Whole School Evaluation
Management, Leadership and Learning

REPORT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ainm na scoile / School name</th>
<th>Lower Glanmire N S</th>
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| Seoladh na scoile / School address | Glanmire  
Co Cork |
| Uimhir rolla / Roll number | 13663W |

Date of Evaluation: 12-05-2017
WHAT IS A WHOLE-SCHOOL EVALUATION: MANAGEMENT, LEADERSHIP AND LEARNING?

Whole-School Evaluations – Management, Leadership and Learning report on the quality of teaching and learning and on the quality of management and leadership in a school. They affirm good practice and make 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. Teaching and learning
2. Support for pupils’ wellbeing
3. School leadership and management

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.
Whole-School Evaluation – Management, Leadership and Learning Report

INSPECTION ACTIVITIES DURING THIS INSPECTION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dates of inspection</th>
<th>09 May – 12 May 2017</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inspection activities undertaken;</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Meetings with the principal, post holders and special education team</td>
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<td>• Meeting with representatives of the board of management</td>
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<td>• Meetings with teachers</td>
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<td>• Review of relevant documents</td>
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<td>• Pupil focus-group interview</td>
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<td>• Analysis of parent and pupil questionnaires</td>
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<td>• Observation of teaching and learning</td>
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<td>• Examination of pupils’ work</td>
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<td>• Interaction with pupils</td>
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<td>• Feedback to teachers and to board of management representatives</td>
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SCHOOL CONTEXT

Lower Glanmire national school is a co-educational, mainstream primary school under the patronage of the Catholic Bishop of Cork and Ross. The school has a staff of six mainstream class teachers including a teaching principal and three support teachers. At the time of the evaluation there were 136 pupils on roll. Pupil attendance is good to very good.

SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

FINDINGS

• The school places a strong emphasis on ensuring high standards of education and care for all its pupils.
• While the overall quality of pupil learning is good, the learning experiences of pupils would be enhanced through ensuring greater breath and balance in curriculum coverage.
• High quality teaching was observed during the evaluation period but there remains scope to develop the quality of teachers’ individual planning.
• The quality of support for pupils’ wellbeing is of a very high standard.
• The overall quality of pupil assessment of and for learning at whole-school and individual class level requires improvement.
• While the quality of leadership and management is good overall, there is a need to plan strategically for the future development of the school.

RECOMMENDATIONS

• The school should ensure that pupils experience a broad and balanced curriculum and that continuity and progression in pupils’ learning is ensured in each curriculum area.
• A common approach to individual teacher planning, informed by curriculum strands, strand units and objectives should be developed. Assessment and differentiation should be identified in this planning.
• The school should extend the range of assessment strategies utilised and an analysis of assessment data should then inform teaching and learning in all settings.
• The board should initiate a consultative process to formulate a strategic plan for the future development of the school.
1. THE LEARNING ACHIEVEMENTS OF PUPILS

- The overall quality of pupil learning is good. Pupils demonstrate a good knowledge of lesson content taught and teachers make concerted efforts to provide a range of interesting learning experiences for the pupils in their care. However, there are omissions in curriculum coverage particularly in Social, Environmental and Scientific Education (SESE), Physical Education and in Music. The school should ensure that pupils are facilitated to engage with each strand and strand unit of subject areas on a cyclical basis and that there is continuity and progression in their learning as they progress from class to class.

- Pupil learning in English ranges from satisfactory to good. The school is highly praised for its work in successfully raising the reading standards of pupils. The exploration of a wider range of reading texts would further enhance pupils' literacy skills. Pupils’ written work is very neatly presented and it is evident that they have acquired a good understanding of the conventions of print. Facilitating pupils to write regularly in a wider variety of genres is recommended. Good listener-speaker relationships have been developed among pupils in all classes. However, many pupils lack fluency and confidence in communicating ideas and experiences. It is recommended that a whole-school approach to developing pupils’ oral language skills be implemented. Particular attention should be placed on developing the language skills of pupils whose first language is not English.

