

**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>	Scoil Náisiúnta Naomh Aonghus
<b>Seoladh na scoile / School address</b>	Bridgend Lifford County Donegal
<b>Uimhir rolla / Roll number</b>	19359D

**Date of inspection: 13-03-2019**



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**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 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

<b>Dates of inspection</b>	13-03-2019
<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 and pupil 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>

### SCHOOL CONTEXT

Scoil Náisiúnta Naomh Aonghus is a rural co-educational school under the patronage of the Roman Catholic Bishop of Derry. The teaching staff comprises an administrative principal teacher, eight mainstream class teachers and four special education teachers, one of whom is shared with another school. There are 215 pupils enrolled and while the overall attendance patterns are very good, there is a small minority of pupils who have poor attendance. The school participates in the School Completion Programme (SCP) which provides support to young people identified to be most at risk of early school leaving.

### SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

#### FINDINGS

- The overall learning achievements of pupils are good; pupils have limited opportunities to work collaboratively in a purposeful manner during lessons.
- The quality of teaching observed, including the teaching of pupils with special educational needs (SEN) is effective; the teaching approaches used for Irish do not sufficiently progress pupils' oral language skills.
- The overall quality of assessment is good; limited use is made of the analysis of assessment data to support the provision of appropriately differentiated learning experiences for all pupils.
- The standard of support for pupils' wellbeing is good; teachers demonstrate a genuine commitment to the holistic development of each pupil.
- School leadership and management are effective; the principal and in-school management team actively promote a culture of collaboration and improvement.
- The quality of school self-evaluation (SSE) is good; the school has engaged successfully in the SSE process and there is evidence that agreed targets and actions are having a positive impact on teaching and learning in classrooms.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

- Teachers should plan for and implement purposeful pupil discussion and collaboration during lessons.
- A whole-school approach to the development of pupils' oral language skills in Irish should be agreed and implemented.
- Teachers should make greater use of the analysis of information resulting from assessment to provide more appropriately differentiated learning experiences for all pupils.

## DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 1. THE QUALITY OF PUPILS' LEARNING

- The quality of pupils' learning is good. Pupils demonstrate an enquiring attitude towards their learning activities. The overall attainment of pupils is improving in accordance with the *Primary School Curriculum*. Most pupils can understand and explain the purpose of their learning tasks during lessons. In the Inspectorate questionnaires, the majority of pupils indicate that they enjoy their lessons and learning, and almost all parents agree that their child is doing well in school.
- Pupils demonstrate high levels of interest and participation in their learning overall. They are able to work independently during their various reading and mathematics activities. Very high quality collaboration and meaningful discussion was observed among senior class pupils during lessons in Irish and Mathematics. There is scope for pupils in each class to engage with more consistent and meaningful collaborative experiences during lessons.
- Pupils display a willingness to ask questions and suggest possible answers very confidently during some lessons. They respond well to teachers' constructive feedback. Pupils can transfer and apply skills learned to real-life and other subjects of the curriculum. They have completed cross-curricular project work to a very high standard in Visual Arts, English and Social, Environmental and Scientific Education.
- Pupils read with fluency and expression and display an enthusiasm for reading books across various genres. They have access to a wide range of appropriately challenging, relevant and interesting texts in English and a developing range of contemporary reading resources in the Irish language.
- Pupils in junior classrooms are provided with regular play-based opportunities through *Aistear: The Early Childhood Curriculum Framework*. They use a wide range of concrete learning resources and they actively engage in many theme-based and structured learning activities. While valuable emphasis is placed on active and playful learning experiences for junior pupils, opportunities for more creative and child-led experiences during this time would be worthwhile.

