

An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna
Department of Education and Skills

Whole School Evaluation
REPORT

Central Model Senior NS
Marlborough Street, Dublin 1
Uimhir rolla: 00752A

Date of inspection: 14 June 2012



A N R O I N N | **DEPARTMENT OF**
OIDEACHAIS | **EDUCATION**
AGUS SCILEANNA | **AND SKILLS**

1. Introduction

The Central Model Senior National School is a co-educational school for pupils from second to sixth class. It shares a building in Marlborough Street, Dublin 1, with the neighbouring infants' school. The school participates in Band 1 of Delivering Equality of Opportunity to Schools (DEIS), the action plan of the Department of Education and Skills for educational inclusion. Strategies developed by the school under this plan have had a noticeable impact on improving pupil attendance levels, which are now very good. The school presents as an inclusive learning environment in which pupils of many nationalities are welcomed and encouraged to participate fully in school life. At the time of the evaluation there were 207 pupils enrolled in the school. 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.

2. Summary of Findings and Recommendations for Further Development

The following are the **main strengths** of the work of the school:

- The board of management operates as a cohesive unit and plays a full and committed role in the work of the school.
- Highly commendable and dedicated leadership is provided to the school by the principal and by the in-school management team.
- Whole-school planning processes are very well developed and the school engages in self-evaluation to a commendable degree.
- A range of initiatives and approaches is used very effectively in the teaching of English and Mathematics and these are having a positive impact on pupils' attainment in these areas.
- The range and quality of work completed by pupils in all strands of Visual Arts are excellent.
- Very effective strategies are in place for the management of pupils and for communication with all members of the school community.
- The school makes very good provision for pupils with special educational needs and for pupils with English as an additional language (EAL) needs.

The following **main recommendations** are made:

- Tá scóip le raon an ábhair léitheoireachta Gaeilge a leathnú agus le breis béime a leagan ar úsáid an fhoclóra nua i suímh chumarsáideacha. *There is scope to broaden the range of Irish reading material and to place greater emphasis on the use of new vocabulary in communicative settings.*
- Maidir le múineadh na Gaeilge, b'fhiú don fhoireann torthaí foghlama oiriúnacha do gach rangleibhéal thar na ceithre snáitheanna a rianú, mar a rinne an fhoireann cheana don Mhatamaitic. *Regarding the teaching of Irish, it would be worthwhile for the staff to delineate appropriate learning outcomes for each class level, as the staff has done already for Mathematics.*

3. Quality of School Management

- The quality of school management is good. The board of management operates as a cohesive unit. Board members show a strong commitment to the school and work collaboratively and effectively. The board plays an active part in school planning and it attends diligently to the carrying out of its functions. The school's finances are managed carefully and accounts are audited or certified annually.
- The in-school management team is led by an insightful and dedicated principal who is committed to pupils and to the development of a collaborative culture among staff. He emphasises collegiality in school decision-making processes. He is supported ably by an enthusiastic and focused in-school management team which discharges a range of appropriate responsibilities with commitment.
- Very effective and efficient use is made of resources throughout the school. The school building was refurbished in 1994 and is maintained to a very high standard. A wide variety of appropriate resources is provided to support teaching and learning.
- The management of pupils is very good and strategies to promote positive behaviour are used very successfully. An affirming and productive atmosphere exists in all classrooms and teachers manage pupil discipline insightfully. Pupils' questionnaire responses indicate that they are content and secure in the school environment and that they believe they are doing well in school.
- Communication with parents and with the wider school community is very good. The school produces an attractive and informative newsletter on a regular basis. The school's website is updated frequently and includes comprehensive details about school activities. Effective mechanisms are in place for communicating with parents about pupils' progress. Detailed records are kept of meetings. In their responses to questionnaires, parents show very high levels of satisfaction with the way the school is run and with their children's learning.

4. Quality of School Planning and School Self-evaluation

- The quality of the school planning and school self-evaluation processes are very high. Planning serves the school context very well and the school is very effective at ensuring that school plans address the needs of the school population. Action planning is worthwhile and is very focused on identifying and addressing specific issues in respect of teaching and learning.
- The range of school policies is reviewed thoroughly on a regular basis. Curriculum plans are very effective at identifying content and objectives for each class level. Organisational policies help to ensure the smooth operation of the school.
- Overall, classroom planning is commendable. The best examples of effective classroom planning focus on identifying learning objectives clearly. Additional preparation for teaching is of a very high quality, with very good quality resources prepared by teachers in all mainstream and support settings.
- Confirmation was provided that the board of management has formally adopted the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* without modification and that the school is compliant with the requirements of the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*.

