

**An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna**  
**Department of Education and Skills**

**Whole School Evaluation**  
**Management, Leadership and Learning**

**REPORT**

<b>Ainm na scoile / School name</b>	Our Lady's Boys' National School
<b>Seoladh na scoile / School address</b>	Broadford Rise Ballinteer Dublin 16
<b>Uimhir rolla / Roll number</b>	19314E

**Date of inspection: 06-12-2018**



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agus Scileanna  
Department of  
Education and Skills

## **WHAT IS WHOLE- 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.

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.

## **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.

## **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

<b>Dates of inspection</b>	06-12-2018
<b>Inspection activities undertaken</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Meetings with principal and in-school leadership team</li><li>• Meeting with representatives of the board of management</li><li>• Meeting with parent representatives</li><li>• Meeting with teachers</li><li>• Review of relevant documents</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Analysis of parent, pupil and teacher questionnaires</li><li>• Observation of teaching and learning</li><li>• Examination of pupils' work</li><li>• Interaction with pupils</li><li>• Feedback to principal, deputy principal and teachers, and to parent and board of management representatives</li></ul>

### CONTEXT

Our Lady's BNS caters for 284 pupils and is under the patronage of the Catholic Archbishop of Dublin. It provides two classes for pupils with autistic spectrum disorder (ASD). There are eleven mainstream classroom teachers and six special education teachers. Overall, the attendance of the pupils enrolled is very good.

### SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

#### FINDINGS

- A welcoming atmosphere exists and commitment to inclusion and equality of opportunity for pupils is fostered throughout the school.
- The overall learning achievement of pupils, including pupils with special educational needs (SEN) is good; scope exists to provide leadership in curricular planning and in SEN.
- The quality of teaching is competent overall; content planning and assessment practices need further consistency.
- The leadership and management of the school is satisfactory; there is a lack of compliance in the development and implementation of some school policies.
- While the overall support for pupils' well-being is good, their participation levels and interactions among some pupils need improvement.
- An appropriate start has been made to re-engage with the process of school self-evaluation.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

- The principal should ensure that there is a collaborative process in place to review curriculum plans and the implementation of agreed programmes of work should be led, monitored and evaluated regularly.
- Co-ordination should be provided for SEN to ensure consistency in practice across all settings.
- The outcomes of assessments should be analysed more rigorously to inform teachers' individual and collective practices.
- In order to improve respectful interaction among pupils and to raise levels of their participation in and contribution to their learning, pupils should be facilitated to work collaboratively on challenging and meaningful tasks.
- The board should ensure that structures and processes are established to verify that all school policies are in line with Department guidelines and are implemented consistently.

## DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 1. THE QUALITY OF PUPILS' LEARNING

- The overall learning achievements of pupils, including pupils with SEN are good. In general, pupils engaged well in discussions about their learning and were confident in recalling content taught across the curriculum. Learning achievements for most pupils in Mathematics and English are good. Pupils demonstrate clear understanding of mathematical procedures. In English, pupils read confidently at their instructional level. Tá na daltaí in ann roinnt ceisteanna a fhreagairt sa Ghaeilge agus tá roinnt abairtí ar eolas acu. *Pupils are able to answer some questions in Irish and they have learned some sentences.*
- Learning experiences such as maths and science weeks and *seachtain na Gaeilge* are praiseworthy. Pupils' listening skills and active engagement during teaching and learning ranges significantly from very good to fair. In lessons where well-planned, well-resourced and differentiated tasks were provided, better levels of active, purposeful pupil participation were evident. In order to improve interactions among pupils and to raise levels of participation in and contribution to their learning, pupils should be facilitated to work collaboratively on challenging and meaningful tasks.

### 2. THE QUALITY OF TEACHING

- The quality of teaching in mainstream classes and SEN settings is competent overall. During the evaluation, teaching ranged from satisfactory to very good. All teachers are conscientious in planning for their lessons. Where practice was best, lessons were well structured with specific learning intentions, content was effectively differentiated and a variety of teaching methodologies were used to actively engage pupils. Leadership should ensure that these high quality practices are implemented consistently across the school.
- Teaching for pupils with additional needs in ASD class settings and support settings is provided in a warm and affirming manner with some highly effective integration and behaviour management practices in place. Commendably, the continuum of support has been introduced on a whole-school basis and the introduction of in-class support to address pupils' learning needs is a positive development in some classes. Where highly effective teaching was observed, it was characterised by well-planned programmes of work, with measurable targets, clear learning outcomes and records of pupils' progress. Programmes of work for all support should be underpinned by specific learning targets, which are measurable and achievable, that arise from the pupils' identified priority learning needs. Effective weekly planning should support the implementation of such programmes. It is recommended that co-ordination be provided to ensure that these practices are across all settings.
- The decision to withdraw a class for Mathematics and English does not focus adequately on the specific needs of the pupils requiring support. The practice of whole-class withdrawal should be discontinued in order to prioritise support for pupils most in need.
- Overall, the quality of assessment is satisfactory. While individual teachers use an appropriate range of assessment strategies there is little consistency in terms of overall practice. The school uses the outcomes of standardised tests to establish the support needs of pupils. In order to achieve consistency throughout the school, effective whole-school approaches to track pupils' progress should be implemented and the outcomes of assessments should be analysed more rigorously to inform teachers' individual and collective practices.

