionnaire was completed by parents of students in First Year from 04/02/15 to 13/02/15. The questionnaire contained 15 questions. In total 67 responses were collected. This represents 52% families who have a son in First Year.

Q1: My son is progressing well at St. Benildus College.

Agree 96%	Disagree 3%	Do not know 1%
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Q2: There is a high standard of teaching at St. Benildus College.

Agree 96%	Disagree 1%	Do not know 3%
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Q3: My son gets an adequate amount of homework to do.

Agree 81%	Disagree 10%	Do not know 9%
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Q4: My son's work is regularly assessed by his teachers through a variety of means (written and oral evaluation).

Agree 95%	Disagree 1%	Do not know 4%
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Q5: I regularly check my son's homework journal.

Agree 76%	Disagree 24%	Do not know 0%
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Q6: The school consults me if my son needs extra help.

Agree 36%	Disagree 10%	Not applicable 54%
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Q7: I know the relevant person to contact if I have a question about my son's education at St. Benildus College.

Agree 93%	Disagree 1%	Do not know 6%
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Q8: School reports and parent teacher meetings offer useful feedback about my son's progress.

Agree 96%	Disagree 3%	Do not know 1%
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Q9: Parent teacher meetings are well organised at St. Benildus College.

Agree 90%	Disagree 7%	Do not know 3%
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Q10: I am aware of and have read the St. Benildus College code of behaviour.

Agree 99%	Disagree 1%	Do not know 0%
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Q11. Are you aware of the on-going work at St. Benildus College in relation to literacy and numeracy? Please comment. (Sample responses below)

1. Yes, I can see that there is a good emphasis placed on both.
2. Not aware of this.
3. I know that there is support for students who need extra help with their work.
4. Yes I am aware of the 'drop everything and read' program going on in the school.
5. Not relevant to me.

Q12. From the teaching and learning perspective what are the biggest challenges that your son has faced as a First Year Student at St. Benildus College? Please comment. (Sample responses below)

1. Staying organised with correct books for correct classes. He would rather carry everything with him all the time than risk forgetting a book or copy.
2. The amount of homework; the increased number of teachers; asking questions.
3. It's been a challenge for him to adjust to the move from Primary to Secondary but he's improving all the time.
4. Adjusting to the level required at second level, adjusting to the higher standard of work required. Not knowing how to study or what to study outside of homework - managing sport and class work.
5. None. Seems to have settled in very well.

Q13. Are there ways that the school could help your son further in the study of his subjects? Please comment. (Sample responses below)

1. It would be great if my son was taught how to help him manage his huge work load and prioritise his work to enable him to get a better work life balance.
2. Overall I think the school is doing a good job in covering all his subjects.
3. Reiterate how important it is to be prepared for exams and study.
4. Teach him how to study productively, note taking etc.
5. Abbreviated notes from the teachers are a good idea as the boys can find studying large amount of text quite daunting.

Q14. Students receive guidance in relation to their personal and social development in R.E., C.S.P.E., and S.P.H.E. classes and also through engaging with the Guidance Department. Please suggest further ways that the school could help First Year Students with their social and personal development. (Sample responses below)

1. Less homework and more time for other school activities and have some fun while learning to socially develop.
2. A couple of 'fun' activities could be added to the curriculum in the first term. To help settle in and mix with all the classes, something like a treasure hunt around the school, would allow them become familiar with their surrounding quickly etc
3. None - this has been good so far.
4. We think school is looking after our son very well, maybe suggest guest speakers with different life experiences, past pupils even?
5. As it's a huge change from primary school I think that the school could have a way of finding out how the students are getting on and coping with the challenge of secondary school life. They should have a way of expressing if they need extra help or if they are sometimes finding it difficult to cope with all the new changes and challenges.

Q15. Any other comments or suggestions? (Sample responses below)

1. I'm very happy with the school and my son is enjoying the experience both social and academic.
2. No easy solution and might be off topic slightly but school bag extremely heavy and has started to cause back strain at times. I pads?? E books?
3. Has the schools considered canvassing past pupils for career advice? To help set up a CoderDojo? Could the students visit the Young Scientists Competition or be encouraged to compete? It is such a pity that matches take place during school time. Should the College reconsider a half day for sports?
4. My son is the first of my 3 children to go to secondary school. So far the experience has been extremely positive. I feel that the first years are really "minded" by the school. The teachers are great and my son feels that he can ask any questions to any teacher. I have only praise for the school and I am extremely happy with the teaching and the care that my son receives.
5. Study timetable given to boys in December in preparation for their Christmas exams was excellent. However they could have received less homework those few weeks due to the extra study time they had to do.