### 2. THE QUALITY OF TEACHING

- The overall quality of teaching, including the teaching of pupils with SEN, is good. Teachers use a range of questioning techniques effectively for a variety of purposes including stimulating substantial pupil responses and facilitating deeper engagement with lesson content. In the Inspectorate questionnaires, almost all parents agreed that teaching is good in the school and almost all pupils agreed that their teacher explains things clearly to them.
- The quality of individual teachers' planning is good. Teachers organise appropriate planning and preparation for teaching. They identify and prepare in advance resources suitable for the specific learning objectives of each lesson. Some teachers use digital learning technologies (DLT) very competently as a teaching resource during lessons. Limited opportunities are provided for pupils to engage with DLT as a learning tool during lessons. Teachers should plan for more consistent opportunities for pupils to engage with DLT as a learning resource during lessons.
- The quality of teachers' collaborative approaches is very good. Teachers engage regularly with continuing professional development which is aligned very appropriately with identified school priorities. Teachers discuss collective endeavours, such as in-class support targeting

accelerated pupil progress in literacy and numeracy, at staff meetings and plan collaboratively for the implementation of school initiatives.

- The quality of assessment is good overall; however, there are aspects that require improvement. Teachers use a range of summative and formative assessments in ascertaining pupil achievement. At present there is considerable variance by all teachers in the meaningful use of the generated assessment data. While a small number of teachers use assessment-for-learning strategies very successfully during lessons; there is significant scope to use the analysis of assessment results in developing more appropriately challenging learning experiences for all pupils.
- Tá cáilíocht an teagaisc sa Ghaeilge go maith ar an iomlán. Sa chleachtas a bhí go han-mhaith rinne an múinteoir réamh-eolas na ndaltaí a spreagadh, bhí ard-ionchais léirithe chun an sprioctheanga a úsáid, bhí dearcadh dearfach na ndaltaí a chothú, bhí cumarsáid réalaíoch i gcomhthéacs na ndaltaí forbartha agus soláthar de dhúshlán oiriúnach do gach leibhéal cumais. Ba chóir an dea-chleachtas seo a chur i bhfeidhm i ngach rang agus níos mó béime ar scileanna chumarsáide na ndaltaí a neartú.

*The quality of teaching of Irish is good overall. During the very good practice observed, the teacher elicited pupils' prior knowledge, high expectations were outlined regarding the use of the target language, pupils' positive dispositions were enhanced, realistic communication using pupils' context and appropriate challenge for all levels of ability was provided. This very good practice should be implemented on a more consistent basis in every class with increased emphasis on the development of pupils' communication skills.*

- Support for pupils with SEN is good. The special education team has made a commendable and concerted effort in implementing the *Continuum of Support*. In-class support and early intervention strategies in literacy and numeracy have been established and they are implemented successfully. The present system of oversight in relation to the provision of support has scope for development. Going forward, there is need to ensure that pupils with the greatest need receive the highest level of support and that co-teaching approaches are planned for so as to align more closely with the priority learning needs of pupils with SEN in all classes.

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

- The quality of support for pupils', including pupils with SEN is good. The principal and staff demonstrate a genuine commitment to the holistic development of each pupil. Very respectful interactions between teachers and pupils, and pupils and their peers are evident. The school facilitates many worthwhile initiatives in supporting the wellbeing of pupils and the school community.
- In Inspectorate questionnaires almost all parents agreed that there is a good atmosphere in the school and that their child is safe and well looked after therein. Almost all pupils agreed that their teacher listens to them and pays attention to what they say and that there are clear rules against hurting others.
- Pupils have many opportunities to develop leadership capacity in the school through engagement with various school-based and national initiatives such as physical activity and environmental care programmes. Pupil voice is actively sought, valued and incorporated into worthwhile school improvements, for example the recent construction of a school running track. However, formalised procedures regarding the establishment and management of a pupil council should be agreed in supporting the development of pupil voice in the school.

- Very productive relationships have been established and maintained with other schools and the local community. There are very effective transition strategies in place in support of new pupils and pupils who are transferring to post-primary schools.

