

**An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna**  
**Department of Education and Skills**

**Whole School Evaluation**  
**Management, Leadership and Learning**

**REPORT**

<b>Ainm na scoile / School name</b>	Scoil Náisiúnta an Bháin Mhóir
<b>Seoladh na scoile / School address</b>	Cloghaun Claregalway County Galway
<b>Uimhir rolla / Roll number</b>	09069L

**Date of inspection: 17-10-2019**



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An Roinn Oideachais  
agus Scileanna  
Department of  
Education and Skills

## **WHAT IS WHOLE-SCHOOL EVALUATION – MANAGEMENT, LEADERSHIP AND LEARNING?**

Whole-School Evaluation – Management, Leadership and Learning reports on the quality of teaching and learning and on the quality of management and leadership in a school. It affirms good practice and makes recommendations, where appropriate, to aid the further development of educational provision in the school.

## **HOW TO READ THIS REPORT**

During this inspection, the inspectors evaluated and reported under the following headings or areas of enquiry:

1. The quality of pupils' learning
2. The quality of teaching
3. The quality of support for pupils' well-being
4. The quality of leadership and management
5. The quality of school self-evaluation

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 of the school 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.

## **CHILD PROTECTION**

During the inspection visit, the following checks in relation to the school's child protection procedures were conducted:

1. The name of the DLP and the Child Safeguarding Statement are prominently displayed near the main entrance to the school.
2. The Child Safeguarding Statement has been ratified by the board and includes an annual review and a risk assessment.
3. All teachers visited reported that they have read the Child Safeguarding Statement and that they are aware of their responsibilities as mandated persons.
4. The Child Safeguarding Statement meets the requirements of the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017.
5. The records of the last three board of management meetings record a child protection oversight report that meet the requirements of the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary schools 2017.
6. The board of management has ensured that arrangements are in place to provide information to all school personnel on the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools, 2017
7. School planning documentation indicates that the school is making full provision for the relevant aspects of the curriculum (SPHE, Stay Safe, RSE, Wellbeing).
8. Child protection records are maintained in a secure location.

The school met the requirements in relation to each of the checks above.

## Whole-School Evaluation – Management, Leadership and Learning

<b>Dates of inspection</b>	15-10-2019 to 17-10-2019
<b>Inspection activities undertaken</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Meetings with principal and in-school leadership team</li><li>• Meeting with representatives of the board of management</li><li>• Meeting with parent representatives</li><li>• Meeting with teachers</li><li>• Review of relevant documents</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Analysis of parent, pupil and teacher questionnaires</li><li>• Observation of teaching and learning</li><li>• Examination of pupils' work</li><li>• Interaction with pupils</li><li>• Feedback to principal, deputy principal and teachers, and to parent and board of management representatives</li></ul>

### SCHOOL CONTEXT

Scoil Náisiúnta an Bháin Mhóir (Bawnmore National School) is a rural co-educational primary school in the parish of Lackagh, County Galway under the patronage of the Catholic Archbishop of Tuam. There are six mainstream teachers and four special education teachers (SETs), one of whom is the principal. One SET also works in another school nearby. There is a class for pupils with autistic spectrum disorders (ASDs). There were 160 pupils enrolled at the time of the evaluation and attendance patterns are very good overall.

### SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

#### FINDINGS

- The quality of pupils' learning across the curriculum is very good overall, with scope to further develop the pupils' comprehension skills in English.
- The overall quality of teaching is very good, with teachers at each class level using a variety of effective teaching methods.
- The targets for some pupils with special educational needs (SEN) need to be reviewed to make them clearer.
- Support for pupils' well-being is very good.
- School leadership and management are of a very high quality, and the principal demonstrates very good leadership skills.
- The quality of school self-evaluation (SSE) is very good overall.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

- A whole-school approach to developing pupils' comprehension skills should be implemented to ensure greater consistency at each class level.
- Specific, measureable and time-bound targets should be identified and monitored in all support plans for pupils with SEN.

### DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 1. THE QUALITY OF PUPILS' LEARNING

- The quality of pupils' learning is very good overall. Most pupils demonstrate very good knowledge of the work covered across a range of curricular areas. They are articulate in describing their learning across the curriculum, particularly in Social, Environmental and Scientific Education (SESE). Almost all pupils were actively engaged in their learning during the various lessons and activities observed.

- Most pupils achieve a very good standard in English. Oral language skills are integrated effectively with reading and writing. It is highly commendable that differentiated reading experiences, for example Literacy Lift-off and Guided Reading, are provided for all pupils. Whole-school approaches to writing ensure that pupils in all classes experience a variety of genres. In most instances, pupils' handwriting is clear and their work is presented neatly. While they demonstrate good comprehension skills in English, a whole-school approach to developing comprehension skills should now be implemented to ensure greater consistency at each class level.
- Tá cumas na ndaltaí sa Ghaeilge ag beagnach gach rang-leibhéal go maith. Is féidir leis an gcuid is mó de na daltaí iad féin a chur in iúl agus tá siad ábalta ceisteanna a chur agus a fhreagairt go muiníneach. *The pupils' ability in Irish at almost all class levels is good. Most of the pupils are able to introduce themselves and to pose and answer questions confidently.*
- Pupils' achievement in Mathematics is very good overall. There is a maths-rich environment in each classroom and other learning settings. During the evaluation, good use was made of educational resources to enhance learning in Mathematics.
- Work done in Visual Arts and in musical performance, both singing and instrumental, is particularly praiseworthy. Classroom and corridor displays demonstrate the breadth and quality of pupils' project work across various curricular areas.
- *Aistear: the Early Childhood Curriculum Framework* has been implemented very successfully in the infant classes. Aistear themes and key vocabulary are taught and consolidated through a variety of engaging stations for literacy, construction, role play, and art.

## 2. THE QUALITY OF TEACHING

- The overall quality of teaching is very good. The quality of teaching observed in a small number of classes was excellent. Each teacher demonstrates commitment to adapting his/her own teaching practice to improve pupils' learning outcomes.
- Very effective station teaching was observed in most classrooms during the evaluation. The teaching of English, in particular, benefits from this approach. In most classrooms, effective group or pair work was a feature of the lessons observed. There is a need to differentiate activities and lessons more effectively in a few cases.
- Tá sé le moladh go mbaintear úsáid éifeachtach as Gaeilge go neamhfhoirmiúil i rith an lae. *Commendably, Irish is used informally throughout the day.*
- Teachers' planning and preparation are very good overall. There is commendable engagement with the Primary Language Curriculum, with learning outcomes identified in teachers' written plans. Pupils' progress is tracked throughout the school and each teacher maintains a useful assessment folder containing information on individual pupils' progress.
- Effective assessment for learning (AfL) strategies are used by most teachers. Lessons start by eliciting pupils' prior knowledge on the subject to be taught and the teacher shares the intended learning outcome with the class. In some support plans for pupils with SEN, the learning targets are not sufficiently clear; these should be revised to ensure they are specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and timed (SMART).
- While the school uses diagnostic tests to identify pupils' individual learning needs, the range of diagnostic testing should be expanded to ensure supplementary support is focused on the areas of greatest priority for individual learners.

### **3. THE QUALITY OF SUPPORT FOR PUPILS' WELL-BEING**

- The quality of support for pupils' wellbeing is very good and is one of the noteworthy strengths of the school. Respectful and caring relationships were evident between teachers and pupils, and between the pupils themselves.
- Teachers work effectively with each other and with parents to support pupils with identified learning needs. The collaborative work of the special education team contributes to ensuring that all pupils benefit from effective team teaching and in-class support. Pupils from the ASD class are integrated effectively into the mainstream setting during the school day.
- In questionnaire responses, pupils agreed that they like school, and that their teachers explain things clearly and pay attention to what they say.