- Tá cáilíocht an teagaisc agus na foghlama sa Ghaeilge idir measartha agus maith. Ba rólchuspaí maithte iad tromlach na múinteoirí in úsáid na teanga agus cruthaíodh deiseanna rialta do na daltaí an sprioctheanga a úsáid ina gceachtanna. Bhí sé ar chumas na ndaltaí réimse cúnt focióra agus bun structúir chainte a úsáid go neamhspléach nuair a ceistíodh iad faoi théamaí teanga an churaclain. Tá cumas léitheoireachta na ndaltaí idir sásúil agus maith. Is gá an t-abhar léitheoireachta úsáidte a leathnú le téacsanna dílse agus úrscéalta chun a gcumas a fhorbairt a thuilleadh. Ní mór deiseanna rialta scribhneoireachta a chothú do na daltaí agus raon leathan de sheáinraí a úsáid leo, chun a scileanna féin-scribhneoireachta a fhorbairt go sásúil. Tá treoir fhiúntach sa phlean scoile Gaeilge do mhúinteoirí faoi shealbhú scileanna teanga. Tá sé in am athbhreithniú a dhéanamh ar an bplean, le cinníú go bhfuil sé á chur i bhfeidhm go córasach. The quality of teaching and learning in Irish ranges from fair to good. A majority of teachers modelled language usage well and regular opportunities were created for pupils to use the target language in their lessons. Pupils were able to use a narrow range of vocabulary and sentence structure independently when they were questioned on curricular language themes. Pupils’ attainment in reading ranges from satisfactory to good. It is necessary to extend the reading materials used with authentic texts and novels to progress pupils’ attainment further. It is necessary to facilitate the pupils to write frequently in a range of genres to progress their independent writing skills satisfactorily. The school plan provides worthwhile direction to teachers on the acquisition of language skills. The plan should be reviewed to ensure that it is being implemented consistently.
The quality of pupil learning in Mathematics is good overall with some pupils achieving very high standards. Pupils demonstrated high levels of engagement in oral mathematical activities. In general, pupils’ understanding of number and of mathematical operations is of a very good standard. Increased opportunities for pupils to engage in practical mathematical activities would further improve the quality of learning outcomes.

In Geography, the quality of pupil attainment and learning experience was observed to be of a high standard. Commendable emphasis is placed on developing pupils’ sense of place and spatial awareness. However, insufficient opportunities are provided in SESE for pupils to work scientifically, as historians and as geographers. Greater emphasis should also be placed on skills development and on the exploration of history and geography in the local environment.

Attractive displays of pupils’ art work feature in each classroom and there is good integration between visual arts and other subjects. All pupils actively engage in physical education lessons and derive great pleasure from the organised activities. The provision of a range of competitive and non-competitive games for the pupils is highly praised.

2. QUALITY OF TEACHING

The quality of teaching is good overall with lessons observed varying from satisfactory to very good. Where good teaching was observed, lesson content and teaching approaches effectively addressed the varying needs and learning styles of the pupils. There is scope for development in the quality of teachers’ individual planning. It is recommended that teachers use objective based planning informed by curriculum strands and strand units. Assessment and differentiation strategies which progress pupils’ attainment should be identified in this planning.

In general, pupils with learning difficulties are making good to very good progress in their learning. A dedicated team of support teachers works conscientiously to meet the needs of pupils with learning difficulties. Effective team interventions in literacy and numeracy address the varying range of pupil abilities. Support teachers are advised to ensure that future interventions focus on the pupils with greatest need. Care should also be taken to ensure that realistic, time-bound learning targets are outlined, monitored and assessed systematically. Pupil progress reports should be completed at the end of each instructional term.