The Teacher Questionnaire:

The Teacher Questionnaire was completed by teachers from 30/01/15 to 06/02/15. The questionnaire contained 15 questions. In total 41 responses were collected. This represents 82% of the current teaching staff.

Q1. Focusing on Literacy and Numeracy is important in relation to teaching and learning in St Benildus College.

Agree 100%	Disagree 0%
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Q2. In my teaching I incorporate strategies to help my students improve their written literacy.

Agree 95%	Disagree 5%
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Q3. In my teaching I incorporate strategies to help my students improve their oral literacy.

Agree 93%	Disagree 0%	Not applicable 7%
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Q4. In my teaching I incorporate strategies to help my students improve their digital literacy.

Agree 72%	Disagree 20%	Not applicable 8%
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Q5. In my teaching I incorporate strategies to help my students improve their numeracy skills.

Agree 90%	Disagree 7%	Not applicable 3%
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Q6. In my teaching I incorporate strategies to help my students improve their problem solving skills.

Agree 98%	Disagree 0%	Not applicable 2%
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Q7. School reports and the recording of results at St. Benildus College could be improved.

Agree 65%	Disagree 35%
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Q8. The organisation of Parent Teacher Meetings at St. Benildus College could be improved.

Agree 23%	Disagree 77%
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Q9. A review of relevant policy documents by a sub-committee of teachers would help improve student literacy and numeracy at St. Benildus College.

Agree 61%	Disagree 39%
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Q10. I have read and am familiar with the St. Benildus College Code of Behaviour.

Agree 82%	Disagree 18%
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Q11. What are our greatest strengths in relation to improving the Literacy and Numeracy levels of students at St. Benildus College? Please comment.

(Sample responses below)

1. Open-mindedness to new ideas, willing to incorporate these ideas into practice, frequent subject meetings and discussions.
2. A willingness among staff to share resources. Interdepartmental co-operation. Highlighting the issue by using class notice boards and key-word notebooks.
3. The DEAR initiative in theory is a good way to encourage reading and improve literacy. However, at the moment I feel it is not being implemented in a uniform manner on a school-wide basis and this needs to be addressed. Perhaps it's an initiative that needs to be explained and promoted at an assembly for each of the years. It should run continuously with no breaks so as not to confuse the students and it becomes part of the Friday routine for them.
4. Our English department are very good at highlighting the issues of literacy and determining policy and strategy in relation to literacy. Our Maths department also make a genuine contribution. Maths week is an excellent idea.
5. Commitment and dedication of the teaching staff in the College. Support of an excellent Learning Support Team.

Q12. What are the biggest challenges that we encounter in relation to improving the Literacy and Numeracy levels of students at St. Benildus College? Please comment.

(Sample responses below)

1. We are already at quite a high level at both so it may be more difficult to see improvements compared to schools who begin from a low threshold.
2. It is hard to implement a cultural shift. The meetings and the paper work are off putting.
3. Having the time to patch up gaps in these areas while trying to complete already extensive syllabi. Huge variation in ability across mixed ability classes (which seems to be growing year by year).
4. Our biggest challenge lies in digital literacy and access to the computer room to be able to improve this. Perhaps the school should consider investing in a set of laptops that can be brought to classes when needed. Oral literacy is perhaps something that should be improved, students should be encouraged to do more presentations in front of their classes in all years.
5. Further developing a collaborative approach by all staff on whole school and subject departmental levels to collate imaginative teaching methodologies many teachers already use to improve literacy and numeracy.

Q 13. How can management facilitate the improvement of Literacy and Numeracy levels of students at St. Benildus College? Please comment. (Sample responses below)

1. Encourage teachers to include literacy and numeracy in lessons in every subject as much as possible. Maybe a noticeboard in the staff room where different teachers could leave ideas or share ideas on what literacy or numeracy initiatives they have used and found effective for their subject or in general.
2. Intermittent surveys similar to this one for students periodically. Perhaps an online test and then we could measure if there was a general level of improvement. Funding for buying resources and making available places where teachers can get resources, as students learn in different ways. Perhaps the Department has a list of suppliers of educational resource providers.
3. Investing in the school library and improving the selection of books available to students. Survey students on books they would be most interested in reading and use this to help. Encouraging students to read outside of school- assign book reports each term for all years. Announcement made each Thursday evening to remind all students to bring a novel in for DEAR time the following morning.
4. Send circulars to parents asking them to spend time with their kids reviewing literacy and numeracy. This must be a multiple pronged approach.
5. By feeding back to staff improvements achieved (on empirical tests) as then they would believe in its effectiveness. Also by generally keeping it on the agenda.