### **4. THE QUALITY OF LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

- The overall quality of leadership and management is very good.
- The board of management meets regularly, as required, and demonstrates very good commitment to enhancing and improving the quality of education provided. School accounts are certified annually. The board has ensured that the school is well resourced with teaching aids and educational resources. The board has demonstrated commendable commitment to safeguarding the health and safety of the pupils in the school environment. It promotes and facilitates the continuing professional development (CPD) of the staff.
- The principal demonstrates very good leadership skills. This is evident in the school's culture of improvement, and in the leadership of the implementation of a broad range of curricular, co-curricular and extra-curricular initiatives. Each member of the newly appointed in-school management (ISM) team has a clearly identified set of duties. The duties are aligned appropriately with the domains for leadership and management in *Looking at Our School* (LAOS).
- There is very good communication between the school and parents. Parents are informed regularly of the work of the board of management and are consulted in the formulation and review of school policy. The parents' association organises a variety of successful school events during the year. In questionnaire responses, almost all parents agreed that the school is well run, that teaching is good in the school, and that they are happy with the school.
- The school reported that it provides placements for student teachers regularly. Such engagement in initial teacher education programmes is welcome and is included among the Teaching Council's Code of Professional Conduct for Teachers, as it can provide valuable benefits for teachers, pupils and the teacher education institute.

### **5. THE QUALITY OF SCHOOL SELF-EVALUATION**

- The work undertaken in school self-evaluation (SSE) is very good. There is evidence that the focus placed on writing genres in English has been very effective in improving pupils' outcomes in this area. The school has identified oral language in English as its current area of focus and commendable work has been done in gathering and analysing data and setting targets for improvement.
- The school has developed a Digital Learning Plan. While the plan identifies certain areas of focus, there is a need to consider the provision of further opportunities for the use of digital learning technologies (DLT) by the pupils.

# **Appendix**

**SCHOOL RESPONSE TO THE REPORT**

**Submitted by the Board of Management**

## **Part A Observations on the content of the inspection report**

The Board of Management of Scoil Náisiúnta an Bháin Mhóir welcomes what we consider to be an excellent Whole-School Evaluation - Management, Leadership and Learning (WSE-MLL) report, the findings of which affirm the very effective management and leadership at the school and acknowledges the high standards of teaching and learning taking place at the school.

The Board members are particularly pleased that due recognition is given to a number of definite strengths of the school: the work done in *Visual Arts and Musical Performance*, the very successful implementation of the *Aistear* programme, effective *Team Teaching*, the provision of *Differentiated Reading* experiences for all pupils, the support given to the *Wellbeing* of pupils, the very good quality of the *School Self-Evaluation* process and the very good *Leadership Skills* demonstrated by the principal.

## **Part B Follow-up actions planned or undertaken since the completion of the inspection activity to implement the findings and recommendations of the inspection.**

The Board of Management acknowledges the findings and recommendations contained in the report and confirms that the following are now taking place:

1. Expansion of existing practices in the teaching of explicit comprehension skills to all classes, thus ensuring greater consistency.
2. Revision of learning targets in some student support plans to ensure that they are sufficiently clear.

## 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 of quality the school's provision of each area.

Level	Description	Example of descriptive terms
<b>Very Good</b>	<b>Very good</b> 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 <b>outstanding</b> 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
<b>Good</b>	<b>Good</b> 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' 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 <b>very good</b> standard.	Good; good quality; valuable; effective practice; competent; useful; commendable; good standard; some areas for improvement
<b>Satisfactory</b>	<b>Satisfactory</b> 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
<b>Fair</b>	<b>Fair</b> 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' learning; less than satisfactory; experiencing difficulty; must improve in specified areas; action required to improve
<b>Weak</b>	<b>Weak</b> 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;