

An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna
Department of Education and Skills

Whole School Evaluation
Management, Leadership and Learning

REPORT

Ainm na scoile / School name	Scoil Na Tríonóide Naofa
Seoladh na scoile / School address	Doon Co Limerick
Uimhir rolla / Roll number	68121S

Date of Evaluation: 12-11-2018



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agus Scileanna
Department of
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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. Quality of school leadership and management
2. Quality of teaching and learning
3. Implementation of recommendations from previous evaluations
4. The school's self-evaluation process and capacity for school improvement

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	12,13 and 14-11-2018
Inspection activities undertaken <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Meeting with board of management• Meetings with principal and deputy principal• Meetings with key staff• Review of relevant documents• Student focus-group interview	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Meeting with parents• Analysis of parent, student and teacher questionnaires• Observation of teaching and learning• Examination of students' work• Interaction with students• Feedback to senior management team, board of management and teachers

School context

Scoil na Tríonóide Naofa is a co-educational voluntary secondary school under the trusteeship of Catholic Schools, an Irish education Trust (CEIST). Established in 2013, following the amalgamation of three local schools; St. Joseph's Secondary School, St. Fintan's Christian Brothers School and St. Michael's College, the school caters for students from Doon and the surrounding areas of east Limerick and west Tipperary. Currently 597 students are enrolled. The school offers the Junior Cycle, an optional Transition Year (TY), Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme (LCVP), and Leaving Certificate established.

Summary of main findings and recommendations:

Findings

- The quality of school leadership and management is very good and the principal and deputy principal form a highly effective leadership team.
- Support for students identified with special educational needs (SEN) is provided through a model of withdrawal and through the recent development of team-teaching; however all of the additional special education teaching resources, are not being used for their intended purpose.
- Overall timetabling provision is very good and teacher deployment is very effective; it is unclear how and when the Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) programme is fully delivered.
- The quality of teaching was very good overall, and learner outcomes and experiences were good, although opportunities exist for the development of more purposeful student participation in their learning.
- There is very good implementation of recommendations from previous evaluations.
- The school's self-evaluation (SSE) process is of a very high standard and there is very good capacity for improvement.

Recommendations

- The board of management, together with senior leadership, should ensure, in accordance with circular letter 0014/2017 that all additional teaching resources for SEN are used solely to provide additional support to students identified as requiring such support, including providing support to any student with English as an additional language (EAL) needs.
- The team-teaching model should be further developed to provide focused support for targeted students within the collective setting of the mainstream classroom.

- Senior leadership should oversee the implementation of a co-ordinated RSE programme, which incrementally meets the developmental needs of students.
- Teachers should explore and utilise co-operative learning strategies within lessons, which will facilitate students to take ownership of their learning, to be more active participants and to provide opportunities for structured student talk.

DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. QUALITY OF SCHOOL LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The quality of school leadership and management, including the work of the recently appointed board and the senior leadership team is very good.

Leading learning and teaching

The quality of leadership for learning and teaching is very good.

The principal and deputy principal form a highly effective senior leadership team. Both have defined, yet complementary roles and work together with staff, students and parents to establish and maintain a very positive school community. Their excellent work is underpinned by the school's mission statement which values inclusion, respect, wellbeing, dignity, care and potential.

The senior leadership team sets high expectations, both for themselves and for the school community. There is very good communication within the team. They have an understanding of the strengths they bring to their individual roles and share a vision for the school, which is based on the empowerment of staff and students. They provide proactive leadership of the school and this is reflected in the results of questionnaires distributed to students, teachers and parents.

The principal and deputy principal encourage teachers to develop and extend their teaching practices through providing opportunities for continuing professional development (CPD) and collaboration. Teachers are encouraged to use their individual talents and skills to develop positive school practices. The principal and deputy principal have a visible presence in the school. They operate an open-door policy, with an emphasis on the wellbeing of students and staff. The collegiality amongst staff is very evident.

The school offers a broad range of curricular, co-curricular and extracurricular learning opportunities for students. Students are provided with a good range of subjects and programmes. There is a high uptake of a well-organised and optional TY programme, which is a vibrant part of the school's educational programme. It is very evident that students participating in the TY programme are provided with very worthwhile opportunities for new experiences and learning, which promote their holistic development. Many of these learning opportunities are student led. The LCVP is offered to students who meet the required subject criteria. This programme is appropriately organised and is well-established in the school.

The school is keenly aware of the need to provide as broad a curriculum as possible to students. The timetable is carefully planned and constructed, and a successful subject sampling programme is operated in first year and in TY. Students are well supported in making informed choices and student preferences are well accommodated.

