

An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna
Department of Education and Skills

Whole School Evaluation
Management, Leadership and Learning

REPORT

Ainm na scoile / School name	Scoil Náisiúnta Naomh Pádraig
Seoladh na scoile / School address	Cregmore Claregalway County Galway
Uimhir rolla / Roll number	16936A

Date of inspection: 07-03-2019



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 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, Well-being).
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	05-03-2019 to 07-03-2019
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

Scoil Náisiúnta Naomh Pádraig (Cregmore National School) is a co-educational primary school situated in Cregmore, in the parish of Lackagh, County Galway. The school is under the patronage of the Catholic Archbishop of Tuam. Currently, it has an administrative principal, nine mainstream teachers and four special education teachers (SETs), one of whom also works in other schools in the locality. There were 245 pupils enrolled at the time of the evaluation; school attendance is very good overall.

SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

FINDINGS

- Pupils' learning across the curriculum is very good overall.
- Teaching is very good overall, with teachers at each class level using a range of new and effective teaching methods; there are opportunities to differentiate activities and lessons more effectively.
- Support for pupils' well-being is very good with the attention given to pupils' health and welfare being one of the significant strengths of the school.
- School leadership and management are very good; currently, parents have a limited role in school policy development.
- School self-evaluation (SSE) is very good overall; there are opportunities to increase the involvement of the board of management and the parents in the SSE process.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Activities and lessons should be differentiated more effectively to cater for the needs of individual pupils.
- Parents should have the opportunity to contribute more meaningfully to school policy development.
- The involvement of the board of management and parents in the SSE process should be enhanced.

DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. THE QUALITY OF PUPILS' LEARNING

- The overall quality of learning is very good at each class level. Pupils were very engaged, focused and motivated during observed lessons and activities. Learner experiences are very

rich and varied. Most pupils demonstrated very good knowledge of the work covered across a range of curricular areas. They could accurately describe what they had learned, particularly in Mathematics. Skills development is given due attention across the curriculum.

- *Aistear: the Early Childhood Curriculum Framework* has been implemented very successfully in the infant classes. *Aistear* themes and target vocabulary are introduced and consolidated using a variety of stimulating stations for literacy, construction and role play.
- The digital learning action plan is being well implemented. Information and communication technology (ICT) is regularly used to improve the learning process. Most pupils achieve a very good standard in English reading. Pupils' writing in a variety of genres is of a good standard overall, with some writing being of a very high quality. Pupils' achievement in Mathematics is very good overall. A maths-rich environment has been developed in each classroom and throughout the school.
- Tá cumas na ndaltaí sa Ghaeilge ag beagnach gach rang-leibhéal go maith ar an iomlán. Sa chuid is mó de na ranganna, is féidir leis na daltaí iad féin a chur in iúl agus is féidir leo labhairt faoi na caithimh aimsire atá acu as Gaeilge. B'fhiú, áfach, athbhreithniú a dhéanamh ar chlár na scoile don teanga labhartha i gcomhthéacs an Churaclaim Teanga Bunscoile. *The pupils' overall ability in Irish is good at almost every class level. In most classes, the pupils are able to introduce themselves and talk about their interests in Irish. It would be worthwhile, however, reviewing the school's oral language programme for Irish in the context of the Primary Language Curriculum (PLC).*
- Classroom displays demonstrate the breadth and quality of pupils' project and assignment work across various curricular areas, especially in Social, Environmental and Scientific Education (SESE) and in Visual Arts.

2. THE QUALITY OF TEACHING

- The overall quality of teaching is very good. The quality of teaching observed in some classes was excellent. While the teachers demonstrate commendable commitment to adapting their teaching practice to improve learner outcomes, there is a need to differentiate activities and lessons more effectively to cater for the range of pupil abilities.
- During the evaluation, very effective station teaching was observed in most classrooms. The teaching of English in particular benefits from these teaching methods, with exemplary practice observed in some classrooms. It is recommended that the use of group work and pair work be expanded to a wider range of curricular areas. This should enable teachers to place greater emphasis on the needs of individual pupils across the curriculum. Very strong emphasis is placed on the teaching of Mathematics. The discrete teaching of mathematical language at each class level enhances pupils' understanding of mathematical concepts.
- Cuireann gach oide dearcadh dearfach don teanga Gaeilge chun cinn. Cé go dtugtar aird chuí do mhúineadh an teanga labhartha sa chuid is mó de ranganna, ba ghá díriú ar scileanna labhartha bunúsacha na ndaltaí i roinnt ranganna. *Each teacher promotes a positive attitude to the Irish language. While the teaching of spoken Irish receives due attention in most classes, there is a need to focus on pupils' basic oral language skills in some classrooms.*

