

School Self-Evaluation Process

Kilbonane National School

June 2020

Introduction:

School self-evaluation of teaching and learning is part of the ongoing work of Kilbonane National School. The focus of school self-evaluation for 2020 is the new Primary Language Curriculum (PLC).

Kilbonane N.S. is a rural, mixed primary school under Catholic patronage. As of the above date, there are currently 94 pupils (45 boys and 49 girls), four Mainstream Teachers, a teaching Principal, as well as two SEN Teachers. One SNA caters for the needs of five pupils also. Pupils generally come from middle class backgrounds and there is strong parental support for teaching and learning, a factor that is acknowledged as having a positive effect on pupil attainment levels and on pupils' attitudes to learning.

Below is an outline of the SSE process that we have undertaken in our school recently:

A Staff Meeting was held on 3 February 2020 to discuss what our focus for School Self-Evaluation might be.

Teachers agreed that the new Primary Language Curriculum (PLC) is the area of teaching and learning that needs most investigation currently in our school.

After a period of reflection and discussion and having reviewed current writing practices in the school, we agreed to focus on handwriting for the duration of this plan.

A questionnaire survey for parents was formed and sent (using Google Forms) to the parents of 1st to 5th Class.

A questionnaire was drawn up to get children's thoughts on writing. The children completed the questionnaire (3rd - 6th class).

Data Gathering:

Discussing the topic as a staff, it was agreed that overall, Handwriting is reasonably strong in our school. It was also agreed that pupils have a positive view of Handwriting in general.

However, teachers reported that:

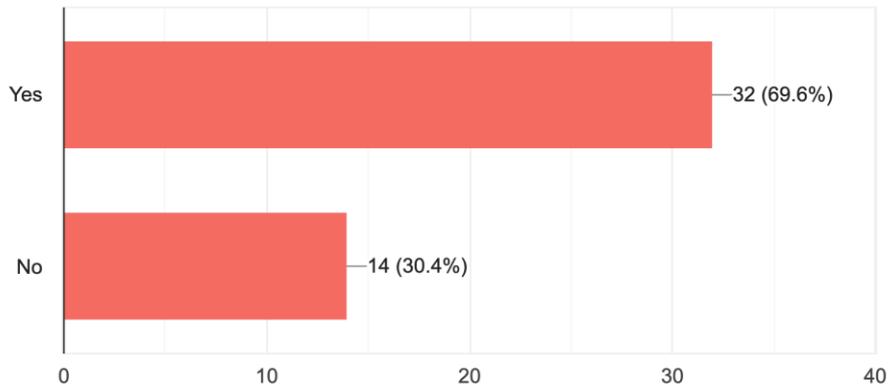
- (i) There are multiple handwriting programmes in use throughout the school. As such, there is no one consistent approach/programme that is followed from Junior Infants upwards.
- (ii) The majority of pupils use a print script, while a number of pupils use cursive.
- (iii) Teachers observed that in general, the handwriting of the pupils who employ a cursive print is more difficult to read/correct. It was felt that unless a cursive script is strictly taught and utilised by both pupils and teachers, there is a tendency for the handwriting to become 'sloppy'.
- (iv) A small number of pupils have poor posture and/or use an incorrect pencil grip when writing.

Kilbonane NS Handwriting Survey 2020 – Parents

We formed a questionnaire survey and sent it (using Google Forms) to the parents of 1st to 5th Class. The results of that survey can be seen below. Overall, the school is performing well and the parents have a positive view of how Handwriting is being taught in Kilbonane NS.

