

An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna
Department of Education and Skills

Whole School Evaluation
Management, Leadership and Learning

REPORT

Ainm na scoile / School name	Gusserane N S
Seoladh na scoile / School address	Gusserane New Ross Co. Wexford
Uimhir rolla / Roll number	14900P

Date of inspection: 28-11-2019



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 inspector(s) 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

Dates of inspection	28-11-2019
Inspection activities undertaken <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Meetings with principal and in-school leadership team• Meeting with representatives of the board of management• Meeting with parent representatives• Meeting with teachers• Review of relevant documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Analysis of parent, pupil and teacher questionnaires• Observation of teaching and learning• Examination of pupils' work• Interaction with pupils• Feedback to principal, deputy principal and teachers, and to parent and board of management representatives

SCHOOL CONTEXT

Gusserane National School (NS) is a catholic, co-educational primary school located in the small village of Gusserane, Co. Wexford; it is under the patronage of the Catholic Bishop of Ferns. The school has four mainstream class teachers and two special education teachers (SETs), one of whom is shared with another school. At the time of the evaluation the deputy principal and assistant principal were recently appointed to their leadership roles. The attendance of the 94 pupils enrolled is very good.

SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

FINDINGS

- The quality of the pupils' learning is highly commendable.
- The quality of teaching is very high.
- Supports for pupils with special educational needs (SEN) is good; there is greater scope to analyse assessment data to inform target setting for pupils as a means of monitoring progress within support plans.
- Support for pupils' well-being is very successful.
- The quality of leadership and management is very high; the principal discharges his leadership duties in a highly-successful and competent manner.
- School self-evaluation is of a high standard; school improvement plans are implemented over a one year period and there is scope to develop learner outcome-focused targets within improvement plans.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Greater analysis of assessment data should be carried out to inform target setting for pupils with SEN as a means of monitoring progress within their support plans.
- The school should engage with the school improvement planning aspect of the SSE process over a three-year period and the targets within these plans should be more learner-outcome focussed, specific and measurable.

DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. THE QUALITY OF PUPILS' LEARNING

- The quality of the pupils' learning is highly commendable and the pupils present as interested and motivated learners. They are very eager to communicate about their learning across a range of curriculum areas.
- The pupils in all classes engage in individual and cooperative tasks very successfully.
- Achievement in Mathematics is very good, many pupils in the infant and junior classes demonstrate a competent understanding of early-numeracy skills. High numbers of the pupils in the middle and senior classes show competence in number operations, use of Mathematics language and in problem solving.
- Learning outcomes in English are of a very high standard. The pupils talk about their learning using a wide range of vocabulary. For the most part, pupils read with fluency, expression and understanding. Some very good samples of the pupils' writing in a variety of genres were evident within writing folders and on display in classrooms. There is need in some settings to develop systems to retain the pupils' written work over the course of the year. It is evident that the pupils take pride in the presentation of their written work, many pupils in middle and senior classes write using block letters; a cursive script should be consistently implemented at these class levels.
- Tá cáilíocht na foghlama sa Gaeilge go han-maith. Léiríonn formhór na ndaltaí leibhéal oiriúnach tuisceana agus tá foclóir maith acu. *The pupil's experience of learning in Irish is very good. The majority of pupils demonstrate appropriate levels of understanding and they have a wide vocabulary.*
- The pupils' creativity is fostered very successfully by engaging at a very good level with the Social Environmental and Scientific Education (SESE) and the Arts Education programmes. They demonstrate a very good understanding of their local environment and many high quality samples of their visual arts were attractively displayed throughout the school. The pupils take a very active part in local bio-diversity initiatives and speak about these endeavours with pride and confidence.
- Very high quality learning experiences were observed in Physical Education (PE) lessons and the pupils take part in a wide range of sporting activities.
- The pupils sing songs with enthusiasm and confidence and are provided with regular opportunities to perform within the school and more broadly within the county at various planned events.

2. THE QUALITY OF TEACHING

- The quality of teaching is very high. All teachers are highly commended for preparing very good lessons which are supported by a wide variety of resources and active-learning methodologies.
- The teachers display excellent classroom management skills; the pupils' behaviour was exemplary throughout the evaluation.
- Responses to pupil questionnaires which were administered as part of the evaluation indicate that the majority of pupils agree that their teacher explains things clearly.
- The quality of teaching in English and Mathematics is very good. The school has focused on the development of reading in recent times and this is having a positive impact on the pupil's learning. Within Mathematics, the teachers provide suitably challenging tasks for pupils at different levels of ability. Good attention is paid to using maths trails within the school. The whole-school plan for Mathematics does not provide sufficient guidance in

relation to approaches to oral and mental mathematics. Good practice in this regard should be shared within staff, adopted as whole-school policy and implemented consistently throughout the school.

- The teachers make very good use of the outdoor school environment.
- Supports for pupils with special educational needs (SEN) is good. A good range of assessments is carried out on pupils with SEN. Support plans are devised in consultation with parents and there is good links with outside agencies. Successful teaching was observed in these settings and was matched to the pupils' priority needs. There is greater scope to analyse assessment data and the outcomes of diagnostic assessments to inform target setting for pupils as a means of monitoring progress within support plans.
- All teachers maintain a wide range of assessment information and carefully monitor the pupils' work.
- The teachers' collaborative practice is very good. They are very reflective teachers and continually seek out new approaches to overcome challenges within the school.

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

- Support for pupils' well-being is a very successful and is a strength of the school. Responding to the Inspectorate questionnaires, almost all pupils stated that they like the school and feel safe in their class and playground.
- The learning atmosphere is very positive. There is a strong emphasis on enabling pupils to develop positive attitudes to physical fitness, healthy eating and to sustainability. A comprehensive range of co-curricular and extra-curricular activities is available in the school.

4. THE QUALITY OF LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

- The quality of leadership and management is very high.
- The board of management ensures that the schools is very well resourced and maintained. Very effective communication is evident between school staff, the board of management, parents' association and wider parent community. Almost all parent surveyed agree that the school is well run and that they are happy with the school overall.
- The principal discharges his leadership duties in a highly-successful and competent manner. He has a strong commitment to the holistic development of each pupil and succeeds in creating a very successful community of learners.
- The principal is supported by a newly-appointed deputy principal and an assistant principal. It is timely for this newly established team to lead the systematic review of some whole-school plans and to monitor their implementation. All members of staff are highly commended for taking on leadership roles in addition to their teaching duties.
- The parents' association provide very valuable support to the school, it successfully contributes towards cultivating a strong sense of school community.

5. THE QUALITY OF SCHOOL SELF-EVALUATION

- School self-evaluation is of a high standard. A broad range of evidence has been used to inform the SSE process to date. A comprehensive selection of actions is outlined in school improvement plans to develop practices in chosen areas of focus.
- The school implements improvement plans over the course of a year. It is recommended that the school engages with the process over a longer period of time and that the targets within improvement plans are focussed on improving learning outcomes and are more specific and measurable.

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
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' 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.	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' 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

Part A Observations on the content of the inspection report

The Board of Management of Gusserane NS welcome this very positive and affirming Whole School Evaluation report for Gusserane NS.

The report endorses the very high standards of teaching and learning achieved in Gusserane NS. It reflects extremely well upon the commitments, dedication and endeavour of the whole school community including pupils, teaching staff, principal, ancillary staff, Parents Association, parents/guardians, the Board of Management and the wider community of Gusserane NS.

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 of Gusserane NS has begun the process of implementing the recommendations made in the report. These recommendations will provide a focus to further enhance the work of the school as we endeavour to develop best practice for the whole school community in Gusserane NS.