

An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna
Department of Education and Skills

Whole School Evaluation
Management, Leadership and Learning

REPORT

Ainm na scoile / School name	Bishop Harty National School
Seoladh na scoile / School address	Ballinree Nenagh County Tipperary
Uimhir rolla / Roll number	15560W

Date of inspection: 17-10-2019



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 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	15-10-2019 – 17-10-2019
Inspection activities undertaken <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Meetings with principal and in-school leadership team• Meeting with chairperson of the board of management• Meeting with parent representatives• Review of relevant documents	<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, deputy principal and teachers, and to parent and board of management representatives

SCHOOL CONTEXT

Bishop Harty National School is a co-educational primary school located in Ballinree, County Tipperary, under the patronage of the Catholic Bishop of Killaloe. The staff comprises a teaching principal, four mainstream teachers and two special education teachers (SETs). One of the SETs is shared with another local school. At the time of the evaluation, there were seventy-five pupils enrolled. Attendance levels are very good overall.

SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

FINDINGS

- The pupils' learning is very good.
- The observed teaching was very good, with a very high standard of preparation for lessons.
- The support for pupils with special educational needs (SEN) is commendable; aspects of team teaching would benefit from restructuring.
- The support for pupils' wellbeing is very good, with pupil voice being fostered very successfully.
- School leadership and management are very good, and positive relationships are fostered very effectively among all partners in the school community.
- The school self-evaluation (SSE) process is good; monitoring of improvement strategies is not yet embedded.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Current team teaching initiatives should be reviewed to maximise the use of additional teaching resources in all settings; the use of small-group focused instruction should be extended.
- As part of the SSE process, the impact of agreed improvement strategies on learner outcomes should be monitored regularly using assessment data.

DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. THE QUALITY OF PUPILS' LEARNING

- The pupils' learning is very good. During the evaluation, they were engaged in their learning and highly motivated. They were supported in engaging collaboratively during lessons and had access to high-quality learning resources. In summative assessments of literacy and numeracy, learner outcomes for the majority of pupils are very good.

- The majority of pupils demonstrated an ability to apply their skills and knowledge confidently across the curriculum. Learning across the curriculum is displayed and celebrated in classrooms and on school corridors. In the case of a minority of pupils, there is scope to improve the presentation of written work.
- In English, there is differentiated support in reading. Pupils' early literacy development is fostered effectively. Commendably, *Aistear; the Early Childhood Curriculum Framework* is implemented in all junior classrooms to support cross-curricular learning through play. Pupils' writing and comprehension skills are developed systematically at whole-school level. Very good links are forged in some classrooms between oral and writing genres; such highly effective practice should be extended.
- Bhí stór leathan focal ag formhór na ndaltaí sa Ghaeilge. Le linn na gceachtanna a breathnaíodh, chuir agus d'fhreagair na daltaí ceisteanna go muiníneach. Léirigh siad tuiscint mhaith ar ghramadach. Cuireadh béim thairbheach ar chluichí, rainn agus ar an gcur chuige cumarsáideach chun cumas labhartha na ndaltaí a fhorbairt. Úsáidtear na trialacha caighdeánaithe chun dul chun cinn na ndaltaí sa Ghaeilge a mheas. B'fhiú tuilleadh béime a chur ar an bhfoghraíocht sa léitheoireacht agus ar scríbhneoireacht chruthaitheach. *The majority of pupils had a wide vocabulary in Irish. During the lessons observed, the pupils were confident in asking and answering questions. They demonstrated a good understanding of grammar. A valuable emphasis was placed on games, rhymes and on the communicative approach to develop pupils' oral language ability. Standardised tests are used to evaluate pupils' progress. Pupils would benefit from additional emphasis on pronunciation in reading and on creative writing.*
- Overall, pupils' learning in numeracy is developed effectively through the use of a wide range of resources and approaches, including collaborative group work. The development of pupils' mathematical language is very good.
- Commendably, pupils' digital skills are developed systematically and they have access to high-quality digital resources. Pupils use these for self-assessment in literacy.
- Pupils demonstrated a good range of skills and knowledge in Social, Environmental and Science Education (SESE). They reported that they engage regularly in investigations. Their knowledge of the local environment across SESE subjects should be developed more systematically.