Class groups are organised on a mixed-ability basis, except after first year, when the core subjects of Irish and Maths are streamed, according to higher and ordinary levels. Very good work is underway with regard to the implementation of the new Junior Cycle Framework. As part of this process, the school is developing an assessment policy. As the Junior Cycle Framework becomes more embedded, and as part of the school's overall assessment of student attainment, staff should carry out an analysis of student performance in Classroom Based Assessments. Subject departments should discuss how to further enhance individual student attainment and uptake of levels particularly in senior cycle.

Good care structures have been established and the school engages in strategies and practices to support students' educational, vocational and personal development. These include: Social Personal and Health Education (SPHE); a wellbeing programme; the class tutor and year-head structure; Guidance, and a SEN support team.

Whole-school guidance planning is at an advanced stage with recognition that everyone has a contribution to make in promoting and supporting student wellbeing. However, a more coherent whole-school guidance plan should be developed, which should focus on and formalise the various structures in place across the year groups to support students. As part of this work, the school should consider how to better develop the role of the class tutor and a more formalised class-tutor system should be adopted to provide support to students.

The school strives to be an inclusive school and students identified with SEN are supported by a core team of special education teachers (SET). Support is provided mostly through withdrawal and recently through the development of a team-teaching model. This type of support was observed to be very effective and should be further developed to provide focused support for targeted students within the collective setting of mainstream classrooms. The school has one SNA who supports identified students' care needs. The role of the SNA should be further developed to support students to be effectively included in their learning under the guidance and discretion of the principal, in accordance with Circular Letter 0030/2014.

A significant number of additional teaching resources are allocated to the school to provide support to students identified with SEN. These resources, however, are not being used in their entirety for their intended purpose. The board of management, together with senior leadership should ensure, in accordance with Circular Letter 0014/2017 that all additional resources are used solely to provide additional support to students identified with requiring such support and this should include providing support to any student with EAL needs.

Managing the organisation

The school is very effectively managed.

The current board of management is newly appointed and in place since November 2018. It is appropriately constituted and all members are aware of their roles and responsibilities. The new chairperson of the board has a very good understanding and knowledge of the school and has a clear vision for the future work of the board, which includes the importance of maintaining and further enhancing the school's position within the community. The board of management and the principal are aware of their statutory obligations.

The board is committed to ensuring that a broad curriculum is provided to students and to the continued promotion of a school culture of collaboration and improvement. Following board meetings, an agreed report is communicated to staff and to the parents.

An active parents' association is in place. Regular meetings are held and these are attended by senior management. There is good communication between the board and the association. The parents' association is consulted on the development of school policies and in general, parents are kept well informed of school and student matters through a range of communication platforms. The parents' association should explore the use of the school website to communicate with the wider parent body.

A very comprehensive school plan has been developed with clear and strategic priorities identified, to manage and lead school development. All mandatory policies are in place. Many of these policies were developed prior to the amalgamation and opening of the school. It is positive that a programme of review has commenced. In order to facilitate the ongoing review of policies and school development, the board should ensure that both the policy checklist and legislative and regulatory checklist are completed annually.

The school's admissions policy should be revised in line with Department of Education and Skills policy and legislative developments in areas such as, the admission of students with special educational needs. This policy when reviewed, should reflect the inclusive practices that currently exist. The relevance of some of the information sought in advance of admission should also be examined. The behaviour policy would also benefit from being prioritised for review and should be framed in a more positive manner which reflects the practice and culture of the school.

An SPHE policy is in place and Wellbeing and RSE policies have been drafted. SPHE is delivered across Junior Cycle. It is unclear how and when the RSE programme is delivered across the year groups and whether all students are fully provided with the required programme, particularly at senior cycle. Senior leadership should oversee the implementation of a co-ordinated RSE programme which incrementally meets the developmental needs of the students.

Overall, timetabling provision is very good and teacher deployment is effective. It is positive that all year groups have access to a double class period of Physical Education (PE) each week. However, in senior cycle, the timetabling of LCVP has resulted in a timetabled study period for students who do not participate in the programme. This practice should cease, in order to provide students with the full twenty-eight hours of structured tuition time each week. Alternative learning experiences should be made for students during this time.

The facilities provided for the whole-school community, arising from the building and completion of a new school campus are of a very high quality. The building is bright and spacious and its design contributes significantly to the positive atmosphere evident within the school. The school facilities are maintained to a very high level, in conjunction with the on-site Public Private Partnership facilities management team.