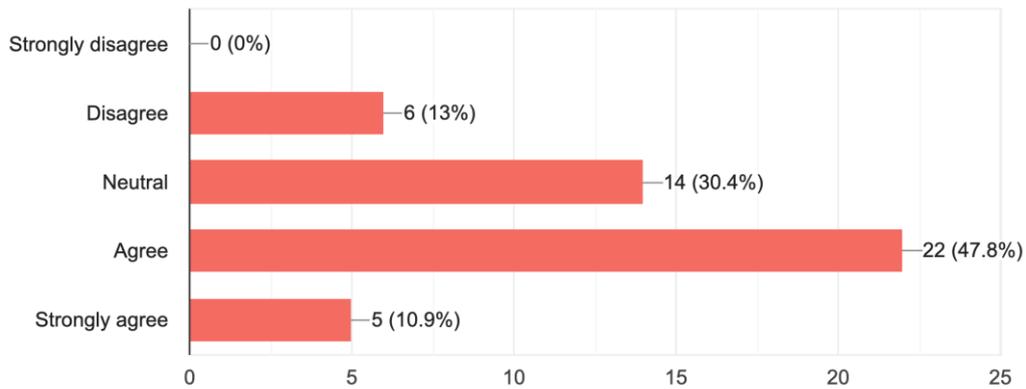
1. My child enjoys handwriting

46 responses



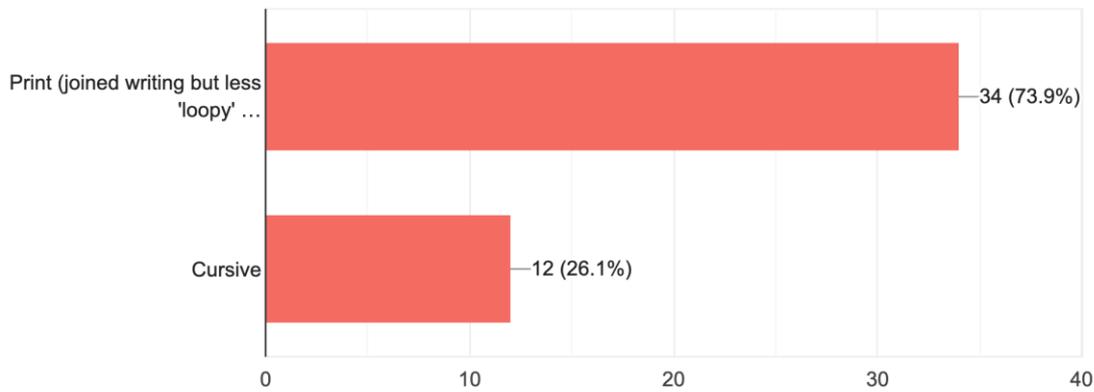
2. My child's handwriting is neat and legible

46 responses



3. If the school was to adopt ONE handwriting programme from Junior Infants upwards, would you prefer (i) print or (ii) cursive handwriting style?

46 responses



The results, when examined in detail, reveal the following:

- 69.6% of parents reported that their children enjoy handwriting.
- 58.7% of parents either (i) agreed or (ii) strongly agreed that their child's handwriting is neat and legible.
- 73.9% of parents would prefer the school to concentrate on using ONE handwriting programme throughout, using the PRINT script.

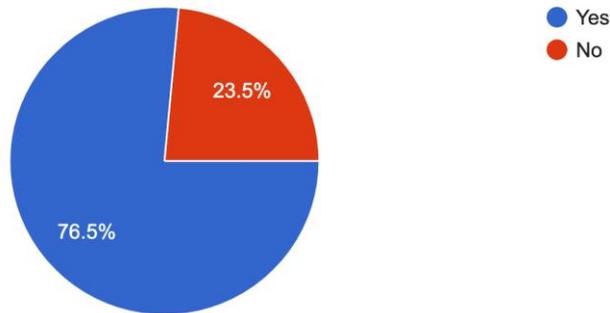
Kilbonane NS Handwriting Survey 2020 – Pupils

The pupils were then surveyed, again using Google Forms. Every child from 3rd Class to 6th Class was surveyed and they were able to submit their answers anonymously.

Again, the results of that survey can be seen at the end of this report. Overall, the children have a very positive view of Handwriting in Kilbonane NS.

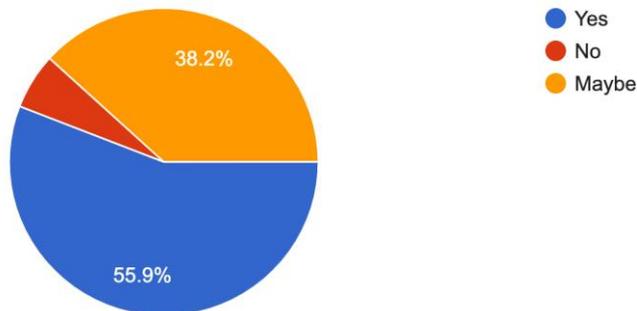
1. Do you enjoy handwriting?

