

An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna
Department of Education and Skills

DEIS EVALUATION

REPORT

School Name	Scoil Na Croise Naofa
School Address	Mahon Cork
Roll number	17024I

Date of Evaluation: 21-05-2017



WHAT IS A DEIS EVALUATION?

In 2005 the Department published *DEIS (Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools): An Action Plan for Educational Inclusion*. The aim of this action plan is to ensure that the educational needs of children and young people from disadvantaged communities are met.

Schools are expected to develop action plans for improvement in the following areas (referred to as the DEIS themes): attendance; retention; progression; literacy; numeracy; at post-primary level, educational attainment including examination attainment; partnership with parents; partnership with other schools and educational providers, and with external agencies. The DEIS Evaluation model evaluates and reports on the school's action planning for improvement.

HOW TO READ THIS REPORT

During this inspection, the inspectors evaluated the school's action planning for improvement under the following headings:

1. DEIS action planning for improvement
2. DEIS themes

Inspectors describe the quality of each of these areas using the Inspectorate's quality continuum which is shown on the final page of this report. The quality continuum provides examples of the language used by inspectors when evaluating and describing the quality of the school's provision in each area. The board of management was given an opportunity to comment in writing on the findings and recommendations of the report, and the response of the board will be found in the appendix of this report.

DEIS Evaluation

INSPECTION ACTIVITIES

Date of inspection	21-05-2017
Inspection activities undertaken	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Analysis of parent and pupil questionnaires• Observation of teaching and learning• Examination of pupils' work• Interaction with pupils• Feedback to principal and teachers• Interview with the home-school-community liaison co-ordinator• Meeting with the school completion worker
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Discussion with principal and teachers• Examination of school's current action plans for improvement• Observation of DEIS-related activities and interventions• Parent focus-group interview• Interview with the literacy & numeracy coordinators	

SCHOOL CONTEXT

Scoil Na Croise Naofa is a co-educational primary school located in Mahon, in Cork city. The school participates in Band I of the DEIS action plan. It has the services of a shared home-school-community liaison (HSCL) co-ordinator and partakes in the School Completion Programme (SCP). At the time of the evaluation there were 199 pupils enrolled in the school.

SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

FINDINGS

The key findings in relation to the DEIS action planning for improvement process in this school are the following:

- The overall quality of DEIS action planning for improvement in this school is very good; the leadership of action planning provided by the principal and co-ordinating teachers is excellent.
- The target setting process is informed by a systematic analysis of a broad range of assessment data and is characterised by real and meaningful collaboration between teachers, parents and pupils. There is some scope to link the high quality provision observed in Mathematics more closely with an extended whole-school target-setting process.
- There is a strong culture of continuous professional development in the school and the expertise gained in this process informs the identification and implementation of strategies and interventions. These are implemented in a very effective manner.
- The teachers engage systematically in reflective practice and all interventions are reviewed and developed on a regular basis to ensure maximum impact on teaching, learning and pupil attainment. A disparity between non-verbal cognitive functioning and literacy attainment was noted in the assessment data for a small number of pupils.
- The HSCL co-ordinator, principal and teachers actively promote positive relationships with parents and the quality of parental engagement in this school is exemplary.

Aspects of the DEIS action planning for improvement process that require development in this school include:

- Some targets in the DEIS plan should be further developed and extended to ensure that the improvements being achieved in key areas of provision are clearly reflected in the ongoing action planning process.
- Further attention should be devoted to addressing the needs of an identifiable group of pupils, for whom the assessment data indicates a disparity between non-verbal cognitive functioning and literacy attainment.

DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. DEIS ACTION PLANNING IMPROVEMENT

- The leadership of DEIS action planning for improvement provided by the principal and co-ordinating teachers in this school is excellent.
- The target setting process is informed by a systematic analysis of a broad range of assessment data and by real and meaningful collaboration between teachers, parents and pupils.
- There is a strong culture of continuous professional development in the school and the expertise gained in this process informs the identification and selection of strategies and interventions. These are implemented in a very effective manner.
- The teachers engage systematically in reflective practice and all interventions are reviewed and developed on a regular basis to ensure maximum impact on teaching, learning and pupil attainment.
- The school is very well resourced. Both human and material resources were observed to be deployed judiciously and effectively.
- There is scope to further develop and refine some targets in the DEIS plan to ensure that the improvements being achieved in key areas of provision are clearly reflected in the ongoing action planning process.
- Confirmation was provided that the board of management has formally adopted the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-primary Schools (2011)* without modification and that the school is compliant with the requirements of the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (2011)*.

2. DEIS THEMES

2.1. Literacy and Numeracy

Literacy

- The action planning for literacy is of a very high quality. The school has generated significant data on pupils' attainment. This information has informed the establishment of key targets for improvement in oral language, reading and writing. These targets are clearly reflected in teacher preparation and practice. As part of the on-going action planning process, it is recommended that further attention be devoted to the small, but identifiable group of pupils, for whom the assessment data indicates a disparity between non-verbal cognitive functioning and literacy attainment.
- An extensive selection of strategies and interventions to achieve the targets in literacy are implemented in a highly effective manner. These include, *Aistear*, *First Steps*, *Reading Recovery* and *Literacy Lift-Off*. A structured approach to the development of pupils' comprehension skills is implemented incrementally throughout the school. Team teaching, peer tutoring, buddy reading and involvement in the *Write A Book* initiative are also highly commendable features of provision. An innovative and well-structured approach to improving spellings has been implemented. Very high quality involvement of teachers and parents with speech and language therapists in the implementation of the *Happy Talk* programme was observed.
- The impact of all interventions on pupils' learning experiences and outcomes is closely monitored and collaboratively reviewed on an ongoing basis by the school's highly effective

literacy committee. This process informs the on-going development of all initiatives and the work is clearly having a positive impact on both pupils' learning experiences and on pupils' learning outcomes.

Numeracy

- There is high quality action planning for improvement for numeracy in the school. A clear baseline target has been established for whole-school attainment in Mathematics and high levels of awareness of this goal were noted in all learning settings. The school's well-established assessment processes and the effective structures in place for the collaborative review and analysis of pupils' progress are impacting very positively on classroom practice and on pupil learning outcomes. There is scope to develop the target-setting process in Mathematics to ensure closer alignment between the effective practice observed and the action planning process.
- A wide range of initiatives is in place to enhance pupil learning outcomes and experiences in Mathematics throughout the school. These include *Maths Recovery* and *Mata sa Rang, Ready Set Go Maths* and station teaching. The provision by parents of very high quality in-class support for pupils in areas of Mathematics identified for development was exemplary.
- The numeracy committee established in the school engages in ongoing collaborative monitoring, analysis and development of all initiatives to support provision for Mathematics in the school.

2.2. Attendance, Retention, Progression

- The overall quality of action planning for improvement in the areas of attendance, retention and progression is very good. Attendance is systematically monitored and analysed. This data informs target setting for improvement in overall attendance and in the attendance levels of identified target groups of pupils.
- A range of initiatives is implemented very effectively to support positive levels of school attendance. These include highly visible displays of class and school attendance levels, acknowledgement of attendance and punctuality at school assemblies, rewards for full attendance and incentives targeted at specific times of the school year. The overall levels of school attendance recorded compare very favourably with the available data on national norms for pupils in primary schools.
- The school reports full retention of pupils in education up to sixth class and all pupils transfer to post-primary education. The highly-effective role played by the HSCL coordinator, the SCP worker and the behaviour support teacher in this regard is acknowledged. The transition to post-primary school programme for parents and pupils is very well structured. The school's involvement in a programme which provides for structured visits to the local university to heighten awareness and expectations regarding progression routes in education is highly commended.