A health and safety statement has been developed and appropriate attention is paid to health and safety issues through the joint work of staff, senior leadership, the board and the facilities team. Health and safety audits of specialist rooms have been conducted and these are maintained in subject department folders and in school planning documents. Regular fire drills are undertaken in a well-organised manner.

Leading school development

Leadership of school development is very good. The board of management and the senior leadership team have been proactive in establishing a guiding vision for the school. This vision encompasses the continuing provision of a high quality and relevant education for students in the community of Doon. It is commendable that the principal and deputy principal have dealt very effectively with the

challenges of unifying three different staffs, students and school cultures into one ethos, culture and tradition. The commitment and willingness of staff to collaborate in order to ensure the successful establishment of the school is commendable.

Consultation with staff and students is regularly sought and is central to the development of the school. Consequently, the school has adapted and grown. A review of the post structure has recently been completed. This was undertaken in a consultative manner between senior leadership, teaching staff and the board. Arising from this process, a very effective and strategic development planning and change agenda have been successfully identified. The emphasis on reflection and consultation has led to a very purposeful and focused strategy document for ongoing school development.

Developing leadership capacity

There are very effective structures in place to support and develop leadership capacity. In the five years since the establishment of the school, senior leadership has worked very successfully to create clear systems and structures necessary to ensure the smooth running of the school. A student-centred and vibrant school culture and a safe and secure learning environment has been established. Newly qualified teachers are supported through the school's involvement in the Droichead programme and teachers new to the school are provided with a programme of induction.

Key teams are in place in the areas of student support and leadership. Weekly meetings of the year heads, the pastoral care team and SEN team are timetabled with senior management. Teachers are encouraged and supported to take on responsibility as class tutors and to develop and lead initiatives in line with their skills and interests.

The subject department structure is well established and much work has been completed in relation to subject plans, with many offering good details relative to subject provision and curricular planning. Some plans are more detailed and advanced than others in relation to learning outcomes and actions to achieve good quality outcomes for students. It is very positive that teachers recognise the value of their collaborative work. This good practice should be extended across all subject department plans and all plans should provide an integrated approach to teaching the key skills at junior cycle. It is recommended that sharing teaching and learning strategies is a standing item on the agendas of subject department and staff meetings.

Opportunities for student leadership are promoted through the student council which is well-established and well organised. A link teacher works with the council and its two captains and members are democratically elected by the student body. The student council has set up sub-committees to lead and develop initiatives based on the results of student surveys. This is very positive work.

2. QUALITY OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

The quality of teaching was very good overall. Learner outcomes were observed to be of good quality in general. Scope for enhancing the learner experience was identified, which should lead to more clearly evident learning outcomes, and providing students with more opportunities to actively participate and collaborate in their learning.

Learner outcomes and experiences

Teacher, student rapport was very positive and interactions between students were very respectful also. Consequently, a positive and calm learning environment was evident.

In lessons where outcomes and experiences were observed to be of excellent quality, students were actively engaged in their learning and participated in meaningful independent and group activities. The tasks set for students were purposeful, well organised and linked to the intended learning of the lessons. In these lessons, student collaboration was well-structured and students had clear roles and responsibilities set within their peer-groups. Through the facilitation of these types of learning opportunities, a better balance between teacher talk and student voice was achieved. To build on this very good practice, all teachers should explore and utilise co-operative learning strategies within lessons which would facilitate more active and meaningful participation of students in their learning and structured opportunities for student talk.

Positive learner outcomes were observed when students demonstrated enjoyment in their learning and where progress was evident. Achievement was demonstrated by student contributions to the work of the lessons, which included: giving examples; providing feedback to the class group following the completion of tasks; peer-tutoring opportunities; acquiring relevant skills; engagement in active learning opportunities to increase understanding; the ability to communicate in the target language of the lessons, and in students' ability to self-assess.

In senior classes, students were generally encouraged to take more responsibility for their learning and there was appropriately high-expectation of student achievement. When this was most evident, students were confident to make their own notes rather than relying on notes from teachers. This level of student engagement promotes skills for life-long learning and should be further encouraged and developed.

In a very small number of lessons, new learning was unclear. In such instances, the intended learning of lessons needed to be more clearly expressed, to ensure that students were aware of the new learning points in the lesson and how these would be achieved.

Teachers' individual and collective practice

The quality of teaching was very good overall. Teachers' individual practice ranged from good to excellent and was underpinned by positive teacher, student relationships. A key feature of teachers' collective practice was the modelling of positive behaviour in their interactions with students and there was a clear sense of developing student confidence and self-esteem and supporting their wellbeing.