5. Quality of Teaching, Learning and Pupil Achievement

- Ar an iomlán tá múineadh na Gaeilge go maith ach tá scóip chun forbartha i ngnéithe an tsoláthair. Cuirtear fócas soiléir ar fhorbairt foclóra le linn ceachtanna Gaeilge. Baintear dea-úsáid as dánta agus amhráin chun eispéireas teanga na ndaltaí a shaibhriú. D'fhéadfaí cur le héifeacht na gceachtanna trí béim sa bhreis a leagan ar úsáid an fhoclóra nua i suímh chumarsáideacha. Le linn na meastóireachta, breathnaíodh samplaí an-éifeachtacha de cheachtanna léitheoireachta sa Ghaeilge, ina raibh baint ag na scéalta leis na téamaí a bhí á múineadh. Tá scóip le raon an ábhair léitheoireachta Gaeilge a leathnú. Déantar cleachtaí scríbhneoireachta go rialta agus sonraítear roinnt samplaí maithe de scríbhneoireacht phearsanta na ndaltaí. B'fhiú don fhoireann torthaí foghlama oiriúnacha do gach rangleibhéal thar na ceithre snáitheanna a rianú, mar atá déanta cheana don Mhatamaitic.
- *In general the teaching of Irish is good but there is scope for development in some aspects of the provision. A clear focus is placed on the teaching of vocabulary during Irish lessons. Good use is made of poems and songs to enrich the language experience of pupils. The effectiveness of lessons could be enhanced by placing greater emphasis on the use of new vocabulary in communicative settings. During the evaluation, samples of very effective Irish reading lessons were observed in which the stories were connected with the themes being taught. There is scope to broaden the range of Irish reading material. Written exercises are done regularly and some good samples of pupils' personal writing are noted. It would be worthwhile for the staff to delineate appropriate learning outcomes across the four curriculum strands, for each class level, as has been done already for Mathematics.*
- The teaching of English is commendable throughout the school and there is evidence of this having a positive impact on pupils' linguistic ability. The teaching of writing is systematic and benefits from a co-ordinated whole school approach. The teaching of the writing process in a structured manner is well-emphasised. Assessment of writing is very effective. Well-structured and worthwhile activities are used to develop oral language. Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is used very effectively to promote pupils' linguistic development. Pupils engage enthusiastically in oral language lessons and their oral accounts are coherent and logical. There is potential to expand upon the development of oral language through increasing the current parental involvement in the programme. Effective use is made of guided reading strategies and there is suitable emphasis on the development of vocabulary and reading skills. Reading standards are good and pupils' progress is monitored carefully throughout the school.
- There is much to commend in the quality of teaching, learning and pupil achievement in Mathematics. Good standards are attained by pupils. Lessons are well structured with clear objectives. Lessons emphasise active and purposeful engagement by pupils. Resources are used very well to engage pupils in hands-on learning activities. Assessment practices are very good and thorough analysis of pupils' performance on school-designed tests and standardised tests helps to ensure that the programme is differentiated appropriately. Strategies introduced recently to improve problem solving are having a good effect.
- The quality of teaching, learning and pupil achievement in Visual Arts is very high. All strands are taught in a balanced manner and there is highly commendable provision for making art and looking at and responding to art. Pupils are introduced to the work of an extensive range of artists. ICT is used very well to source copies of artists' work which are used as stimuli for the pupils' own efforts. Pupils work imaginatively and creatively in a variety of media and their artwork is presented in a very attractive manner in classrooms and throughout the school. It is also published in the school newsletter and on the website.

- The quality of overall teaching, learning and pupil achievement is commendable. Lessons are prepared carefully and teachers use a broad range of stimulating teaching methods. A plentiful supply of resources, augmented by additional teacher-designed materials, is used to good effect for teaching and learning. Pupils' engagement levels during lessons are high and they complete their work to a good standard. Assessment practices are well developed, particularly for literacy and numeracy.

6. Quality of Support for Pupils

- Very good provision is made for pupils with special educational needs and for pupils for whom English is an additional language. A very collaborative and focused approach guides the highly commendable work in this area. The care team meets regularly and meetings include all key personnel: the principal, mainstream and support teachers, and special needs assistants. The needs of pupils are clearly identified and appropriate programmes of work are designed to meet these needs. Record keeping is very good. Individual and group plans are informative and well crafted and are reviewed carefully and perceptively at suitable intervals.
- Lessons are well-structured, well-paced and affirming. A highly commendable range of resources is used purposefully to engage pupils in well-managed and well-sequenced learning activities. Assessment practices are very good.
- The quality of home-school partnership is very good. The Home, School, Community Liaison (HSCL) initiative is organised very effectively in this school. A very good rapport has been established with parents. It was evident to the evaluation team that the priority given to establishing the positive rapport has been intrinsic to achieving and maintaining this effectiveness. The leadership of the HSCL initiative is very dynamic and this is central to the success of the programme. Worthwhile activities include the involvement of parents in classroom-based activities such as Maths for Fun and Science for Fun. It is commendable practice that time is taken to prepare parents thoroughly for these activities and to affirm and appreciate their involvement.

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 the Central Model Senior School wishes to acknowledge the professional, courteous, and collaborative approach with which the inspection team conducted the WSE. Their approach ensured that the evaluation process was a positive and worthwhile experience.

The Board would like to thank all those in the school community who contribute to the enhancement of teaching and learning in the Central Model Senior School. We appreciate that the commitment, enthusiasm and dedication of our teachers, parents, pupils and board members has been recognised and affirmed.

Area 2: Follow-up actions planned or undertaken since the completion of the inspection activity to implement the findings and recommendations of the inspection

Glacann Bord Bainistíochta na scoile le moltaí na cigireachta mar atá luaite sa tuairisc agus tosaíodh ar iad a chur i bhfeidhm.

The Board of Management accepts the recommendations the inspectors have made in the report and have begun to implement them.