HAZELWOOD COLLEGE

DROMCOLLOGHER, CO. LIMERICK

71850B

School self-evaluation summary report for school community

Evaluation period: February to May 2014

Report issue date: September 2014

**1. Introduction**

Hazelwood College is a co-educational community college under the auspices of Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board. We serve the rural population of south county Limerick. There are 45 teachers and 545 students in the school. We offer a wide range of curricular programmes including the established Junior Certificate and Leaving Certificate programmes, the Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme (LCVP) and the Leaving Certificate Applied (LCA). We also offer an optional Transition Year (TY) programme. The school previously participated in the DEIS programme. In recent years this status has been lost. Nevertheless, a significant proportion of students come from homes that suffer from social or economic disadvantage. There are 11 feeder schools in the catchment area.

We have a number of programmes operating in the school including Paired Reading. Our attendance levels are good but need to be improved. Our students’ behaviour is excellent. For more information on how we intend to improve our students’ learning, please see our School Improvement Plan which is available on the school website. See www.hazelc.ie

We undertook a school self-evaluation of teaching and learning during 2013/2014. We evaluated literacy. We chose this because we felt that our students could improve their learning outcomes in this area.

This report summarises the strengths that were identified and the areas that have been prioritised for improvement. Following the school self-evaluation process the school was judged as having significant strengths on the quality continuum.

**2. Summary of school self-evaluation findings**

We collected information from parents, students and teachers in preparing this report. We looked at how well our students were doing in speaking, listening, reading and writing. We reviewed the Micra-T test results that our First year students (2013/2014) completed at the end of sixth class. We asked our First year students to complete online questionnaires about reading and writing. We interviewed some teachers about literacy in their subject area. We analysed inspection reports that have been carried out in the school. Finally, we reviewed questionnaires that parents and students had completed about the school.

**2.1 We found that our school has strengths in the following areas:**

**Strengths**

• Students are happy to engage with teachers in their learning. They are happy at Hazelwood College and feel they are making progress.

• Parents are also happy with the progress that their children are making.

• Inspectors from the Department of Education and Skills say that teaching and learning in the school is predominantly very good.

• Teachers and students are increasingly aware of the importance of literacy in teaching and learning across all subject areas.

• Some students engage confidently in speaking and listening activities.

• Some First year students come to us with reading levels which are much better than their peers in other schools across the country.

• Teachers provide many opportunities for students to write during school.

**We know these are our strengths because**:

• When surveyed students across all age groups told us in an anonymous questionnaire that they are happy to engage in learning with teachers in Hazelwood College. They are also happy at the school and feel that they are making progress.

• In the same survey parents told us that they are happy with the progress their children are making.

• Subject inspection reports (Special Educational Needs / Music / Science and Biology / French / Home Economics) conducted by Inspectors from the Department of Education and Skills describe teaching and learning in the school as predominantly very good.

• Teachers told us that there is an increasing awareness about the importance of literacy for learning in all subject areas. They also told us that students and teachers have taken a positive approach to it.

• Teachers told us that some students confidently engage in speaking and listening activities.

• The Micra-T scores in reading tell us that 43% of First year students entering the school in 2013/2014, compared to only 34% nationally, have reading levels which are either high average or well above average.

• 72% of First year students (2013/2014) indicated to us that during school they often or very often get the opportunity to write.

**2.2 We have decided to prioritise the following areas for development:**

**Areas for development**

• Active participation and engagement by all students in speaking and listening activities across the curriculum.

• Teachers to insist that students use fully developed sentences in response to oral questioning.

• Increasing and enhancing the range of reading opportunities provided to students across the curriculum.

• Students’ self-editing their own written work.

• Providing teachers with opportunities to share good practice in teaching literacy across the curriculum.

**We have decided to prioritise these areas because:**

• When placed in groups talking about what they are reading 79% of First year students (2013/2014) told us that they either almost never or only sometimes talk about their ideas.

• Teachers recognise that many students very often respond in single sentences without forming full sentences to oral questioning.

• 63% of students like to read sometimes or often.

• Only 34% of students indicated that they almost always check their written work (structure – beginning, middle, conclusion; and connections between sentences and paragraphs) once they have completed a task. Only 20% almost always double-check spellings.