Q14. How can we encourage students to take more responsibility for their own learning? Please comment. (Sample responses below)

1. Give students guidelines on how to study your subject. Maybe give them tips on how you studied your subject when you were in school/university. Set students goals and target grades.
2. By making greater use of the free digital resources on the internet. Encourage students to seek out and share online examples using blogs and other social media that are appropriate for the classroom and can help in their learning.
3. Correct their own work. It's self evaluation and then they can learn how the marking scheme works and also peer assessment. Provide a reading room perhaps that students can sit down in a quiet relaxed environment. Other schools would have a room with some comfortable seats, books and tea making facilities and students can read.
4. Look at promoting an incentives/rewards system. Show them the benefits of a good education. Tours /Open Days. More frequent study skills seminars.literacy and numeracy. This must be a multiple pronged approach.
5. I think that it would be effective to introduce more project and presentation work where a student is given a topic to research and produce a PowerPoint presentation on which they must present and be graded on. The teacher will be available for guidance (provide checklist of things students must include) to the student but they are responsible for their own research and production of this work. This can be a great way for students to revise certain topics they have previously studied and teachers can then print off the PowerPoint notes for students in the class when completed.

Q15. Any other comments or suggestions? Please comment.

(Sample responses below)

1. One thing we could look at would be having an 'English' or 'Maths' award at the academic awards; one student in the school who is gifted at English, and one who is gifted at maths, would receive the award and it would emphasise the importance we place on literacy and numeracy within the college. Very often our focus may be on supporting the weaker students in these areas; it would be nice to recognise excellence in them also.
2. Fun events that encourage the students to get involved in their learning.
3. It's worthwhile doing these kinds of self-evaluation. I want management to keep pushing at us as teachers to consult with peers, meet and discuss this issue. I don't want to become complacent (a trait we as humans all display I'm sure from time to time).
4. We shouldn't lose sight of the good job we are already doing. This process should be about looking for good ideas to help augment what we are already largely doing anyway not about feeling criticised.
5. As well as common subject term tests, there should be common marking schemes to correct these common term tests. In some schools one teacher would correct for example all the first year geography Christmas exams to maintain consistency. Also having 7 common class Maths exams as continuous assessment rather than term exams.

2.1 Literacy

It was decided that the S.S.E. initiative for the 2014-15 school year would focus primarily on literacy. It was agreed that teachers across all subject areas would focus on C.U.P.S. (capital letters, understanding, punctuation and spelling).

W.R.A.T IV Spelling Tests

W.R.A.T. IV stands for Wide Range Achievement Test (fourth edition). It is a norm referenced test that measures spelling. The alternate forms (i.e. blue form, green form) can be used interchangeably with comparable results. This interchangeability allows for re-testing within short periods of time. This spelling test measures an individual's ability to encode sounds into written form through the use of a dictated spelling format containing both letters and words. All First Year students completed the blue spelling test in October 2014 and the green spelling test in April. The results are recorded below:

October 2014 Blue Spelling Test Results

Less than 89 Below Average	90-109 Average	110-119 Above Average	120-129 Superior	More than 130 Upper Extreme
3%	36%	24%	10%	27%

April 2015 Green Spelling Test Results

Less than 89 Below Average	90-109 Average	110-119 Above Average	120-129 Superior	More than 130 Upper Extreme
0%	48%	26%	11%	15%

Error Analysis

A newspaper article was edited for the purpose of error analysis. The article contained four paragraphs. On 18/03/15 all First Year students completed three different exercises based upon on this article during their timetabled English class. The exercises were completed anonymously. On 19/03/15 teachers engaged in an error analysis of twenty exercises, chosen entirely at random from the all the completed exercises (124). It was noted that the students required more time than they were allocated to complete exercise three. It was suggested that this exercise could be given as a homework assignment in the future and that in addition to marking the students understanding of the article that exercise three could be also marked in terms of capital letters, punctuation and spelling.

