

**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 Chroí Naofa
<b>Seoladh na scoile / School address</b>	Rochfortbridge Co. Westmeath
<b>Uimhir rolla / Roll number</b>	20439I

**Date of inspection: 02-10-2019**



---

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 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

<b>Dates of inspection</b>	02-10-2019
<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, 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 teachers and board of management representative</li></ul>

### SCHOOL CONTEXT

Scoil Chroí Naofa National School is a co-educational primary school located in Rochfortbridge, County Westmeath. The original boys' and girls' schools amalgamated in 2013. Scoil Chroí Naofa operates under the patronage of the Catholic Bishop of Meath. It has an administrative principal, nine mainstream class teachers and four special education teachers. At the time of the evaluation there were 244 pupils enrolled in the school. The attendance levels of the majority of pupils are good. While there are established procedures to monitor attendance, more robust structures need to be put in place to improve the attendance of a small number of pupils for whom attendance is poor.

### SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

#### FINDINGS

- The overall quality of pupils' learning is good; there is insufficient development of subject-specific language and discrete oral language skills in English and Irish lessons.
- The overall quality of teaching is good and although all teachers gather assessment data on their pupils, it does not impact on differentiated learning outcomes for all pupils.
- There is scope to improve how support for pupils with special educational needs (SEN) is organised and planned.
- The overall quality of leadership and management is very effective; the principal fosters a collaborative school culture.
- The overall quality of support for pupils' well-being is a significant strength in the school.
- The overall quality of School Self- Evaluation (SSE) is good.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

- Pupils' oral language skills in both English and Irish should now be developed further at whole-school level with discrete oral language skills explicitly planned for and taught in all classes.
- Teachers should analyse assessment data to guide the differentiation of teaching and learning, to track the progression of learning and to help pupils develop strategies to improve their own work.
- Programmes of learning for pupils with SEN should be underpinned by weekly planning that incorporates specific, measurable and achievable learning targets that address pupils' priority learning needs.

## DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 1. THE QUALITY OF PUPILS' LEARNING

- The quality of pupils' learning is good. Pupils enjoy their learning and are motivated to learn. Teachers use a variety of effective questions to promote engagement in learning. Most lessons observed were well structured and paced. While there was good use of pair work in many lessons, pupils' learning would benefit from the use of a wider range of active teaching methodologies and opportunities to work collaboratively on differentiated tasks. Some learning experiences lacked appropriate challenge and did not successfully develop pupils' skills and knowledge. There is a need for teachers to create opportunities for pupils to be more active in their learning and to challenge and support all learners more effectively.
- *Aistear: the Early Childhood Curriculum Framework* has been successfully implemented in the infant classrooms. Through play-based methodologies, collaborative learning and social interactions are nurtured and developed as pupils learn purposefully through play and interactive activities. There is scope to develop language learning more comprehensively through the use of these play-based learning methodologies. While in some settings teachers create opportunities for the pupils to engage in oral language activities, discrete oral language should be planned for explicitly, with vocabulary identified at whole-school level in both English and Irish. Léiríonn an chuid is mó de na daltaí cumas maith i dtuiscint na Gaeilge. Níl go leor deiseanna ag na daltaí an Ghaeilge a úsáid go rialta, áfach. Ba chóir go mbeadh an teanga nua atá le múineadh sa cheacht Gaeilge luaite i bpleananna agus go mbeadh deiseanna ag na daltaí an teanga seo a úsáid i gcomhthéacsanna éagsúla le béim áirithe ar an bhfíorchumarsáid. *Most pupils demonstrate a good ability to understand the Irish language. Pupils do not have enough opportunities to use Irish regularly, however. New vocabulary should be identified in planning and opportunities created for pupils to use this language in different contexts, with particular emphasis on real communication.*
- Learning experiences in Mathematics lessons observed support learning effectively. Pupils are actively and purposefully engaged in their learning. Teachers work collaboratively to plan and explicitly teach mathematical language at whole-school level. The whole-school plan in Mathematics provides good guidance for the incremental progression of learning. There is scope to extend this good practice to other curricular areas where the use of subject-specific language and a focus on skill development can create rich learning experiences. This will enable pupils to talk about their learning and make meaningful connections in the different curricular areas.

