

## Abbey Community College, Wicklow

### *Reading Test results for First and Second Year JCSP students*

May 2010

#### First Years

This year saw the introduction of an intensive literacy and numeracy programme for incoming First Year JCSP students which took place every morning in the library from 9.00am-11.00pm. The Junior Certificate School Programme (JCSP) is designed to help schools and teachers develop a student-centred approach to the Junior Certificate for young people who are potential early school leavers.

The programme consists of literacy activities every Monday, Wednesday and Friday and numeracy activities running every Tuesday and Thursday. Students get a break of 10 minutes at 10.00am.

For the literacy programme, students are divided up into groups of four. Each group is colour coded and is then allocated a workstation and a time slot for their group. There are four workstations in the library which each group attends for a period of 25 minutes each. This ensures that the students' interest and concentration is retained during the session. The workstations are: **Teacher Instruction** (normal subject instruction), **Computer Work** (literacy games, on-line literacy lessons etc), **Booklets/ Reading** (Paired Reading with parents, reading aloud, spelling, letter writing, comprehension skills) and **Activities** (literacy and numeracy board games, word puzzles etc). Each workstation is supervised by at least one staff member (JCSP Co-ordinator, teacher, librarian). This programme involves input from the School Completion Programme (personnel and attendance check) and the Home School Community Liaison Officer (parents)

The rotating nature of the programme as well as the short duration of the four sessions is having a very positive effect on the student's behaviour and concentration levels. The morning start is also important as the students are more alert at that time. The Principal believes that the programme is having a very positive effect on the students' general behaviour and he has noticed that behavioural problems among first years are lower this year than in other years.

**The Reading test results below are an affirmation of the success of this literacy/numeracy programme with nearly all the students showing big improvements in their reading and numeracy levels over the course of the year. From an Irish perspective, the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment commissioned the Educational Policy Research**

Centre of the Economic and Social Research Institute (ERSI) to engage in a longitudinal study of students' experiences of curriculum in the first three years of post-primary schooling. The first year study *Moving Up* focused on the experiences of students making the transition from primary to post-primary education. In terms of reading performance, findings from the first year study indicated that test scores in reading for "the majority of students do not improve over the course of first year; only one-fifth of students experience a significant improvement in reading" (Smyth et al., 2004, p.248).

**Given that our results have been achieved with first year students experiencing considerable difficulties with reading, these results must be viewed as being very significant.**

The library also timetables classes with all other 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3rd year JCSP students in the school. These students also take part in a wide range of library-based literacy initiatives including Readalong sessions, Reading Challenge, Make a Book, Word Millionaire, Paired Reading (with parents), Practical Reading and Writing sessions, Internet activities, Literacy board games etc.

### **First Year Reading Test Results - May 2010**

- **Student A**  
Reading Age:  
September 2009: 8 Years  
**May 2010: 10 Years, 6 months**
  
- **Student B**  
Reading Age:  
September 2009: 9 years, 8 months  
**May 2010: 9 years, 8 months**
  
- **Student C**  
Reading Age:  
September 2009: 11 Years  
**May 2010: 11 Years**
  
- **Student D**  
Reading Age:  
September 2009: 8 years, 6 months  
**May 2010 : 9 years, 8 months**
  
- **Student E**  
Reading Age:  
September 2009: 8 years, 8 months  
**May 2010: 10 years, 6 months**

- **Student F**  
Reading Age:  
September 2009: 6 years, 10 months  
**May 2010: 8 years**
- **Student G**  
Reading Age:  
September 2009: 8 years, 6 months  
**May 2010: 10 years, 6 months**
- **Student H**  
Reading Age:  
September 2009: 8 years, 6 months  
**May 2010: 9 years, 11 months**
- **Student I**  
Reading Age:  
September 2009: 9 years, 11 months  
**May 2010: 9 years, 8 months**
- **Student J**  
Reading Age  
September 2009: 10 years, 6 months  
**May 2010: 11 years**
- **Student K**  
Reading Age:  
September 2009: 8 years, 2 months  
**May 2010: 9 years, 11 months**
- Student L**  
Reading Age:  
September 2009: 8 years, 9 months  
**May 2010: 9 years, 8 months**
- **Student M**  
Reading Age:  
September 2009: 11 years  
**May 2010 : 11years**
- **Student N**  
Reading Age:  
September 2009: 9 years, 1 month  
**May 2010: 10 years, 6 months**

**\*Overall, literacy levels for this 1<sup>st</sup> Year increased on average by 0.6 years (ranging from minus 0.25 years to plus 2.5 years)**

**First Year Numeracy Test Results - May 2010**

- **Student A**  
Numeracy Age:  
September 2009: 8 years, 3 months  
**May 2010: 8 years, 5 months**
  
- **Student B**  
Numeracy Age:  
September 2009: 9 years, 3 months  
**May 2010: 10 years, 3 months**
  
- **Student C**  
Numeracy Age:  
September 2009: 8 Years,11 months  
**May 2010: stayed the same**
  
- **Student D**  
Numeracy Age:  
September 2009: 8 years, 9 months  
**May 2010 : 9 years, 7 months**
  
- **Student E**  
Numeracy Age:  
September 2009: 10 years  
**May 2010: 11 year, 6 months**
  
- **Student F**  
Numeracy Age:  
September 2009: 10 years, 4 months  
**May 2010 10 years,4 months**
  