Teacher-based classrooms operate in the school and learning environments are very well-developed and incorporate a focus on subject specific vocabulary and key terms, educational resources and student work. Suggestions on how to reconfigure classroom layout of desks to encourage students to work together were made in a few instances.

All lessons were characterised by very good classroom routines and structures. Very effective preparation for teaching was a key feature of all lessons. This was reflected in the use of well-chosen resources which included: teacher generated work sheets; concrete materials to aid and to consolidate learning; graphic organisers, and clear presentations and interesting video clips using information and communications technology (ICT).

All lessons were well structured and formative assessment strategies were well utilised within lessons. The use of learning intentions were used at the beginning of lessons to provide students with a clear pathway for their learning. In a small number of lessons, the co-construction of the learning intentions for the lesson represented excellent practice. Where teaching was of a very high quality, the learning intentions were referred to as new learning occurred, and students were

enabled to peer and self-assess throughout and at the end of the lesson. Very effective practice was also evident where the literacy of the subject and opportunities for numeracy appropriate to the learning were incorporated seamlessly into the delivery of the lesson. This level of purposeful and thoughtful planning should be extended to all lessons.

Inclusive teaching practices were effectively utilised in a number of lessons. These included: clear explanations and instructions; scaffolding of learning and associated tasks; providing students with contextual and real life examples to encourage critical thinking skills; a focus on student understanding; providing students with a variety of learning activities to access learning, and teacher circulation to support individual students, when students worked on individual, pair or group tasks. The use of success criteria should be considered as a strategy to further support students to be purposefully included in their learning and for successful task completion.

Teachers' collective practice is a very good and evidenced in almost all classrooms where the key teaching and learning strategies identified through the SSE process were well embedded into teachers' practice and students' learning strategies. Teachers' reflective practice and willingness to collaborate to advance student learning is very clear. In general teachers' knowledge and enthusiasm for their subject was motivating for students.

3. IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS FROM PREVIOUS EVALUATIONS

There is very good implementation of recommendations from previous evaluations.

Leadership and Management

A very good process is in place to ensure recommendations arising from subject and programme inspections are acted upon. The board of management, senior leadership, subject departments and all staff discuss and identify areas for improvement at whole-school level and actions are planned for at department and whole-school level.

The provision of a one-day per week work experience in TY was reviewed and changed from a Friday to a Tuesday following consultation. Visualisers were purchased following an inspection of English.

Teaching and Learning

There has been very good progress in implementing recommendations in the areas of teaching and learning. Formative assessment strategies such as 'the post-it wall' and 'two stars and a wish and a target' have now been introduced throughout the school, following recommendations arising from inspections of Geography, Engineering and Business Studies. Vocabulary displays are included in all English classrooms.

4. THE SCHOOL'S SELF-EVALUATION PROCESS AND CAPACITY FOR SCHOOL

The School's Self-Evaluation Process

The school's self-evaluation (SSE) process is of a very high standard and there is very good capacity for improvement.

A very significant culture of reflection and planning underpins the comprehensive educational provision offered to students. The amalgamation process, and building a new school community, has

very clearly involved an active, purposeful and very effective self-evaluation process. The work of the principal and deputy principal in leading the process in conjunction with the commitment of staff and parents from the three schools has led to the establishment of a very reflective and positive school community.

Formal SSE process is informed by evidence gathered and comprehensive plans in the areas of literacy, numeracy, peer-mentoring and assessment have been developed. An SSE working group effectively leads this process. The willingness of staff to engage in the process is a key strength of the school.

The School's Capacity for Improvement

There is very good capacity for improvement throughout the school. This is very evident in the culture of improvement that prevails and in the structures and processes that have led to the establishment of a highly effective school.

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
Very Good	<i>Very good</i> 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 <i>outstanding</i> 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	<i>Good</i> 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
Satisfactory	<i>Satisfactory</i> 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	<i>Fair</i> 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	<i>Weak</i> 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 board welcomes this very positive and affirming WSE-MLL report, as it identifies many of the key strengths of our school. We are pleased by the affirmation of the highly effective practices of our school identified in the report.

The board welcomes the recognition of the following-

- The principal and deputy principal form a highly effective leadership team.
- The quality of teaching and learning was very good and teachers' individual practice ranged from good to excellent and was underpinned by positive student, teacher relationships.
- There is very good implementation of recommendations from previous evaluations.
- The school's engagement with SSE is of a very high standard.

The board was pleased that the report acknowledged the prevailing culture of improvement within its structures and processes that have led to the establishment of a highly effective 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.

The board acknowledges recommendations made in the report. Work to address these recommendations has already commenced and the board will take an active part in leading and supporting the successful implantation of these recommendations.