

An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna

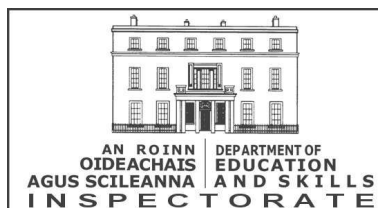
Department of Education and Skills

**Whole School Evaluation
Management, Leadership and Learning**

REPORT

**Scoil Cill Rónáin
Keadue, Co. Roscommon
Uimhir rolla: 06100K**

Date of inspection: 15 October 2013



Whole-School Evaluation – Management, Leadership and Learning Report

Introduction

A Whole-School Evaluation – Management, Leadership and Learning (WSE - MLL) was undertaken in Scoil Cill Rónáin in October 2013. This report is based on a selection of lessons observed in a range of learning settings in the school, interaction with pupils and review of their work, meetings with the principal and with board and parent representatives, completed parent and pupil questionnaires, and a selection of school documents. 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.

Scoil Cill Rónáin is a two-teacher school and is also a base for a learning support teacher. It is located in the village of Keadue in North Roscommon. It is a co-educational school under the patronage of the Catholic Bishop of Ardagh and Clonmacnoise. The school has an enrolment of twenty two pupils. Attendance levels are good.

The school has **strengths** in the following areas:

- The board of management works in a purposeful and efficient manner in supporting the work of the school.
- The principal and staff are diligent and committed to the pupils in their care.
- The school grounds and buildings are extremely well maintained.
- The pupils are exceptionally well behaved and highly respectful of their teachers and their peers.
- Planning and preparation for pupils with learning needs is comprehensive.

The following **main recommendations** are made:

- A paired reading programme should be introduced to provide pupils with additional opportunities to improve their reading attainment.
- The delivery of support for pupils needs review to facilitate a greater emphasis on differentiated teaching through in-class support.
- The board of management should issue an annual report in line with the *School Self-Evaluation Guidelines for Schools*.
- It is recommended that station teaching be used much more frequently to cater for the varying needs in each classroom.

Findings

1. The learning achievements of pupils

- The overall learning achievements of the pupils are very successful. Pupils have a very positive attitude towards their learning. In English, very good reading standards are achieved by most of the pupils. Valuable work on both writing skills and comprehension skills is in progress. The development of oral language skills is ongoing using circle time and discussion. This will be augmented further through the introduction of *Aistear: the Early Childhood Curriculum framework* which is due to be implemented shortly. Pupils' competence and confidence in speaking could be developed further through debating.
- In Mathematics, most pupils are progressing very well. The presentation of work in copies is very good. The development of a foundation in the language of problem-solving is proving successful. Pupils enjoy their learning as it is logical, practical and

child-centred. There is breadth and balance in the programme of work being accessed by the pupils.

- Sa Ghaeilge, baineann na daltaí sult as na gníomhaíochtaí mar chluichí agus drámaíocht. Forbraítear scileanna labhartha go céimniúil. Léann na daltaí le brí agus tugtar faoi chleachtaí scríbhneoireachta go rialta.
- *In Irish, the pupils enjoy activities such as games and drama. Speaking skills are being developed progressively. The pupils read with meaning and they are given regular opportunities to write.*
- In Social Environmental and Scientific Education (SESE), the school grounds, the polytunnel, the Green Schools Programme and the school's involvement in the Tidy Towns competition are used effectively to support pupils' learning productively. Areas of interest in the wider environment of the village and parish such as the Arigna Mining Museum and Kilronan castle are explored to engage pupils enthusiastically in their learning and help them appreciate a sense of place in the community. Pupils research topics willingly using information and communication technology. Local people from the community visit the school to share their expertise in these subjects with the pupils.
- Pupils with additional learning needs are making good progress in accordance with their abilities.

2. Quality of teaching

- The overall quality of teaching in the school is very good. Lessons were observed in two mainstream settings and three support settings. Two of the three support teachers are based in neighbouring schools. Assessment of pupils is very good. All teachers plan comprehensively for their lessons. Circle time is the predominant methodology used to initiate lessons in mainstream settings. Teachers also use pair work and group work. The local environment is used judiciously in pupils' learning. However, it is recommended that station teaching be used much more frequently to cater for the varying needs of children in each classroom.
- Classrooms are stimulating, attractive and display current learning materials and resources. The atmosphere is very positive. All teachers create a print-rich environment. They display pupils' work with care and acknowledge their achievements.
- Teaching in the support setting is well-paced and structured. It is recommended that paired reading be introduced to provide pupils with additional opportunities to improve their reading attainment. The delivery of support for pupils needs review, to facilitate a greater emphasis on differentiated teaching through in-class support. This will allow pupils receive support with their peers in an integrated manner.

3. Support for pupils' well-being

- Mutual respect permeates the management of pupils within the school. Pupils are exceptionally courteous and friendly. They listen attentively to their teachers and they engage eagerly in lessons.
- Pupils with learning needs and special educational needs were supported at the time of the evaluation on a withdrawal basis. This support is provided in a sensitive, caring environment. This support can be enhanced through the delivery of relevant programmes in the mainstream setting which include the involvement of the pupils' peers.
- Responses to pupils' questionnaires distributed as part of the evaluation indicate that all pupils are treated fairly and that all pupils behave well in school. They all agree

that they like school. Parental responses indicate that all parents feel that discipline is good in the school and that it is well run.

- Confirmation was provided that the board of management has formally adopted the *Child Protection 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*.

4. Leadership and Management

- The board of management has made praiseworthy progress in managing structural improvements to the building and grounds. Their review of policies is commendable. All members are highly committed to their role. Members of the board are proactive in helping to create a stimulating, safe, clean and high quality learning environment.
- The principal and deputy principal provide very effective leadership to the school community. They work as a team and decision making is collaborative.

5. School Self-evaluation

- The board and staff have prioritised problem-solving in numeracy as an area for development. They have gathered evidence through the distribution of parent questionnaires and teacher self-reflection. They have formulated an improvement plan which outlines the proposed actions to achieve their aims. It is recommended that the school issue a report on its work to the school community.

Conclusion

The school's capacity to engage **in school improvement** is very good. The board of management and staff operate in a professional, efficient manner and have demonstrated many examples of embracing change over the years.

Appendix

SCHOOL RESPONSE TO THE REPORT

Submitted by the Board of Management

Area 1 Observations on the content of the inspection report

- Fair and concise.

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 follow-up actions undertaken by the staff of Scoil Cill Rónáin since the completion of the inspection is as follows:

- The mainstream teachers are using station teaching more frequently in the classroom to cater for the varying needs of the pupils.
- The staff have re-arranged the support timetables so as to facilitate differentiated teaching through in-class support. This new arrangement will further support the use of station teaching in the mainstream setting as a means of addressing pupils' needs.
- During the month of November, we had a pdst cúiditheoir visit the school with regard to various reading strategies and techniques. A very worthwhile and inspiring session for both pupils and teachers.

The follow-up actions planned since the completion of the inspection are as follows:

- The staff have drawn up a paired reading programme which will be implemented in January.
- In line with the SSE Guidelines, the Board of Management, will issue a report to parents in 2014 and annually there-after.