34 responses



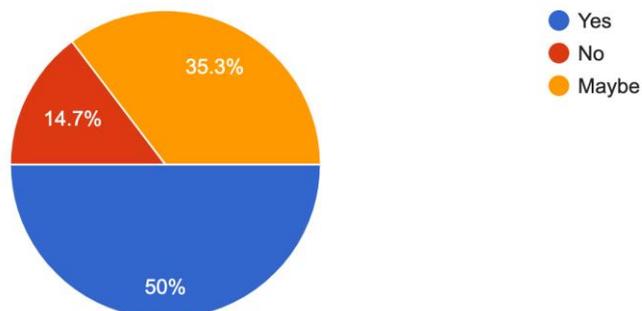
2. Do you think your handwriting is legible (clear enough to read)?

34 responses



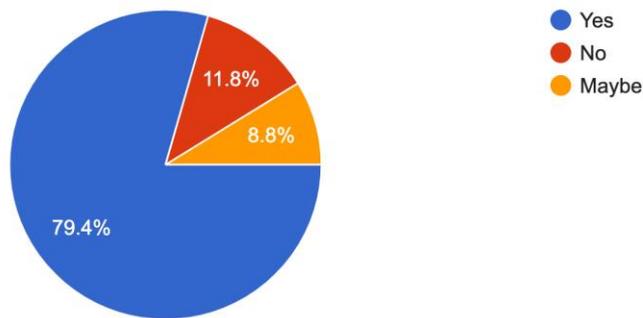
3. Do you have a good sitting posture when writing?

34 responses



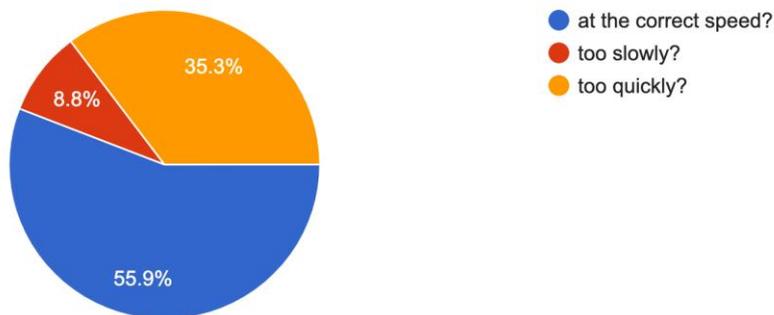
4. Do you use the correct grip when writing (tripod grip)?

34 responses



5. Do you think you write...

34 responses



The key points we took from this survey were:

- 76.5% of pupils enjoy handwriting. This is a very positive statistic.
- 79.4% feel they use the correct tripod grip.

However:

- Almost half of pupils either (i) are unsure or (ii) feel that their handwriting is not legible.
- Half of pupils either (i) are unsure or (ii) feel that their sitting position is not correct.

With this knowledge, the staff discussed the outcomes.

The following recommendations and strategies were agreed upon:

1. Going forward, the school will adopt one consistent handwriting approach from Junior Infants upwards.
2. Children will be taught the print style of handwriting throughout the school.
3. Two handwriting programmes will be followed: (i) Handwriting Mad Easy – print Style (CJ Fallon) Junior Infants to 4th class. (ii) Write This Way – Book 6 (Folens) in 5th & 6th Class
4. There will be 3 handwriting sessions every week for each class.
5. The correct (tripod) grip as well as correct sitting position for handwriting will be taught in Junior Infants and pupils will be reminded of these at each handwriting session throughout the school years.
6. To encourage the children to develop awareness of the importance of clear, neat presentation.
7. Provide positive affirmation and acknowledgement of children's handwriting.
8. Develop positive attitudes towards handwriting throughout the school.
9. Responsibility for the above will rest with the individual class teacher and SET team.
10. We will begin the process in September 2020.