- **Student G**  
Numeracy Age:  
September 2009: 9 years, 1 month  
**May 2010: 9 Years 1 month**
  
- **Student H**  
Numeracy Age:  
September 2009: 9 Years, 9 months

**May 2010:**                    **10 years**

- **Student I**  
Numeracy Age:  
September 2009:    9 Years, 5 months  
**May 2010:**            **9 years, 9 months**
- **Student J**  
Numeracy Age:  
September 2009:    9 Years, 9 months  
**May 2010:**            **9 years, 9 months**
- **Student K**  
Numeracy Age:  
September 2009:    8 Years, 11 months  
**May 2010:**            **9 years, 1 month**
- **Student L**  
Numeracy Age:  
September 2009:    11 Years, 4 months  
**May 2010:**            **12 years**
- **Student M**  
Numeracy Age:  
September 2009:    10 Years, 2 months  
**May 2010 :**            **12 years**
- **Student N**  
Numeracy Age:  
September 2009:    8 Years, 9 months  
**May 2010:**            **10 years**

**\*Overall, numeracy levels for this 1<sup>st</sup> year group increased by 0.6 years (ranging from 0 years to 1.83 years)**

## Second Years (Specifically targeted group)

2<sup>nd</sup> Year JCSP students were also timetabled for library sessions during the year. Among the literacy initiatives they took part in were:

- **Reading Challenge** - Students were 'challenged' to read five books over a five week period.
- **Buy and Sell exercises** – Students looked up Buy and Sell and wrote down items for sale. Good for writing and comprehension.
- **Readalong** - Students listened to a book being read aloud on earphones and at the same time would read the book at the same time
- **Reading sessions** – Students would all get a copy of the same book and would follow the words in the book as the librarian read aloud to the class.
- **Paired Reading** - Students would read aloud from a book with an adult volunteer (parent/ SNA/SCP personnel)
- **Make a Book ('Gaol Book', 'Tales of Abbey Life')**

### 2nd year Reading Test results - May 2010

- **Student A**  
Reading Age:  
September 2009: 14 Years, 10 months (14:10)  
**May 2010: 15 Years , 3 months ( 15:03)**
- **Student B**  
Reading Age:  
September 2009: 11:00  
**May 2010: 12:09**
- **Student C**  
Reading Age:  
September 2009: 15:03  
**May 2010: 15:03**

- **Student D**  
Reading Age:  
September 2009: 15:03  
**May 2010 :** **15:03**
- **Student E**  
Reading Age:  
September 2009: 11:03  
**May 2010:** **12:09**
- **Student F**  
Reading Age:  
September 2009: 12:03  
**May 2010** **13:01**
- **Student G**  
Reading Age:  
September 2009: 14:01  
**May 2010:** **15 :03**
- **Student H**  
Reading Age:  
September 2009: 12:09  
**May 2010:** **12:09**
- **Student I**  
Reading Age:  
September 2009: -  
**May 2010:** **13:05**
- **Student J**  
Reading Age  
September 2009: 11:07  
**May 2010:** **11:07**
- **Student K**  
Reading Age:  
September 2009: 11:10  
**May 2010:** **15:03**
- **Student L**  
Reading Age:  
September 2009: 13:09  
**May 2010:** **15:03**

- **Student M**  
Reading Age:  
September 2009: 13:05  
**May 2010 :** **14:10**
  
- **Student N**  
Reading Age:  
September 2009: 11:07  
**May 2010:** **12:03**
  
- **Student O**  
Reading Age:  
September 2009: 15:03  
**May 2010:** **15:03**
  
- **Student P**  
Reading Age:  
September 2009: 7:11  
**May 2010:** **8:05**
  
- **Student Q**  
Reading Age:  
September 2009: 8:06  
**May 2010:** **9:05**
  
- **Student R**  
Reading Age:  
September 2009: 10:06  
**May 2010 :** **12:03**
  
- **Student S**  
Reading Age:  
September 2009: 10:07  
**May 2010:** **11.00**
  
- **Student T**  
Reading Age:  
September 2009: 8:06  
**May 2010** **11:00**
  
- **Student U**  
Reading Age:  
September 2009: 9:03  
**May 2010:** **11:03**

- **Student V**  
Reading Age:  
September 2009: 12:09  
**May 2010: 14:01**
  
- **Student W**  
Reading Age:  
September 2009: 9:03  
**May 2010: 9:11**
  
- **Student X**  
Reading Age  
September 2009: 9:01  
**May 2010: 9:08**
  
- **Student Y**  
Reading Age:  
September 2009: 8:03  
**May 2010: 10:06**
  
- **Student Z**  
Reading Age:  
September 2009: 10:09  
**May 2010: 12:03**

**\* Overall , literacy levels for 2<sup>nd</sup> Years increased on average by 0.6 years (ranging from 0 years to 3.41 years)**

## **Outreach Work**

### **Work with other schools (through SCP):**

- St. Patrick's National School, Wicklow
- Holy Rosery National School, Wicklow
- St. Ernan's National School, Rathnew
- St Joseph's National School, Rathnew
- Ashford National School, Ashford
- Newtown Mount Kennedy National School
- Arklow Community College

### **Chess (through HSCL)**

**Dyslexia Association of Ireland (Wicklow Branch)**  
**(Loan of books for dyslexic children)**

**Proposed Active Retirement Link (Ashford Group)**