- The quality of assessment and planning is very good overall. Each teacher maintains an assessment folder containing useful information on each pupil's progress. The progression milestones of the Primary Language Curriculum (PLC) are evident in teachers' planning in the infant classes. It is recommended that the PLC be further emphasised in planning and assessment in future, including for Irish.
- The monitoring of pupils' written work is very good in most classes, with useful formative written feedback provided by most teachers. While pupils' progress is tracked in some settings, there is a need for further co-ordination and collaboration between mainstream class teachers and SETs. It is recommended that the use of diagnostic testing for pupils with learning difficulties and special educational needs (SEN) be expanded.

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

- Support for pupils' well-being is very good and is one of the particular strengths of the school. The pupils at each class level demonstrate very good behaviour. Caring and respectful relationships were evident between the teachers and pupils and among the pupils themselves. In their questionnaire responses, pupils agree their teachers listen to them and explain things clearly.
- The school promotes inclusiveness and seeks to ensure that individual pupils' needs are addressed as effectively as possible. The use of the manual sign system LÁMH to assist pupils with communication needs and the implementation of successful early intervention and in-class support are examples of this very positive approach. The wide range of artistic and sporting opportunities for pupils helps to foster their mental and physical health and well-being.

4. THE QUALITY OF LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

- Leadership and management are very good. The board of management meets regularly and is properly constituted. School accounts are certified annually, in accordance with the Education Act (1998).
- The school building and grounds are very well-maintained. The various extensions to the building and grounds in recent years have greatly enriched the educational provision. Among these developments are the school hall, the playing fields, and the sensory room. The board has also ensured that the school is very well resourced with teaching and learning aids, including books, educational charts and maps, ICT equipment, and a wide range of resources for Physical Education and Music.
- The principal fosters a culture of continuing development and improvement. He has overseen the implementation a range of successful new initiatives in teaching and learning, as well as in administration and management.
- School leadership encourages and facilitates the staff's continuing professional development (CPD). This has contributed to a good level of consistency in practice throughout the school, which has had a positive impact on pupils' learning and well-being. The teachers

demonstrate good working relationships, collaborating effectively to devise stimulating learning opportunities for pupils across and beyond the curriculum.

- There is good communication between the school and parents. The school sends regular informative newsletters to parents. There is an active parents' association in the school. The officers of the parents' association expressed satisfaction with the quality of education and support for pupils. In their questionnaire responses, parents agreed that the school is well run and that teaching is good.
- The parents organise several very successful school events throughout the year. To develop parents' role, however, it is recommended that the parents' association, and the wider parent body, be given a more active role in the formulation of school policy.
- 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 professional benefits for teachers, pupils and the teacher education institute.

5. THE QUALITY OF SCHOOL SELF-EVALUATION

- The quality of SSE is very good overall. Extensive work has been done on gathering and analysing data, as well as on setting targets for improvement. It is recommended, however, that the board of management record its discussions on SSE at its meetings and that parents' role in SSE be increased.

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, principal and staff of Scoil Pádraig Naofa wish to acknowledge this very positive report published by the Department of Education and Skills following the recent WSE-MML.

We are pleased that the report acknowledges and reflects the dedication and commitment of our whole school community in achieving and maintaining such high standards most notably in:

- Child Protection
- School accounts
- The quality of pupils' learning
- The quality of teaching
- The quality of support for pupils' well-being
- The quality of school management
- The quality of school self-evaluation

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 of Scoil Pádraig Naofa welcome the recommendations as outlined in the report and are in the process of implementing them.

- Activities and lessons will be differentiated more effectively to cater for the needs of individual pupils.
- The board of management has a plan in place to allow parents the opportunity to input/view/comment on draft policies prior to ratification.
- There will be feedback given at each board of management meeting on school self-evaluation and parents will be notified of same through the monthly newsletter.

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;