### 2. THE QUALITY OF TEACHING

- The overall quality of teaching is good, with lessons observed ranging from very good to satisfactory. Features of best practice included the sharing of intended learning outcomes with pupils, the selection of appropriate resources to support learning and the facilitation of active and collaborative learning. Less successful lessons depended on textbooks or workbooks and a whole-class teaching approach. In response to questionnaires administered during the evaluation almost all parents agreed that teaching in this school is of a high quality.

- Pupils with SEN are supported through a combination of in-class support and withdrawal of individuals and groups within the school. Special education teachers (SET), in consultation with class teachers, should plan their interventions to address pupils' priority learning needs. The process of target setting should be reviewed to ensure that priority learning needs are clearly identified. Targets identified should be specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, time bound and recorded in the relevant Continuum of Support plans which are in use throughout the school. Short-term planning in SEN should reflect these targets and break down the development of skills and content in order to address pupils' specific needs on a weekly basis. Outcomes for pupils should be regularly assessed, recorded and used to review progress.
- Overall the quality of assessment is satisfactory. While a range of worthwhile assessment data is gathered by teachers, there is scope to develop an integrated whole-school approach to assessment so that data is used consistently to inform short-term planning for the differentiated learning outcomes of pupils. Sharing success criteria with pupils will enable them to assess and take responsibility for their own learning, enabling them to develop their skills, extend their own knowledge base and become more independent learners.

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

- The quality of support for pupils' well-being is a significant strength of the school. Management and leadership demonstrate a strong commitment to the well-being of the wider school community. Teachers support pupils' educational, social and personal well-being. The school has developed links as required with external agencies to support pupils with additional needs and to ensure smooth transitions to and from primary school. Regular assemblies celebrate the diversity of school life.
- The parents' association provides valuable support to the school. Almost all parents feel the school is well run, that they are welcome in the school and agree that their child enjoys school and feels safe and well looked after in school.
- Highly respectful and positive interactions were observed in all settings throughout the evaluation. Almost all pupils who responded to the questionnaires administered as part of this evaluation reported that they like this school, feel safe here and that they are treated fairly and respectfully. Pupil voice is nurtured and promoted through the Amber Flag School Committee which focuses on well-being.

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

- Management and leadership within the school are of a very high quality. The board of management meets regularly and it discharges its financial, legislative and leadership duties very effectively. The members of the board are very focused on the needs of the school and supportive of the principal and school staff.
- The principal demonstrates very high quality instructional leadership. She communicates a clear, shared vision and encourages the formation of teams to address school priorities. The school builds and maintains constructive relationships through effective communication with all school partners. While the principal and in-school management (ISM) team meet regularly and work collaboratively, there is scope for the ISM team to lead and manage action planning for improvement in curricular areas.

- The school reported that it is open to providing placements for student teachers. 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 school self-evaluation (SSE) is good. The school has engaged with the SSE process effectively, using it as a tool to manage and respond to the changing needs of the school. It is now timely to use the SSE process to ensure that teaching and learning is engaging and challenging, enabling pupils to become active and motivated learners. The collaborative relationships within the school facilitate the school's engagement in a continuous process of SSE.

## 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 quality of 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;

# **Appendix**

**SCHOOL RESPONSE TO THE REPORT**

**Submitted by the Board of Management**



## **Area 1 Observations on the content of the inspection report**

The Board of Management of Scoil Chroí Naofa welcomes the very positive and affirming report of the WSE- MLL. The report reaffirms our view of the very high standard of management, leadership and learning in our school. The Board welcomes the recognition given to the good quality of teaching in our school and endorses the reports view of the commitment of teachers to support pupils' educational, social and personal wellbeing. The Board is pleased that pupils' wellbeing is a significant strength in our school and that pupil voice is nurtured and promoted.

The Board of Management of Scoil Chroí Naofa wish to express our gratitude to the Principal, In-school Management team, Teachers, Special Needs Assistants, Ancillary staff, Parents, Guardians and the wider school community for their commitment and dedication in creating a positive learning environment for the children in our care.

## **Area 2 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 accepts the findings of the WSE-MLL report in its entirety.

The school's teaching staff together with the Board of Management will collaboratively review each recommendation and plan for its implementation in order to further enhance teaching and learning for the benefit of all our pupils.