2. THE QUALITY OF TEACHING

- Overall, the quality of teaching was very good, with scope to restructure aspects of team teaching.
- Teachers' preparation for lessons was of very high standard. Very positive relationships were evident between teachers and pupils throughout the evaluation. Teachers prepare highly attractive, print-rich learning environments. In questionnaires, all parents agreed that teaching is good in the school.
- A wide range of teaching approaches was used during lessons to stimulate and engage learners. This included use of concrete materials and information and communications technology (ICT). There was scope to improve the structure of a small number of the lessons observed with a view to ensuring high-quality pupil engagement.
- Teachers work collaboratively during team teaching to improve learner outcomes and to promote inclusivity. The role of the additional teaching resource in these activities should be maximised and small-group focused instruction should be extended. Collaborative planning should be devised for all team teaching to ensure that clear learner outcomes and appropriately challenging activities are planned for all pupils.

- The National Educational Psychological (NEPs) *Continuum of Support* process for pupils with SEN is being embedded very effectively. Diagnostic testing is a regular feature of practice. Pupil profiles and individual plans have been developed and are reviewed collaboratively. Some highly effective practices in SEN were evident during the evaluation. Notwithstanding this, all SETs should ensure that withdrawal provision is based on pupils' priority learning needs. Targets devised for pupils with SEN should be specific and measurable.
- The overall quality of assessment is very good. Teachers are implementing a wide range of assessment strategies. The whole-school focus on supporting pupils in reflecting on their learning is highly commendable.

3. THE QUALITY OF SUPPORT FOR PUPILS' WELLBEING

- Pupils' wellbeing is supported very effectively at whole-school level. Pupils engage in a wide range of extra-curricular and co-curricular learning activities to support their holistic development.
- Pupil voice is fostered very successfully through the SSE process and through the student council. In questionnaires, almost all pupils agreed that they were listened to by their teacher.
- All pupils indicated in their questionnaire responses that they learned about different kinds of bullying. The current SSE focus on the safe and respectful use of digital technologies is commendable.

4. THE QUALITY OF LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

- The quality of school leadership and management is very good. Very successful relationships have been fostered among all partners in the school community. In questionnaires, all parents agreed that they are happy with the school.
- The board of management oversees the running of the school very effectively. The school infrastructure is very well maintained. Parents are involved collaboratively in policy development and agreed reports are provided by the board to the wider parent body. Ideally, a formal report on the operation of the board should be published annually.
- The principal demonstrates very high levels of organisational efficiency and instructional leadership. The deputy principal and assistant principal provide effective support for school development. Going forward, the in-school management team should meet more regularly on a formal basis.
- The school facilitates the placement of student teachers from initial teacher education (ITE) school placement programmes.

5. THE QUALITY OF SCHOOL SELF-EVALUATION

- The overall quality of the SSE process is good. School improvement plans for literacy and numeracy and for Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) have been published. All partners have been involved collaboratively in the process. There was evidence during the evaluation that agreed school improvement strategies were impacting positively on teaching and learning in classrooms.
- To build on this good practice, improvement targets for literacy and numeracy should be devised. These targets should be monitored using whole-school assessment data.

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 welcomes the WSE-MLL report on Bishop Harty National School. We are pleased that the very positive findings of the report highlight the many strengths of our school. We are extremely proud that the overall quality of teaching and learning is of a very good standard. We are delighted that the hard work and dedication of our Board of Management, Teachers, Staff and Parents' Association has been acknowledged. We are actively promoting the importance of pupil voice in Bishop Harty N.S., and we are thrilled that our efforts have been acknowledged in the report. The Board of Management is very happy with the overwhelmingly positive responses from both parent and pupil questionnaires.

The Board of Management would like to thank the school management team, teachers, SNA, ancillary staff, pupils, parents and community for their on-going commitment to Bishop Harty N.S. We will use the findings of this very welcome report, to strive to constantly improve learner experiences and outcomes for pupils in our care.

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 and staff acknowledge and accept the findings and recommendations of the report. They will support the implementation of the recommendations made in the WSE-MLL. The report provides clear guidance for our school to continue a very high standard of educational provision. We have identified priority needs as a result of the report. We will work towards these targets, in consultation with all stakeholders and in a sustainable manner.

Team teaching initiatives are a very valued aspect of our teaching in Bishop Harty N.S. We will review the models implemented and extend the use of small group focused instruction to all classes. We are very pleased with our S.S.E. plans and the impact they have on pupils' learning experiences and outcomes. Going forward, we will monitor the effectiveness of these plans in a more formal manner.

We will work to extend the celebration of pupil voice and maintain and foster the quality of support for pupil wellbeing. We will use this report to guide us in our commitment to the holistic development of all children in Bishop Harty N.S.

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 <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' 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;