



St Seton's Secondary School Maths Strategy Plan

Context: DEIS Setting and School Culture

As a DEIS post-primary school, our work in mathematics is grounded in a commitment to equity, high expectations and raising achievement for all learners. We recognise that students may arrive with varying levels of prior attainment and confidence in maths. Therefore, our strategy emphasises:

- A culture of high expectations where every student is encouraged and supported to achieve their potential.
- Deliberate actions to raise standards through targeted interventions, high-quality teaching and continuous monitoring of progress.
- A whole-school effort to reduce negative perceptions of maths by promoting a growth mindset, celebrating effort and reinforcing that mistakes are a key part of learning.
- Strong DEIS planning alignment by ensuring maths improvement targets are embedded in our DEIS Action Plans for Literacy & Numeracy, Attendance, Retention and Transitions.
- Inclusion and support by ensuring students with additional learning needs are fully supported to access an appropriate, challenging programme.

Creating a positive maths culture is central to this plan. Teachers will work intentionally to foster confidence, dismantle fear or anxiety about the subject and present mathematics as a subject that is both accessible and valuable for every student.

1. Purpose of the Maths Strategy Plan

This Maths Strategy Plan provides a structured, transparent and equitable approach to ensuring all students are studying the most appropriate level of mathematics at Junior Cycle (Higher or Ordinary Level) and Leaving Certificate (Higher ordinary or Foundation Level). The plan prioritises student wellbeing, high expectations, academic achievement and consistent communication between teachers, students and parents.

2. Guiding Principles

- Every student can achieve success in maths with the right support and expectations.
- Level decisions must be evidence-based, collaborative and in the best interest of long-term student success.
- Clear criteria and expectations help students understand how to remain at a level.
- High-quality teaching, consistent feedback and independent learning are essential for progression.
- Parents/guardians are key partners in the process.

3. Level Options

Junior Cycle:

- Higher Level (HL)
- Ordinary Level (OL)
- L2LP Students

Leaving Certificate:

- Higher Level (HL)
- Ordinary Level (OL)
- Foundation Level (FL)
- L2LP Students

4. Guidance for Studying and Remaining at Each Level

Junior Cycle (HL/OL)

To remain at Higher Level, students should:

- Achieve an average of 40% in class tests and end-of-term assessments.
- Demonstrate consistent homework completion to a high standard.
- Show strong engagement with problem-solving tasks.
- Maintain positive attendance (Advise 75%+) and participation in class.

A move to Ordinary Level may be advised if:

- A student repeatedly scores below 40% in class assessments.
- There is evidence of difficulty coping with pace, content or independent work.
- Teachers believe the student's wellbeing or long-term outcomes may be impacted.

Level 2 Learning Programme Students

- Achievement is measured by the successful completion of Priority Learning Units (PLUs), specifically the Numeracy PLU.
- To achieve success at Level 2, students should demonstrate progress in functional numeracy tasks as outlined in their Student Support Plan and PLU strands.

Senior Cycle (HL/OL/FL/L2LP)

To remain at Higher Level, students should:

- Have studied HL Maths for Junior Cycle.
- Achieve an average of 40% in class tests and end of term assessments.
- Complete all assigned HL homework and additional problem-solving tasks.
- Demonstrate strong algebraic skills and independent study habits.
- Maintain positive attendance (Advise 75%+) and participation in class.

To remain at Ordinary Level, students should:

- Achieve an average of 40% in class tests and end of term assessments.
- Complete regular homework and demonstrate understanding of core topics.
- Maintain positive attendance (Advise 75%+) and participation in class.

Foundation Level placement is considered when:

- Persistent difficulty is evident despite interventions at OL.
- There is little / no evidence of efforts to complete homework or study independently outside of class time.
- The student's confidence, learning profile or SEN needs align with FL pacing.
- Pattern of chronic attendance that has resulted in large gaps in learning.
- Parents, teachers and the student agree it is in the student's best interest.

Level 2 Learning Programme Students

- Students in SCL2LP achieve success through the completion of 180 hours of Numeracy modules, evidenced by a portfolio of work
- Assessments are school-based and focused on "real-world" applications, such as using a calculator, managing a personal budget, or using measuring tools for DIY or cooking.

5. Homework Expectations

Junior Cycle

- Higher Level: 30–45 minutes per night; additional problem-solving tasks weekly.
- Ordinary Level: 20–30 minutes per night; focus on consolidation and fluency.
- L2LP: 10–20 minutes focused on real-world functional numeracy, such as time, money, or measurement.

Senior Cycle

- Higher Level: 45–75 minutes per night; past papers; independent revision expected.
- Ordinary Level: 30–45 minutes per night; steady revision of key skills.
- Foundation Level: 20–30 minutes per night; focus on number, functional maths and confidence.
- L2LP: 15–20 reinforcing 'Maths for Life' skills

At HL / OL / FL

- Students are expected to show their full workings.
- Students are responsible for catching up on missed classwork and homework, if absent.
- Students are responsible for checking Google classroom for digital notes.
- Independent revision is essential to success.

