



## Information for Parents

### Numeracy

#### **What is numeracy?**

Numeracy is not limited to the ability to use numbers, to add, subtract, multiply and divide.

Numeracy encompasses the ability to use mathematical understanding and skills to solve problems and meet the demands of day-to-day living in complex social settings. To have this ability, a young person needs to be able to think and communicate quantitatively, to make sense of data, to have a spatial awareness, to understand patterns and sequences, and to recognise situations where mathematical reasoning can be applied to solve problems.

#### **Why is numeracy important?**

Numeracy enables us to develop logical thinking and reasoning strategies in our daily life. We need numeracy to solve problems and make sense of time, numbers, patterns and shapes for activities like cooking, reading a map or bill, reading instructions and even playing sport.

#### **Numeracy in Loreto College Swords**

As part of our School Improvement Plan, Loreto College Swords is working on improving the numeracy skills of our students.

We have analysed the results of exams, tests and surveys.

We identified **strengths in the following areas:**

1. 60% of students perceive their ability in Maths to be good, very good or excellent.
2. 92% of students believe that Maths is important.
3. Uptake and attainment at higher level in Junior and Senior Cycle is excellent.
4. Numeracy has been incorporated into written subject plans
5. Teachers are aware of numeracy in their own subjects and have tried out numeracy moments in their lessons

We also identified area that needed improving. Studying these areas we focused on the following targets for 2014-2017

#### Priorities for improvement:

1. Develop student ability to see the usefulness of Maths in everyday life.
2. Develop students' problem solving skills in Maths.
3. Develop student self-evaluation skills in Maths using AFL techniques.

## How parents can help

Below is a list of some activities to help your daughter to improve her numeracy skills; particularly in the areas of seeing and understanding the usefulness of Maths in everyday life, improving problem solving skills and self-evaluation skills.

Some suggested activities;

- Ensure that your daughter continues to have a positive, can-do attitude in her abilities in numeracy situations.
- Work with your daughter to develop a timetable to ensure a balance of study and work commitments, home life and social activities
- Look at numerical information, statistics and data in newspapers together and think critically about the author's purpose
- Discuss time-management skills such as planning and setting priorities
- Talk about household bills, such as telephone, electricity and rates — analyse graphs and discuss costs and ways to reduce energy consumption
- Compare the cost and value of various mobile phone plans and providers to find the most economical option based on call costs, calling patterns, your daughter's phone usage and analyse previous bills
- Understand problems by explaining what the question is asking for
- Understand where mistakes have been made in homework and seek to prevent these in the future.