Error Analysis Scores

Exercise	Capital Letters	Punctuation	Spelling
Exercise One: Students were asked to read the first paragraph and to transcribe it onto the sheet provided.	Total score 359/400 90% correct. Error rate - 10%	Total score 291/340 86% correct. Error rate - 14%	Total score 1982/2000: 99% correct. Error rate - 1%
Exercise Two: Students were asked to listen to their teacher reading the second paragraph and to transcribe it onto the sheet provided.	Total score 201/260 77% Error rate - 23%	Mark out of 260: 232 - 89% Error rate - 11%	Mark out of 2000: 1921 - 96% Error rate - 4%
Exercise Three: Students were asked to write a summary of paragraphs one to four. Total score: 113/200 - 57%			

2.2 Numeracy

It was agreed that across all subject areas that a concerted effort would be made to focus on the following areas for the school year 2014-15:

- Percentages.
- Time.
- Measurement.

Some excellent ideas have come from the Maths Department meetings and it is hoped that these suggestions will be implemented as part of the numeracy strategy for the school year 2015-16.

2.3 Attainment of subject and programme objectives

Traditionally the State Examination results of students at St. Benildus College compare very favourably with national norms. Due to the amount of work involved in the first year of this S.S.E initiative it was only possible to engage in formal analysis of State Examination results for Leaving Cert English and Maths for the school year 2014-15. The results of this analysis are contained in Appendices 2A and 2B at the end of this report. More comprehensive analysis will be undertaken in the school year 2015-16.

2.4 Learning environment

Analysis of the student, parent and teacher questionnaires indicated that a varied and largely positive learning environment exists in St. Benildus College.

2.5 Students' engagement in learning

Analysis of the student, parent and teacher questionnaires indicated that the vast majority of students at St. Benildus College are actively engaged in learning.

2.6 Learning to learn

N/A for school year 2014-15. Will be considered for school year 2015-16.

2.7 Preparation for teaching

Analysis of the questionnaires indicated that teachers prepare for teaching their subjects in an extremely thorough and professional fashion.

2.8 Teaching approaches

Analysis of the student, parent and teacher questionnaires indicated that students experience a wide variety of teaching approaches.

2.9 Management of students

Analysis of the student, parent and teacher questionnaires indicated that students at St. Benildus College are treated and managed extremely well. Students are in turn encouraged to treat each other well and the importance of mutual respect is always stressed.

2.10 Assessment

Analysis of the student, parent and teacher questionnaires indicated that students at St. Benildus College are regularly assessed through a wide variety of methods.

Section 3 - Progress made on previously-identified improvement targets

N/A for school year 2014-15 as S.I.P not in place prior to the completion of this report.

Section 4 - Summary of School Self-Evaluation findings

4.1 In relation to S.S.E. St. Benildus College has strengths in the following areas:

- Highly motivated and hard working teaching staff.
- Excellent standard of teaching.
- A history of high academic achievement.
- Supportive parents and active Parents' Association.
- Motivated and ambitious students.
- Collegiality – excellent team spirit present within the staff.
- Strong and effective management structures.
- Effective communication with all stakeholders.

4.2 The following areas are prioritised for improvement:

- Communication with parents and students re S.S.E.
- Further explanation of the concepts of literacy and numeracy.
- Homework policy to be amended to reflect the positive impact of S.S.E. on teaching and learning.
- Analysis of State Examination results including comparisons with national norms
- Use of I.C.T. to improve digital literacy
- Oral literacy
- Studying
- Homework journal
- Vary teaching methodologies
- Pair work/group work

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

- N/a

Appendix 1 to School Self-Evaluation Report: Legislative and regulatory checklist

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
Valid enrolment of students	M51/93	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
Time in school - Length of school year (Minimum of 167 days for all year groups). - Length of school week (minimum of 28 hours for all year groups). -	Circular M29/95	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
Standardisation of school year	Circular 034/2011	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
Arrangements for parent/teacher and staff meetings	Circular M58/04	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
Implementation of national literacy strategy	Circular 25/12	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
Implementation of Croke Park agreement regarding additional time requirement	Circular 025/2011	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
Development of school plan	Section 21 Education Act 1998	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
Guidance provision in secondary schools	Circular PPT12/05, Education Act 1998 (section 9(c))	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	

Whole-School guidance plan	Section 21 Education Act 1998	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
Delivery of CSPE to all junior cycle classes	Circular M12/01 Circular M13/05	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
Exemption from the study of Irish	Circular M10/94	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
Implementation of revised in-school management structures	Circular M29/02, Circular 21/98, Circular 30/97, Circular 29/97	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
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
Limited alleviation on filling posts of responsibility for school year 2011/12	Circular 53/11	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
Parents as partners in education	Circular M27/91	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
Implementation of child protection procedures	Circular 65/11 Please provide the following information in relation to child protection.		
	Number of cases where a report involving a child in the school was submitted by the DLP to the HSE.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	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.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	Number of cases where the DLP sought advice from the HSE and as a result of this advice, no report was made.	<input type="checkbox"/>	