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

- The overall quality of leadership and management is good. The principal and in-school management team work competently to promote an effective learning culture. They have high expectations for pupils and lead staff successfully in striving for improved outcomes. The principal in collaboration with other leaders in the school manages and oversees the smooth day-to-day running of the school. He encourages teachers to take on leadership roles and to lead learning in curriculum areas.
- The board of management is very supportive of teachers' ongoing professional development and collective practice which enriches pupils' learning in a wide range of areas.
- The ISM team undertakes a wide range of duties with diligence with very appropriate duties and responsibilities traversing curricular, organisational and pastoral priorities.
- The management of communications and relations with parents and the school community is good. A regular system of information giving is supported through the use of the school website, social media, notes, phone calls and text messages. The parents' association provides very good support to the school. A few parents disagreed in the Inspectorate questionnaires that they had been informed of the details of the Relationships and Sexuality policy of the school. While the school shares policies with parents as they have been reviewed, parental involvement should be promoted in policy development and procedure.
- The school reported that it regularly provides placements for student teachers. Such engagement in initial teacher education programmes is welcome and is included among the standards in the Teaching Council's *Code of Professional Conduct for Teachers* as it can provide valuable professional benefits for teachers, student teachers, pupils and the teacher education institution.

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

- The quality of SSE is good. While it is in the early stages of development in the school, those leading SSE engage with it as a structured process with a focus on improving teaching and learning. The school has identified the need to improve pupil attainment in Irish. Suitable evidence gathering has taken place to support the development of targets such as pupil, parent and teacher surveys as well as standardised assessments. Current targets are focused on the development of teaching and learning practices leading to improved outcomes in Irish; there is need to refine the targets so that progress can be tracked and monitored. There are some effective strategies and targets in place to promote pupil attendance, ongoing monitoring procedures require development to support improved outcomes in this area.
- The school's capacity to engage with school improvement is very good due to the enthusiasm, collaborative culture, commitment and expertise of management and teachers.

# **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 Scoil Náisiúnta Naomh Aengus is very pleased with this positive report which highlights the commitment and dedication of the staff and of the board to our school. The board would like to particularly commend:

- Both children and parent surveys were overwhelmingly positive. Both cohorts agree that great care is given to the safety and care needs of the children. They feel welcome, agree and enjoy the good atmosphere in the school.
- Children have many opportunities to develop leadership capacity.
- That all Child Protection Procedures are adhered to.
- Very productive relationships between the local community and the school.
- Very high quality of collaboration and meaningful discussion in our core subjects.
- Cross curricular projects are of a very high standard.
- Children read with fluency and expression.
- The SEN team is implementing the *Continuum of Support* which provides detailed plans, careful reviews and meaningful targets for children in need of support.
- There is a very good collaborative approach in regards to planning, engaging in continuous professional development and introducing new school initiatives.

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

Evaluation, prioritising, implementing and reflection are key components to how we make Scoil Náisiúnta Naomh Aengus a better place for all.

The board was delighted to hear that notice was paid to the very good capacity of the school to engage with school development and that this was down to the enthusiasm, collaborative culture, commitment and expertise of management and teachers.

The Board of Management welcomes the recommendations and wishes to inform the inspectorate of the following:

*Teachers' should plan for and implement purposeful pupil discussion and collaboration during lessons.*

Teachers will further plan for purposeful pupil discussion and collaboration and this will be evident in teaching methodologies.

*A whole-school approach to the development of pupils' oral language skills in Irish should be agreed and implemented.*

The school has identified this already in its School Self-Evaluation (SSE) and plans to continue its work in this area. Professional Development Support for Teachers (PDST) support has been sought and we hope that this will provide us with direction in further developing our SSE in developing pupil oral language skills in Irish.

*Teachers should make greater use of the analysis of information resulting from assessment to provide more appropriately differentiated learning experiences for all pupils.*

Further examination of summative and formative assessments will take place and supplementary differentiation will take place to enhance all children's learning needs.



## 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 <b>very good</b> 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;