

An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna
Department of Education and Skills

Whole School Evaluation
Management, Leadership and Learning

REPORT

Ainm na scoile / School name	Kilmacanogue N S
Seoladh na scoile / School address	Kilmacanogue Bray Co Wicklow A98 D602
Uimhir rolla / Roll number	18365Q

Date of inspection: 26-11-2019



An Roinn Oideachais
agus Scileanna
Department of
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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 did not meet the requirements in relation to 1 above and therefore was not fully compliant with the checks undertaken. However, the school subsequently furnished evidence of compliance with these requirements.

Whole-School Evaluation – Management, Leadership and Learning

Dates of inspection	26-11-2019
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

Kilmacanogue National School is a rural, co-educational primary school operating under the patronage of the Catholic Archbishop of Dublin. School staffing includes an administrative principal, nine mainstream class teachers, three support teachers, and one part-time support teacher who is based in another school. There are 243 pupils enrolled and pupil attendance is very good.

SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

FINDINGS

- The quality of pupils' learning is very good; pupils present as interested and highly enthusiastic learners who work very well independently and collaboratively.
- Teaching is of a very high quality overall and very effective classroom management skills are in evidence.
- Pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN) are very well supported in their learning and the school is highly commended for introducing a wide range of initiatives at whole-school level to support these pupils; there is a need to regularly monitor the impact of these initiatives.
- Support for pupils' well-being is of a very good standard; an inclusive, nurturing atmosphere prevails throughout the school.
- The quality of leadership and management is very good; the principal is a highly effective leader who articulates a very clear vision for school development and oversees the provision of a positive, child-centred learning environment.
- Approaches to self-evaluation (SSE) are effective; while school leaders have been reflective and considered in their approach to the process, a strategic plan for school development should be devised to guide the future direction of the school.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- The organisation of support interventions should be regularly reviewed to ensure that the models of support used are commensurate with the level of pupil need across the school.
- School leaders should devise and monitor the implementation of a strategic plan to guide the future development of the school.

DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. THE QUALITY OF PUPILS' LEARNING

- Pupils' learning is very good. Pupils are interested and enthusiastic learners who work very well independently and collaboratively.
- Learning outcomes in English are very good. Pupils write very well across a broad range of topics. They are articulate and confident communicators. Overall reading attainment is very good although in a few instances, there is potential to extend reading fluency further.
- Pupils are attaining very well in numeracy; they engage productively in mental mathematics and problem-solving.
- Tá torthaí foghlama sa Ghaeilge go maith ar an iomlán, ach tá éagsúlacht le sonrú i gcaighdeán foghlama na ndaltaí. I ranganna áirithe, tá stór an-leathan de nathanna cainte agus raon foclóra ar eolas ag na daltaí. I roinnt ranganna eile, is gá saibhreas teanga na ndaltaí a fhorbairt a thuilleadh agus modhanna aistriúcháin a sheachaint.
Learning outcomes in Irish are good overall but there is noticeable variation in pupils' learning outcomes. In some classes, pupils have a very broad store of phrases and a knowledge of a broad range of vocabulary. In some other classes, there is a need to develop the richness of pupils' language further and to avoid translation methodologies.
- A very good emphasis is placed on the development of pupils' creativity. Pupils show an excellent understanding of a range of drama strategies. Pupils' creativity is developed through their work in Visual Arts, project work, Physical Education, and Social, Environmental and Scientific Education. While pupils clearly enjoy their activities in History, there were a few instances observed where pupils' learning would have benefited from more active learning experiences.

2. THE QUALITY OF TEACHING

- Teaching is very good overall and teachers demonstrate very effective classroom management skills. Almost all observed lessons were well structured and appropriately paced.
- Classrooms are well resourced and attractive with some notably effective displays evident which include teacher-designed charts, stimulating questions, and very high quality displays of pupils' learning.
- Sonraítear cleachtas den scoth i leith teagaisc na Gaeilge i roinnt bheag ranganna. Sna ranganna sin, déantar forbairt ar chumas labhartha na ndaltaí trí bhéim chórasach ar leathnú teanga agus ar struchtúr abairtí. B'fhiú an t-ardchleachtas seo a roinnt tríd an scoil.
Exemplary practice in relation to the teaching of Irish was observed in a few classes. In these classes, pupils' oral language skills were developed through a systematic emphasis on the expansion of language and the structuring of sentences. This excellent practice should be shared throughout the school.
- Assessment practices are effective. Worthwhile approaches to peer assessment are evident, although there is potential to develop these to ensure that pupils are afforded time to reflect upon and respond to feedback.
- Very effective support is provided for pupils with SEN and the Continuum of Support is implemented systematically. Notably, the school has recently researched and introduced a wide range of whole-school initiatives to support pupils with SEN. More consistent systems of review should be developed to ensure that the particular models of support used are commensurate with the level of pupil need across the school. In particular, in-class support models at infant level should be extended and further developed, with a view to sharing

expertise and optimising the potential and impact of these models. More formalised pre-testing and post-testing of interventions should be introduced to monitor the impact of initiatives on targeted pupils.