2.3. Partnership with parents and others

- The HSCL co-ordinator plays a highly effective role in promoting positive relationships with parents and the quality of parental engagement in this school is exemplary. A key set of targets functions as a guiding principle underpinning all work in this area. The quality of the data available regarding parental involvement in school meetings and initiatives is excellent.

- An Action Team for Partnership has been formed by the HSCL in the school. This group is comprised of representatives of parents and teachers and meets on three occasions each year. The team works collaboratively to identify meaningful roles for parents in the implementation of the DEIS plan. This innovative approach to the effective inclusion of parents in the DEIS planning process is highly commended. The contribution of parents in planning, implementing and reviewing classroom initiatives as observed during the evaluation was of an exceptionally high standard.
- A meeting with a focus group of parents during the evaluation reveals very positive attitudes towards the school. They also report that they are facilitated to engage in a wide range of personal development and educational opportunities.
- The school has established strategic partnerships with a broad range of agencies to ensure an integrated and coordinated approach towards providing supports for pupils where relevant. The extent to which the school evaluates both the benefits and the opportunity costs associated with all available external initiatives is highly commended.

THE INSPECTORATE'S QUALITY CONTINUUM

Inspectors describe the quality of provision in the school using the Inspectorate's quality continuum which is shown below. The quality continuum provides examples of the language used by inspectors when evaluating and describing the quality the school's provision of each area.

Level	Description	Example of descriptive terms
Very Good	Very good applies where the quality of the areas evaluated is of a very high standard. The very few areas for improvement that exist do not significantly impact on the overall quality of provision. For some schools in this category the quality of what is evaluated is outstanding and provides an example for other schools of exceptionally high standards of provision.	Very good; of a very high quality; very effective practice; highly commendable; very successful; few areas for improvement; notable; of a very high standard. Excellent; outstanding; exceptionally high standard, with very significant strengths; exemplary
Good	Good applies where the strengths in the areas evaluated clearly outweigh the areas in need of improvement. The areas requiring improvement impact on the quality of pupils'/students' learning. The school needs to build on its strengths and take action to address the areas identified as requiring improvement in order to achieve a <i>very good</i> standard.	Good; good quality; valuable; effective practice; competent; useful; commendable; good standard; some areas for improvement
Satisfactory	Satisfactory applies where the quality of provision is adequate. The strengths in what is being evaluated just outweigh the shortcomings. While the shortcomings do not have a significant negative impact they constrain the quality of the learning experiences and should be addressed in order to achieve a better standard.	Satisfactory; adequate; appropriate provision although some possibilities for improvement exist; acceptable level of quality; improvement needed in some areas
Fair	Fair applies where, although there are some strengths in the areas evaluated, deficiencies or shortcomings that outweigh those strengths also exist. The school will have to address certain deficiencies without delay in order to ensure that provision is satisfactory or better.	Fair; evident weaknesses that are impacting on pupils'/students' learning; less than satisfactory; experiencing difficulty; must improve in specified areas; action required to improve
Weak	Weak applies where there are serious deficiencies in the areas evaluated. Immediate and coordinated whole-school action is required to address the areas of concern. In some cases, the intervention of other agencies may be required to support improvements.	Weak; unsatisfactory; insufficient; ineffective; poor; requiring significant change, development or improvement; experiencing significant difficulties;

Appendix

SCHOOL RESPONSE TO THE REPORT

Submitted by the Board of Management

Area 1 Observations on the content of the inspection report

The Board of Management is very pleased that the evaluation reflects the ongoing excellent work of staff, pupils and parents in Scoil na Croise Naofa.

The Board notes the use of such terms as “excellent”, “exemplary” and “highly commended” when referring to current practice in the school.

Area 2 Follow-up actions planned or undertaken since the completion of the inspection activity to implement the findings and recommendations of the inspection.

The Board, in conjunction with the staff, will ensure that the recommendations made in the report will be followed up on during this academic year.