	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.	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Implementation of complaints procedure as appropriate	Section 28 Education Act 1998 Please provide the following information in relation to complaints made by parents during this school year.		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
	Number of formal parental complaints received. <input type="checkbox"/> Number of formal complaints processed. <input type="checkbox"/> Number of formal complaints not fully processed by the end of this school year. <input type="checkbox"/>			
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
Refusal to enrol	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. <input type="checkbox"/> Number of cases resolved 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	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.	<input type="checkbox"/>		
	Number of cases resolved 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"/>		
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 his school year.			
	Number of section 29 cases taken against the school.	<input type="checkbox"/>		
	Number of cases resolved 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: Policy 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) of Education Act Equal Status Acts 2000-2011.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	

Code of Behaviour, including Anti-Bullying Policy ¹¹	Circular M33/91 NEWB guidelines Section 23, Education Welfare Act 2000 Guidelines on Countering Bullying Behaviour, 1993, Circular M33/91 Equal Status Acts 2000-2011,	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
Attendance and participation strategy ¹²	Circular M51/93 Section 22, Education Welfare Act 2000.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
Health and Safety Statement	Health and Safety Act 2005 Section 50.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
Data Protection	Data Protection Act 1988 Data Protection (Amendment Act) 2003.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
Special Education Needs Policy ^{13,14}	Education Act (1998), Equal Status Acts (2000-2011), Education (Welfare) Act (2000), Education for Persons with Special Education Needs Act (EPSEN) (2004), Disability Act (2005).	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) Policy	Circulars 37/2010, 23/2010, M27/28, M11/03, M22/00, M20/96, M4/95.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
Substance Use Policy	Department of Education and Skills Directive: guidelines issued to schools 2002.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
Internet Acceptable Use Policy	Department of Education and Skills Directive.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
Child Protection Policy	Circular 0065/2011.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	

¹¹ Under the provisions of the Education (Welfare) Act (2000) (Section 23) the school's Code of Behaviour should conform to the specifications stated.

¹² Under the provisions of the Education (Welfare) Act (2000) (Section 22) the school's Attendance Strategy should conform with the provisions stipulated.

¹³ 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".

¹⁴ The EPSEN Act requires that schools be inclusive of and provide an appropriate education for students with special educational needs.



St. Benildus College School Improvement Plan (S.I.P.)

To be implemented during the school year 2015-16

<p>Summary of main strengths as identified in last S.S.E. in St. Benildus College</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Highly motivated and hard-working teaching staff. ● Excellent standard of teaching. ● A history of high academic achievement. ● Supportive parents and active Parents' Association. ● Motivated and ambitious students. ● Collegiality – excellent team spirit present within the staff. ● Strong and effective management structures. ● Effective communication with all stakeholders. ● The Lasallian ethos which focuses on the development of the whole person, intellectual, physical and spiritual
<p>Summary of main areas requiring improvement as identified in last S.S.E.:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Oral literacy ● Digital literacy ● Study skills and techniques. ● Use of the homework journal
<p>Improvement targets (related to students' achievement).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● D.E.A.R. to become an established feature of every school week. ● D.E.A.R to be timetabled class in Transition Year. ● Numeracy to be timetabled class in Transition Year. ● Project/presentation work to improve oral literacy. ● Staff training to help improve digital literacy. ● Presentations to students on study skills and techniques in September. ● Monitor and encourage better use of the homework journal.

<p>Required actions (Related to Teaching and Learning that will help to achieve the targets).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provide more information for parents and students re the importance of numeracy and literacy strategies. ● Homework policy to be amended to reflect the positive impact of S.S.E. on teaching and learning. ● Analysis of State Examination results including comparisons with national norms. ● Continued variation in terms teaching methodologies. ● Additional subject department meetings. ● Pair work/group work.
<p>Persons responsible</p>	<p>All members of the teaching staff have responsibility in relation to the specified improvement targets. The new Core Group for 2015-16 will take the lead in terms of leading new initiatives.</p>
<p>Timeframe for action</p>	<p>School year 2015-16.</p>
<p>Success criteria/measurable outcomes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Standardised spelling tests (WRAT 4). ● Error analysis. ● Numeracy testing (WRAT4 Computation Test). ● Student, parent and teacher questionnaires. ● CAT 4 Testing
<p>Review date(s)</p>	<p>April 2016.</p>