6. Teacher Guidance on Level Placement

Maths teachers and the Maths Department will guide students on the most appropriate level based on:

- Class test averages
- Term and mock exam results
- Classroom engagement and work ethic
- Homework completion and quality
- Problem-solving ability
- Student confidence and wellbeing
- Evidence of independent learning / study
- SEN information, if relevant

Teachers will provide clear verbal and written feedback when a student is at risk of struggling at a particular level.

7. Procedures for Changing Level

Junior Cycle

1. Concern raised by subject teacher based on evidence.
2. Discussion with student to explain concerns.
3. Parent/guardian contacted and options discussed.

4. Final decision made collaboratively by the student, parent / guardian, maths teachers and year head.
5. A letter is signed by the student's parent / guardian as a written record of the agreement to change level.
6. Upon receipt of the signed letter, changes are made to the student's timetable to assign them to the new maths class.

Senior Cycle

1. Teacher identifies concerns or student requests a move.
2. Review of test data, including Junior Cycle results, TY assessments and 5th Year exams.
3. Meeting with student to discuss implications for CAO, future pathways and support.
4. Parent/guardian contacted and options discussed.
5. Final decision made collaboratively by the student, parent / guardian, maths teachers and year head.
6. A letter is signed by the student's parent / guardian as a written record of the agreement to change level.
7. Upon receipt of the signed letter, changes are made to the student's timetable to assign them to the new maths class.

Level changes should ideally be completed:

- By Christmas in Fifth Year (for HL/OL).
- By Mock Exams in Sixth Year (only in exceptional circumstances thereafter).

8. Support Structures

- After-school study
- Numeracy support / Learning support withdrawal where appropriate
- Small-group tuition
- Peer mentoring or homework club
- Regular communication between Maths Department and SEN department
- Digital notes on google classroom and access to revision documents
- Access to studyclix,

9. Monitoring and Review

The Maths Department will:

- Review student performance after key assessments.
- Monitor homework completion and engagement.
- Advise the Year Head and senior management on patterns or concerns.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of this strategy annually.

10. Summary of Expectations (Student Version)

- Complete homework every day.
- Attend class consistently and participate fully.
- Ask for help early when struggling.
- Review notes weekly.
- Engage with problem-solving tasks.
- Aim for target grades required to remain at your level.

11. Maths Department Action Plan

The Maths Department will implement the following targeted actions to raise standards, promote positive attitudes and ensure equitable outcomes for all students:

A. Teaching & Learning

- Implement consistent, research-informed teaching approaches across all year groups (e.g., explicit instruction, structured problem-solving, use of manipulatives where appropriate).
- Increase use of formative assessment strategies to give timely feedback and support differentiation.
- Embed problem-solving and mathematical reasoning in all schemes of work.
- Consistently follow agreed schemes of work to ensure continuity across each year group.

B. Assessment & Tracking

- Conduct common assessments at key points in the year.
- Track student progress systematically using agreed departmental templates.
- Identify students falling below expected progress and implement early interventions.
- Review mock and term exam data at department meetings.

C. Student Attitudes & Culture

- Promote a whole-school “maths growth mindset” through classroom displays, celebration of effort and regular communication.
- Provide targeted numeracy support groups and lunchtime/homework clubs.
- Celebrate improvement and achievement through awards, assemblies and DEIS newsletters.

D. Level Placement & Guidance

- Review level placements twice yearly (October midterm and post-Christmas). These review periods may change depending on when assessments taking place within school calendar
- Provide clear guidance to students and parents on pathways and expectations.
- Ensure consistent application of level criteria across all classes.

E. DEIS Targets & Inclusion

- This Maths strategy is aligned with St Seton’s DEIS numeracy targets:

Target 4: T4: JC OL Maths Grades

To reduce the % of students receiving a partially achieved grade from 16% to 10% and in turn increase the number of students obtaining an achieved grade to 23% and merit from 45% to 51%

Target 5: T5: Higher Level Leaving Cert Maths

To decrease the % number of students that drop from Higher Level Maths in Junior Cycle to Ordinary Level at Senior Cycle from x% to x%.

- This Maths Strategy allows for additional support for students with SEN or numeracy needs through collaboration with the SEN team.
- Monitor attendance and engagement data for patterns that impact maths performance.

F. Professional Development

- Engage in regular department-based CPD on teaching methods, digital tools and assessment.
- Share best practice through peer observation and collaborative planning.

12. Commitment to High Standards & Improvement

This strategy ensures that all students are challenged at the correct level, supported to succeed and guided with fairness and clarity. The school is committed to high expectations, strong numeracy development and positive outcomes for every learner.

13. Review

This Maths Strategy Plan came to the attention of the Board of Management for oversight on 10th February 2026. The Maths Strategy Plan will be reviewed annually by the Maths Department and a member of the Senior Leadership Team.