***Appendix to Post-primary School Self-Evaluation Report:***

***legislative and regulatory checklist – reporting to the school community***

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| **Rules and regulations for schools are set out in a number of Education Acts, and in Circulars issued to schools from time to time by the Department of Education and Skills. The list below deals with important areas of school life and tells you what rules and regulations apply to them. You will find the Acts and Circulars mentioned on the Department’s website,** [**www.education.ie**](http://www.education.ie)**.**  |
| **Which area of school life is involved, and what are the regulations?** | **Is the school following the regulations fully?** |
| **Enrolment of students**The Education Act 1998, the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, and Circular M51/93 set out the principles schools should follow in their enrolment policies | Yes  |
| **Repeating a year**Students may repeat a school year in certain conditions and for particular reasons, such as illness. Conditions are set out in Circular M02/95  | Yes  |
| **The school calendar and the school timetable**Schools must offer a minimum of 167 school days each year to all year groups. Circular M29/95 sets this down.Schools must offer a minimum school week of 28 hours for all year groups. Circular M29/95 sets this down. | Yes Yes  |
| **Standardised school year** School holidays are now standardised so all post-primary schools have holidays at the same time. The current school holidays circular is 34/2011 | Yes  |
| **Parent/teacher meetings and staff meetings**These meetings have to happen at certain times of the day so as not to interrupt teaching time or inconvenience parents. Circular M58/04 sets these out. | Yes  |
| **Implementation of national literacy and numeracy strategy**Schools are required to have a whole-school approach to literacy and numeracy development. Parents have an important role to play in this area. See *Literacy and Numeracy for Learning and Life*, and Circular 25/2012 | Yes  |
| **Agreement regarding additional time in school for teachers**Circular 025/2011 requires teachers to do an additional 33 hours of out-of-class work each year, so as not to reduce teaching time | Yes  |
| **Development of school plan**All schools are required to have a school plan, giving their mission and vision, policies and priorities for development | Yes  |
| **Engagement with school self-evaluation (SSE) process**The SSE process requires schools to evaluate how well they are doing, and where they need to improve. The voices of parents and students are very important to this evaluation process. See [www.schoolself-evaluation.ie](http://www.schoolself-evaluation.ie).  | Yes  |
| **Guidance provision in post-primary schools**The Education Act 1998 requires all schools to provide appropriate guidance to students. See Circular 09/2012 for the current arrangements. | Yes  |
| **Delivery of CSPE to all junior cycle classes**Civic, Social and Political Education is currently a compulsory subject in the junior cycle. All junior cycle students should have one CSPE lesson per week. | Yes  |
| **Exemption from the study of Irish**Some students may be exempt from studying Irish. See Circular M10/94 | Yes  |
| **Implementation of child protection procedures**The *Child Protection Procedures for primary and post-primary schools* (2011) oblige schools to ensure that: liaison persons have been appointed ; the procedures have been communicated to the whole school community; and the procedures are being followed | Yes  |
| **Implementation of complaints procedure as appropriate**Section 28 Education Act 1998 provides for procedures to address complaints about a school | Complaints have been resolved or are being resolvedN/A  |
| **Appeal in the case of refusal to enrol students, suspension, and expulsion** Section 29 Education Act 1998 provides for an appeal procedure in these cases. The school deals with them first. Where cases are not resolved at school level, an external appeals committee hears the appeal and makes a decision.  | Appeals have been dealt with or are being dealt withN/A  |

***Appendix to School Self-Evaluation report: policy checklist – reporting to the school community***

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| **Schools are required to have certain policies in place as part of their permanent school plan. It is good practice for schools to consult with the school community in forming and reviewing many of these policies. The school board of management has to approve and ratify policies, and should ensure that they are reviewed on a regular basis.** |
| **What area of school life does the policy deal with and what is the aim of the policy?** | **Has the policy been approved by the Board of Management?** |
| **Enrolment policy** Section 15 of the Education Act 1998 obliges schools to have and publish an enrolment policy that respects the principles of equality and parental choice | Yes  |
| **Code of behaviour**Section 23, Education (Welfare) Act 2000, and the 2008 *National Educational Welfare Board Guidelines* set out regulations and good practice for schools to follow when drawing up and implementing a code of behaviour. This good practice includes consultation with parents and students. | Yes  |
| **Anti-bullying procedures**The Department’s *Anti-bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-primary Schools*, 2013, set out the measures that schools are required to have in place. | Yes  |
| **Attendance and participation strategy**Section 22 Education Welfare Act 2000 requires schools to develop a strategy to support high levels of student attendance and participation in school life. Parents have a very important role and responsibility in this area. | No |
| **Health and Safety Statement** All schools should have a health and safety statement that is regularly reviewed (see Section 20 Health and Safety Act 2005) | Yes  |
| **Data protection** School procedures relating to gathering, storing and sharing data on students should comply with data protection legislation - Data Protection Act 1988 and Data Protection (Amendment Act) 2003 | No |
| **Special education needs policy**Various pieces of equality and education legislation, especially the Education for Persons with Special Education Needs Act (EPSEN) 2004, require schools to be inclusive of students with special educational needs and to provide for them appropriately using the resources available | No |
| **Social, personal and health education(SPHE)/Relationships and sexuality education (RSE) policy**Schools are required by various circulars to provide SPHE in the junior cycle and RSE throughout the school, and to have policies to support this provision. | No |
| **Substance use policy** The National Drugs Strategy and Department guidelines require schools to develop and implement a substance use policy in consultation with parents and students, and other relevant agencies | No |
| **Internet acceptable use policy** Schools should have and implement a policy to instruct students on safe and responsible use of the internet. Parents have a key role to play in this area. See [www.webwise.ie](http://www.webwise.ie).  | Yes  |
| **Child protection policy**All schools should have a child protection policy that includes the *Child Protection Procedures*.The policy should be communicated to the whole school community. | Yes  |
| **Parents as partners in education**It is good practice for schools to have a parents’ association, and to promote partnership between home and school. The board of management has an important role in supporting the parents’ association. | Yes  |
| **Deployment of special needs assistants**Circular 71/11 allows for SNAs to be deployed flexibly to respond to the needs of schools and students. | Yes  |