

**An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna**  
**Department of Education and Skills**

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

**Drumacruttin National School,**  
**Dunraymond, Co. Monaghan**  
**Uimhir rolla: 10282S**

**Date of inspection: 16 October 2013**



## Whole-School Evaluation – Management, Leadership and Learning Report

### Introduction

A Whole-School Evaluation – Management, Leadership and Learning (WSE-MLL) was undertaken in Drumacrutin National School 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.

Drumacrutin National School is a co-educational school under the patronage of the Church of Ireland Bishop of Clogher. Attendance levels are very good. 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

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

- The overall quality of pupils' learning, particularly in Mathematics, is very good.
- Teachers create a warm and positive learning environment and pupils are purposefully engaged and interested in their learning.
- The quality of curriculum, pastoral and administrative leadership provided by the principal is very good.
- The collaboration of the school community in developing whole-school policies is commendable.
- The quality of the pastoral care and support for pupils with special educational needs is of a very high standard.
- The board of management demonstrates a high level of commitment to the school.
- The parents' association provides very valuable support to the school.

The following **recommendations** are made:

- Ní mór clár céimnithe a chur i bhfeidhm sa Ghaeilge chun scileanna teanga na ndaltaí a fhorbairt a thuilleadh. *(It is recommended that a graded programme in Irish be put in place to further improve pupils' language skills).*
- The school is advised to develop an e-learning plan and to examine opportunities to use information and communications technology as a teaching and learning tool.
- The board of management should ensure accounts are certified annually, in accordance with Section 18.1 of the Education Act 1998.

### Findings

#### 1. The learning achievements of pupils

- The overall learning achievements of pupils are very good. Pupils experience a broad and balanced curriculum and are motivated to learn. They are frequently afforded purposeful opportunities to engage in both independent and collaborative learning.

They are supported in reflecting on their work and in monitoring their own progress in learning.

- The quality of learning outcomes in Mathematics is high. Pupils demonstrate good reasoning and communicating skills and content is connected to their life experiences. The focus on problem solving and the appropriate use of mathematical language develops and consolidates pupils' mathematical understanding.
- The quality of pupils' learning outcomes in literacy is good. Pupils' reading skills are suitably developed. A structured approach to the development of writing skills is in place. It is recommended that the school examine opportunities for differentiation for the more able pupils to ensure maximum challenge for all.
- Ar an iomlán, tá cailíocht na foghlama sa Ghaeilge go maith. Léann na daltaí go hábailta agus tá siad in ann struchtúr chuí a chur ar abairtí ina gcuid scríbhneoireachta. Moltar níos mó béime a chur ar an gcur chuige cumarsáideach sa Ghaeilge agus clár céimnithe a chur i bhfeidhm chun scileanna teanga na ndaltaí a fhorbairt a thuilleadh. B'fhiú, freisin, níos mó béime a chur ar chomhrá neamhfhoirmiúil agus ar shaorscríbhneoireacht.
- *Overall, the quality of pupils learning outcomes in Irish is good. Pupils read capably and they are able to construct sentences appropriately in their writing. It is recommended that more emphasis be placed on the communicative approach in Irish and a graded programme be implemented to further develop pupils' language skills. Further emphasis should also be placed on informal Irish and free writing.*

## **2. Quality of teaching**

- The overall quality of teaching in the school is very high. A wide range of active and collaborative teaching approaches were observed during the evaluation. Teachers clearly communicate learning objectives during lessons and pupils are involved in setting their own personal literacy and numeracy targets. Teachers are committed to ongoing professional development. While the school is digitally well resourced it is recommended that an e-learning plan be prepared and that teachers examine opportunities to develop information and communications technology (ICT) as a teaching and learning tool.
- The quality of teaching provided for pupils with special educational needs is highly commendable. The staged approach to providing support is being managed and recorded very systematically. Interactions between teachers and pupils are supportive and affirming. Teachers prepare learning plans with specific learning targets for both in-class and withdrawal support. Teachers communicate with parents on a regular basis and provide them with a copy of their children's individual learning plan.

## **3. Support for pupils' wellbeing**

- Pastoral care provision is of a very high standard. Pupils are cared for and supported very effectively. The school engages in initiatives to promote pupils' health and well-being. Pupils are courteous, enthusiastic and very well behaved. Responses to questionnaires administered during the evaluation indicated that all pupils felt safe in their classrooms.
- 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*.

#### **4. Leadership and Management**

- The board of management is committed to ensuring that the school delivers a high quality of education for pupils. The school is well resourced and the board of management is supportive of teachers' professional development. Consideration should be given to the further development of the school grounds to support the science and mathematics curriculum. Communication between the school and the board is very good. To develop communication further the board should consider issuing an annual report to parents on the operation of the school. It is recommended that the board of management accounts be certified annually, in accordance with Section 18.1 of the Education Act 1998.
- The principal provides effective administrative and curricular leadership. She has developed a collaborative and inclusive school culture.
- Communication between home and school is very good. The parents' association actively supports the school. In responses to questionnaires administered during the evaluation all parents indicated that the school was welcoming of them.

#### **5. School Self-evaluation**

- The school has embarked enthusiastically on a process of self-evaluation. In implementing the school improvement plan teachers are employing a wide range of formative assessment practices to determine progress. It is commendable that pupils and teachers engage in reflective practice to ensure sustained progress.

#### **Conclusion**

The school's capacity to develop further is very good. Current self-evaluation practices and routines of reflection indicate openness to change and to continuous improvement.

## **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 Drumacruttin National School welcome the report of the Whole School Evaluation, Management, Leadership and Learning, carried out by the inspectorate of the DES. We were, and are, happy with the positive & practical support that both the report and the experience of the evaluation has provided for our school. We are pleased that the report recognises the work of the whole school community and affirms the commitment, enthusiasm and dedication of our pupils, parents, teachers, principal, ancillary staff and Board of Management. The recognition of the high quality of pastoral care, teaching and learning and support for our pupils is both affirming and encouraging.

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

- A graded programme in Irish will be developed by the Principal and teaching staff.
- The Principal and teaching staff, in collaboration with the ICT committee, will build upon our ICT plan in the development of an e-learning plan.