Some very good practice in assessment was noted. In particular, the assessment of pupils’ attainment prior to and post engagement in literacy and numeracy interventions is praised. The longitudinal monitoring of pupil progress is also noteworthy. There remains scope for improvement, however, in the overall quality of pupil assessment of and for learning. Teachers should develop the assessment of pupil attainment particularly in oral language, in writing and in Irish. The data generated from these assessments should inform teachers’ individual planning, lesson preparation and the organisation of differentiated activities to meet the varying needs of pupils.
3. SUPPORT FOR PUPILS’ WELL-BEING

- The quality of support for pupils’ wellbeing is of a very high standard. Pupils are very well behaved and were observed to engage positively with teachers and each other. The school manages the pastoral needs of the pupils very effectively and shows a genuine commitment to the general welfare and holistic development of the pupils. All parents who completed a questionnaire state that their child is treated fairly and respectfully in the school.

4. LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

- The quality of leadership and management is good overall. The current chairperson of the board of management was appointed in May 2017. No board meetings were convened between June 2016 and May 2017 pending the diocesan appointment of a chairperson to the board. The newly appointed chairperson reports that the board is very supportive of the school. In order to fulfil its statutory duties outlined in the Education Act, 1998 and in the Governance Manual for Primary Schools 2015-2019, the board should initiate a consultative process to formulate a strategic plan for the future development of the school. This plan should address the cyclical review of the school plan, the recommendations made in school inspection reports, the development of the school building and the annual certification of school accounts.

- The principal is highly praised for the development of a school community which is characterised by very good working relationships and high standards of education and care for pupils. He is ably supported by the deputy principal and four special duties post holders. The commitment and diligence of the in-school management team in fulfilling their duties is highly praiseworthy. It is recommended that duties assigned to the post holders are reviewed annually to ensure that they reflect the changing needs of the school.

- Confirmation was provided that the board of management has formally adopted the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools without modification and that the school is compliant with the requirements of the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools.

5. SCHOOL SELF-EVALUATION

- The school has engaged effectively with the process of self-evaluation (SSE) and specific areas for improvement have been identified. Parents and pupils have been consulted in the drafting of school improvement plans in literacy and numeracy and summary improvement plans are published on the school website. These plans have impacted positively on pupil learning outcomes. The capacity of the school to address the recommendations of this report is very good.
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.

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<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Example of descriptive terms</th>
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<tr>
<td>Very Good</td>
<td><strong>Very good</strong> 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.</td>
<td>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</td>
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<td>Good</td>
<td><strong>Good</strong> 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 very good standard.</td>
<td>Good; good quality; valuable; effective practice; competent; useful; commendable; good standard; some areas for improvement</td>
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<td>Satisfactory</td>
<td><strong>Satisfactory</strong> 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.</td>
<td>Satisfactory; adequate; appropriate provision although some possibilities for improvement exist; acceptable level of quality; improvement needed in some areas</td>
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<td>Fair</td>
<td><strong>Fair</strong> 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.</td>
<td>Fair; evident weaknesses that are impacting on pupils’ learning; less than satisfactory; experiencing difficulty; must improve in specified areas; action required to improve</td>
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<td>Weak</td>
<td><strong>Weak</strong> 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.</td>
<td>Weak; unsatisfactory; insufficient; ineffective; poor; requiring significant change, development or improvement; experiencing significant difficulties;</td>
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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 welcomes the Whole School Evaluation Management: Leadership and Learning report.

The Board welcomes the acknowledgement by the inspectors of the high standards of education and praise for the holistic development of all our pupils.

The evaluation affirms the dedication and commitment of the principal and his staff, characterised by very good working relationships, high standards of education and care of pupils.

The report notes the good practice in assessment. The board notes the high standard achieved particularly in Maths throughout 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 recommendations are noted and the implementation of these recommendations has already commenced.

1. The school will ensure that pupils experience a broad and balanced curriculum and the continuity and progression in pupils’ learning in each curriculum area is likewise assured. For example, new book schemes in subject areas will be implemented in the coming school year.

2. The school will use a common approach to teacher planning. A broader range of assessments will be enacted and differentiation will be a component of this approach.

3. As a consequence of the extended range of assessments, there will be even more data which will inform teaching and learning in all settings.

The Board of Management acknowledges the need for a strategic plan for the future development of the school and sets this as a priority for the coming school year and beyond.