

An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna
Department of Education and Skills

Whole School Evaluation
Management, Leadership and Learning

REPORT

Ainm na scoile / School name	Wexford Educate Together National School
Seoladh na scoile / School address	Whitemill Clonard Wexford
Uimhir rolla / Roll number	20333P

Date of inspection: 06-02-2019



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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 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.

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	06-02-2019
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

Wexford Educate Together NS is a ten-teacher, co-educational, vertical primary school under the patronage of Educate Together. It opened in 2008 and is currently located in a rented property as it awaits a permanent school building. At the time of the evaluation, there were 168 pupils, many from diverse backgrounds, enrolled in the school, including pupils for whom English is an additional language.

SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

FINDINGS

- The overall learning achievements of the pupils are commendable with the pupils displaying a lively interest in, and curiosity for learning.
- The overall quality of teaching in the school is good with some very good practice also observed.
- There is an explicit focus in some classes on the provision of engaging, collaborative and differentiated learning experiences for the pupils; there is scope to develop more consistent approaches to differentiation and active learning throughout the school.
- The quality of support for pupils' well-being is of a very high standard with the school effectively creating a warm and holistic learning experience for the pupils.
- The quality of leadership and management is very good with all the partners sharing a clear vision for the school and its future.
- The school has engaged very positively with school self-evaluation (SSE).

RECOMMENDATIONS

In order to optimise pupils' learning, further attention should be paid by teachers to differentiation, based on assessment data, lesson structure and the use by all teachers of high quality, active and engaging methodologies.

DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. THE QUALITY OF PUPILS' LEARNING

- The overall learning achievements of the pupils are commendable with the pupils displaying a lively interest in and curiosity for learning. In the questionnaire responses most pupils reported that they enjoy their lessons and learning and that they are doing well at reading.
- *Aistear: the Early Childhood Curriculum Framework* is a strong feature of the work of the school and is implemented very successfully, ensuring valuable focus on early oral language development, self-directed play and the development of pupils' social skills.
- In Mathematics, pupils demonstrate a good understanding of key mathematical concepts and procedures. The school has made very good progress, as part of the SSE process, on improving pupils' approaches to problem solving and is now focusing on measures. The school has also identified number as an area to focus on and is implementing strategies to support pupils' learning of number. Building on this good work, mathematical language should also be prioritised across the school.
- In English, pupils' reading skills are developed systematically. Literacy Lift-Off is implemented successfully and there is very good use of graded reading texts. Novels are a feature of the work with middle and senior classes and pupils read well with appropriate fluency. A very effective whole-school approach to the teaching of writing is in place and pupils can write effectively in a variety of genres. Pupils are afforded frequent opportunities to self-assess and edit their work.
- Cothaítear dearcadh dearfach i leith na Gaeilge. Is maith an rud é go bhfuil an Ghaeilge roghnaithe don triú réimse d'fhéinmheastóireacht scoile agus dá bharr sin go bhfuil an scoil ag chur an Ghaeilge chun cinn go neamhfhoirmiúil i saol na scoile. Cé go bhfuil caighdeán maith tuisceana bainte amach ag na daltaí, labhraíonn roinnt mhaith díobh gan muinín. Chun muinín na ndaltaí a fhorbairt i nGaeilge labhartha, ba chóir scileanna na ndaltaí a fhorbairt go céimniúil, agus iad a daingniú mar chuid de gach ceacht Gaeilge.
A positive attitude to the Irish language is promoted. The selection of Irish as the third area for school self-evaluation (SSE) is welcomed and as a result the school is promoting Irish incidentally in the life of the school. While pupils have a good level of understanding, many speak with a lack of confidence. To develop the pupils' confidence in spoken Irish, the development of pupils' skills should be developed incrementally, and reinforced as part of each Irish lesson.
- Pupils engage in a rich range of learning experiences. A broad range of good quality work in the Visual Arts is displayed and project work is also promoted across the school. The school participates in a number of initiatives, including the Green Schools and Amber Flag programmes, STEAM week and a variety of arts, music and sporting activities.

2. THE QUALITY OF TEACHING

- The overall quality of teaching in the school is good, with some very good practice also observed. Hard working teachers demonstrate high levels of commitment to the pupils in their care. They have enthusiastically and successfully embraced a wide range of new teaching and learning initiatives, including station teaching for literacy and numeracy. Stimulating learning environments support current learning priorities and celebrate pupils' achievements. Most pupils report that the teachers explain things clearly, while almost all parents consider that teaching is good in the school.
- Where practice is most effective there is an explicit focus on the teaching of specific skills and the provision of engaging, collaborative and differentiated, learning experiences for pupils. In these lessons, the regular and effective consolidation of learning is strongly in evidence. In order to optimise pupils' learning, further attention should be paid by teachers to differentiation, lesson structure and the consistent use by all teachers of high quality, active and engaging methodologies.
- All teachers produce long and short-term plans and monthly progress reports. Collaborative approaches are in evidence in the development of teachers planning.
- The teachers draw on a suitable range of assessment tools to monitor individual pupil progress with a wide range of diagnostic and screening tests being used to identify pupils who require additional support. Assessment for learning is also being promoted. There needs to be further consideration of

how this assessment data can be utilised, to cater for the range of abilities, within the classroom contexts.

- Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) benefit from the inclusive atmosphere in the school. Teachers are highly committed, flexible practitioners who work hard to support and challenge the pupils in their care. Provision is delivered in a very affirming manner and pupils engage meaningfully in activities that address their needs.

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

- The quality of support for pupils' well-being is of a very high standard with the school effectively creating a warm and holistic learning experience for the pupils. The school is highly inclusive and the care of pupils is prioritised. While the building is challenging as a learning environment all the partners work collaboratively to ensure that it is attractively maintained and that it is a positive environment. In questionnaire responses almost all parents agreed that their children feel safe and well looked after in the school and that they are treated fairly and respectfully.
- The pupil voice is supported effectively through the student council. The council initiates and leads various projects based on feedback from the pupils in the school. Meetings are arranged between the student council and the Parents' Association and it is also proposed that the student council will meet presently with the board.
- Very good communication exists between home and school and a strong sense of community is evident. The Parents' Association are involved in many areas of school life including fundraising and helping out with school activities. Parents are welcomed into the school to participate in literacy and numeracy activities and to share their expertise and experiences. Parents are also consulted as part of policy development. Almost all parents reported that there is a good atmosphere in the school and that they feel welcome.

4. THE QUALITY OF LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

- The quality of leadership and management is very good. The board of management is very supportive of the school and together with the principal and staff has a clear vision for the school and its future. It is a valuable source of advice and guidance with all the members sharing their expertise to ensure the success and development of the school.
- The principal's role in leading the growth of the school since it was established in 2008 is very good. She purposefully encourages and supports innovation in teaching and learning. She is highly committed to ensuring that pupils experience a happy and positive learning environment. She ensures that leadership is distributed and that all teachers can adopt leadership roles. She is ably supported by the in-school management (ISM) team who carry out a range of duties conscientiously. These duties are regularly reviewed and are based on the current priorities of the school. Regular meetings of the ISM team ensure that the school is well run and efficient. Teachers are also empowered to reflect on their practice, collaborate and share their expertise.
- Well-considered organisational plans guide the smooth running of the school and whole-school curriculum plans which are contextualised to the school guide the implementation of the curriculum. These plans and policies are reviewed systematically.
- A special education teacher is currently deployed as a class teacher in the school. While the board have outlined their reasons for allocating a special education teacher as a class teacher, citing the very challenging and difficult school environment and their concern for the health and safety of the pupils, the deployment of the teacher in this capacity is not in accordance with Circular 0013/2017. School management should ensure that all teaching posts allocated for special education are deployed appropriately.
- The school reported that it regularly provides placements for student teachers.

5. THE QUALITY OF SCHOOL SELF-EVALUATION

- The school has engaged very positively with school self-evaluation (SSE). It has reviewed its literacy and numeracy plans and noted that as a result of the interventions pupils' learning outcomes have

improved. These plans have now been updated with new targets set. The development of pupils' informal Irish is the third area of focus and targets and actions have been agreed. Overall there is very good capacity in the school to promote a culture of improvement in teaching and learning.

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

The report is thorough and clear and is a fair reflection of our school. It clearly outlines the strengths and areas for development for our school. The report is reflective of the feedback meeting conducted by the inspectors which was a valuable learning experience for all of the staff. All staff members felt that their efforts were acknowledged and appreciated. We are pleased that the inspection team recognised the quality of our teaching and the support for our pupils and staff in terms of wellbeing. There was an overall sense of positivity surrounding the inspection.

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

Recommendation: In order to optimise pupils' learning, further attention should be paid by teachers to differentiation, based on assessment data, lesson structure and the use by all teachers of high quality, active and engaging methodologies.

- The school has established core subject groups who, in conjunction with their subject plan will analyse data on a whole school level. This information will be shared in staff meetings with PD provided related to the area of the curriculum and/or need of the class group.
- A whole school approach to differentiation will be examined with support from relevant external agencies and drawing upon teachers' own expertise, particularly teachers who do this well.
- Teachers will trial and implement practical differentiation strategies within their classes, monitoring the impact of these and then sharing this with the wider team to ensure inclusion for all pupils.
- In order to develop a clear understanding of what constitutes a very good lesson, teachers will work in their core subject teams, devising a sample lesson plan/structure and include a bank of activities/strategies that can be used. All subsequent lessons should follow this structure, choosing strategies from a bank that best suit their class needs.
- Planning documents will be altered to include further details of differentiation for specific groups/students which are informed by all available data on the class/individual.
- Learning objectives will be shared with pupils at the beginning of the lesson to ensure that students are clear as to purpose of their learning.
- Teachers will engage in effective AfL strategies and approaches throughout lessons — each teacher will trial at least one AfL strategy in Term 3 and this will be added to the aforementioned resource bank.