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

- The overall quality of support for pupils' well-being is good. The school provides a wide range of extra-curricular activities including sport, science, music and drama. In their responses to

questionnaires, almost all pupils agree that they feel safe in their classes and the playground and have learned about different kinds of bullying.

- There is a culture of professional collaboration between the teachers and other external professionals. The school actively engages with recommendations made from relevant agencies to support needs of individual pupils. Very strong emphasis is placed on the inclusion of all pupils.
- In response to the Inspectorate questionnaires, a significant minority of pupils surveyed agreed that they have a say in how things are done in the school. The school plan to reengage with the Green Schools Programme and hope to set up a student council. This will promote and facilitate the development of pupil voice and pupil leadership.
- Classroom management styles and approaches to differentiated learning vary across the school. Commendably, the review of the code of behaviour has been identified by the school as a priority area and two teachers are attending Incredible Years training. There is a need to develop a consistent whole-school approach to behaviour management with particular emphasis placed on respectful interaction among pupils and positive classroom management strategies.

#### **4. THE QUALITY OF LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

- The overall quality of leadership and management is satisfactory. A welcoming atmosphere exists and commitment to inclusion and equality of opportunity for pupils is fostered throughout the school. The board supports the work of the school, meets regularly and minutes of meetings are recorded. Some school policies are not in line with the Department guidelines others are not consistently implemented. Attention should be given to anti-bullying, deployment of special education posts, supervision and the code of behaviour. The board should ensure that structures and processes are established to verify that all school policies are in line with Department guidelines and are implemented consistently.
- While the school accounts for this current year have recently being certified, accounting practices are not clear since 2013. It is recommended that the school accounts be certified annually from now on, in accordance with the Education Act (1998).
- The principal is supported by an enthusiastic in-school management (ISM) team. They are committed to the school and are commended for building and maintaining open relationships with parents and staff, facilitating Initial Teacher Education school placement, supporting teachers to engage in professional development and building teaching and learning resources. In order to bring about greater cohesion and improvement in teaching and learning, the principal and ISM team should provide stronger instructional leadership.
- While the school engages in whole-school curriculum planning there is a lack of consistency in agreed content, teaching approaches and tracking of pupils' progress as they move from class to class. Whole-school curriculum plans should be reviewed to provide clearer guidance to teachers on whole-school practices and the implementation of agreed programmes of work should be led, monitored and evaluated regularly.
- Parents are supportive of the work of the school and contribute to many aspects of school life. While communication from the school to the home is good, there is scope to include parents' views as part of the school's decision making process and policy development.

#### **5. THE QUALITY OF SCHOOL SELF-EVALUATION**

- An appropriate start has been made to re-engage with the process of school self-evaluation. The school has identified a focus and made positive steps to engage parents and pupils in the

process. To ensure that this process effectively facilitates school improvement, the school should ensure that structures and processes are established to facilitate teachers to collaborate on whole-school practices that will support continuity and progression. When improvement plans are agreed their implementation should be led, monitored and evaluated regularly.

- Given the dedication of the staff and their openness to school improvement, there is good capacity for the school to develop further. Commitment to distributed leadership and developing the leadership capacity among staff to lead learning will be a key priority for school improvement.

# **Appendix**

**SCHOOL RESPONSE TO THE REPORT**

**Submitted by the Board of Management**

## **Part A: Observations on the content of the inspection report**

We welcome the positive findings and recommendations of the WSE MLL.

We are delighted that the welcoming inclusive atmosphere of our school is recognised and that the emphasis on pupils' well-being is noted in the report. The Board is also pleased that the report acknowledges;

- Our highly effective integration and behaviour management strategies
- That the Continuum of Support has been introduced on a whole school basis
- The recognition of highly effective teaching characterised by well-planned programmes of work
- The school's commendable decision to review the Code of Behaviour as a priority area. The Board are happy that this is an ongoing process, which will involve all members of the school community in its updating and redrafting.

## **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 the staff of Our Lady's Boys N.S. Ballinteer accept the findings of the report and aim to work on the recommendations in the following way:

- In order to ensure consistency in practice in the area of SEN, all planning and review templates are in the process of being standardised. The SEN policy is being reviewed and updated to comply with DES and legislative requirements.
- Teacher planning is standardised and shared electronically to ensure consistency of pedagogic approach.
- We acknowledge the importance of respectful interactions amongst pupils and appreciate this is a challenge for all schools in a changed social and technological environment.
- Due attention has been given by the Board of Management to the school's anti-bullying policy and are happy that it complies with DES and legislative guidelines.
- The Board can verify that all school accounts from 2013 have been certified in accordance with the Education Act (1998). These were already verified but were unavailable at the time of the inspection.
- The school has successfully set up a Student's Council since the evaluation took place.
- On the need for improved instructional leadership by ISM Team we wish to point out that these roles were only very recently restored following drastic cut-backs in this vital area under FEMPI legislation passed in 2009.
- The Board wishes to state that the decision to withdraw a class of ten Junior Infant children for Maths and English has discontinued.

## 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
<b>Very Good</b>	<b>Very good</b> 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 <b>outstanding</b> 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
<b>Good</b>	<b>Good</b> 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
<b>Satisfactory</b>	<b>Satisfactory</b> 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
<b>Fair</b>	<b>Fair</b> 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
<b>Weak</b>	<b>Weak</b> 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;