- Teachers' preparation is very effective overall. There is some variation in approaches to short-term planning in support settings; all short-term planning in these settings should be prepared on a weekly basis in order to better support and monitor pupils' incremental learning. In some instances, learning targets documented in pupils' Support Plans are not sufficiently specific and measurable. Support teachers should ensure that in all cases targets in Support Plans are specific, measurable and regularly reviewed.

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

- Support for pupils' well-being is very good and is enhanced through the provision of a wide range of in-school and after-school activities.
- Pupils' holistic development is prioritised by the school and an inclusive, calm and nurturing school climate prevails. In Inspectorate questionnaires, almost all pupils reported that they like this school and that this is a good school. Most parents report that there is a good atmosphere in the school, they feel welcome in the school and that overall, they are happy with the school.

4. THE QUALITY OF LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

- The quality of leadership and management is very good. In Inspectorate questionnaires, all teachers and almost all parents reported that the school is well run.
- The board of management provides very effective support to the school and has overseen a significant refurbishment of the building and grounds. As a next step, the board is advised to issue an annual report on its work to the parent body.
- The principal's leadership is highly effective and notably successful in creating a well-resourced, well-run and child-centred learning environment. The principal articulates a very clear vision for school development and has successfully progressed a number of key priority areas for whole-school improvement.
- The recently established in-school leadership team functions very effectively, providing very positive support to the principal. Regular, formal meetings of the in-school leadership team should now be commenced to enhance the functioning of the team and guide the strategic development of the school.
- Communication practices are well established and are progressed through the use of regular staff meetings, informative newsletters and assemblies.
- The parents' association works very effectively to promote high-quality partnerships between home and school
- The school facilitates the placement of student teachers from initial teacher education (ITE) school placement programmes; such engagement in ITE programmes is welcome.

5. THE QUALITY OF SCHOOL SELF-EVALUATION

- Good quality SSE is evident. School leaders have been focused in their approach to the process and an improvement plan is in place which has been informed by consultation with staff.

- While whole-school priorities for improvement have been identified, there is scope to extend the evidence base for future areas for development by using existing assessment data and ensuring that the perspectives of all stakeholders are incorporated, as appropriate. School leaders are very well-placed to monitor the implementation of the process.

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

On behalf of the whole school community, the Board of Management of Kilmacanogue National School would like to acknowledge the excellent findings outlined in the recent WSE-MLL Report, highlighting the inclusive, calm, welcoming and nurturing climate of the school and above all the prioritisation of the holistic well-being of all the children.

The BOM appreciates the very high quality of teaching in evidence from the very well prepared teachers as highlighted in the report with, for instance, exemplary practice in relation to the teaching of Irish observed in a few classes as well as the teachers' very effective classroom management skills demonstrated in their well-resourced, attractive classrooms, along with the highly commended support provided by the SEN team.

The BOM also appreciates the acknowledgement in the report of the highly effective leadership provided by the Principal and her well-articulated vision for the development of the school as well as the very effective work of the Parents' Association in promoting high quality partnerships between home and school.

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

Kilmacanogue National School welcomes the recommendations of the inspection and has already started monitoring, through pre and post assessment strategies, the impact of the wide range of initiatives which had been introduced at whole school level supporting pupils with SEN.

The effective self-evaluation approaches which had focused on Literacy and Comprehension specifically, have already been extended to include Gaeilge Neamhfhoirmiúil as well as Numeracy. Kilmacanogue National School will utilise existing data already collected as well as gather more data in the future and will incorporate the perspectives of all the stakeholders to further extend the evidence base in selecting areas for any future development.

The effective assessment practices of teachers are being further developed at the moment to ensure that pupils are given time to reflect upon and respond to feedback and the learning targets documented in some pupils' Support Plans will be more specific, measurable and reviewed regularly.

Maidir le Gaeilge, tá feabhas déanta cheana féin ar leibhéal foclóra agus an chomhrá neamhfhoirmiúil a leathnú ar fud na scoile. With regards to Irish, improvement has already taken place in extending the level of vocabulary and informal conversation throughout the school.