

**An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna**

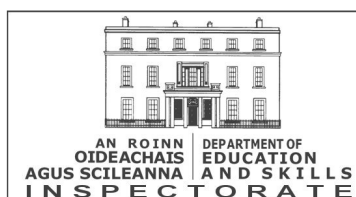
**Department of Education and Skills**

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

**REPORT  
Scoil Cianóg Naofa,  
Timahoe, Co. Kildare**

**Uimhir rolla: 12998C**

**Date of inspection: 16 January 2014**



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

### Introduction

A Whole-School Evaluation – Management, Leadership and Learning (WSE - MLL) was undertaken in Scoil Cianóg Naofa in January 2014. 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. Scoil Cianóg Naofa is a co-educational school under the patronage of the Catholic Bishop of Kildare and Leighlin. The attendance levels of the 109 pupils enrolled are very good. Enrolment patterns are strong and stable. 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 teachers demonstrate commitment to the school and dedication to their work, and are commended for their openness and professionalism.
- Teaching and learning in the school are of a high quality.
- The school building and grounds are maintained to a very high standard and provide a safe, secure and stimulating learning environment.
- The management of pupils is very good and standards of behaviour and discipline are very high.
- Pupils are actively engaged in their learning and demonstrate very high levels of participation and interest.

The following **main recommendations** are made:

- The school is advised to use the immediate environment more effectively to support pupils' learning in Social, Environmental and Scientific Education (SESE).
- In English and Gaeilge, a more structured approach to teaching the writing process and writing genres is advised.

### Findings

#### 1. The learning achievements of pupils

- The overall learning achievements of the pupils are good. Pupils engage actively in their learning, are encouraged and affirmed, and are provided with opportunities to work with their peers. Levels of interest and participation are very high. Pupils have a positive attitude to learning, and are challenged and stimulated by the learning activities. They are encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning and engage in independent work including project work. Their recall of previous learning is very good. A high standard of penmanship and presentation of work was observed throughout the school. In order to further enhance pupils' learning, the immediate school environment should be used more effectively in Social, Environmental and Scientific Education (SESE).
- Learning outcomes in numeracy and literacy in all settings are good. Pupils read accurately and fluently, and display a good understanding of their reading material. The use of ability groupings for reading would further enhance provision. Regular

opportunities are provided for pupils to write. To build on good practice, a more structured approach to the teaching of process writing and writing genres is advised. Appropriate emphasis is placed on oral language development, and fluency and accuracy of expression are fostered.

- Sa Ghaeilge léiríonn formhór na ndaltaí go bhfuil dul chun cinn maith á dhéanamh acu i bhforbairt a scileanna cumarsáide. Sa scríbhneoireacht b'fhiú deiseanna níos mó a thabhairt dóibh chun dul i ngleic leis an scríbhneoireacht chruthaitheach. (*Most pupils demonstrate good progress in their communication skills in Irish. In writing, more opportunities should be provided for them to engage in creative writing.*)
- Pupils demonstrate a good understanding of key mathematical concepts and skills, and can apply them effectively. Responses to questionnaires administered during the evaluation indicate that almost all parents are satisfied with the help their children get in reading and Mathematics.
- The quality of assessment and recording is very good. Whole-school analysis of the outcomes of standardised assessment has taken place. Good quality progress records are maintained in mainstream and support settings.

## **2. Quality of teaching**

- The overall quality of teaching in the school is highly commendable. All teachers have very good classroom management skills. They use a range of teaching methodologies, and their classrooms provide stimulating learning environments. The teaching staff are conscientious, diligent and hard-working. They are well-organised and plan their work effectively. Teaching is informed by consistent and regular high quality planning which is based on specific curriculum-based learning objectives. The most effective lessons observed were well-structured and suitably paced. This very good practice was further characterised by the use of a variety of teaching approaches, the employment of a range of suitable resources, and the provision of learning activities that were challenging and enjoyable. In questionnaire responses, almost all pupils agreed that teachers give clear explanations, and that they enjoy their learning. Almost all parents agreed that teaching is good in the school.
- Support for pupils with special educational needs is of a high quality. It is characterised by effective teaching, good use of resources and ongoing assessment. Following the recent introduction of station teaching, the school is advised to use curriculum-based learning outcomes to underpin the early intervention strategies used.

## **3. Support for pupils' well-being**

- The management of pupils is very good. Standards of behaviour and discipline are very high. Pupils conduct themselves in an exemplary manner, are polite and courteous and are welcoming of visitors. The quality of pastoral care in the school is very good and is acknowledged as such by the parents. Pupils are treated with equality, fairness and respect. They demonstrate suitable levels of confidence and self-esteem.
- A strong sense of community is cultivated in the school, and a positive, caring and collaborative culture is evident. Opportunities for parents to consult with teachers about their children's progress are readily available.
- 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 properly constituted, meets regularly, and is clearly committed to the development of the school. Present and previous boards are to be commended for developing the school's infrastructure, for the manner in which the school building and surrounds are maintained, and for the provision of a safe, secure and pleasant learning environment. Analysis of parent questionnaires indicates that almost all parents are happy with the school. Responses also indicate that there is scope for enhanced communication with and involvement of parents in the life of the school.
- The quality of in-school management is good. The principal and deputy principal are both recently appointed. Both are fully committed to creating a positive school climate and to running an equitable and inclusive school. They carry out their responsibilities diligently and competently.

#### 5. School Self-evaluation

- The school has engaged enthusiastically with the process of school self-evaluation. Strengths and areas for development have been identified, and the school has devised a school self-evaluation report and a school improvement plan. Evidence of the strategies agreed to achieve the school's targets in numeracy are to be seen in planning and practice in the classrooms. A cyclical approach to policy review has also been implemented.

#### Conclusion

The school's capacity to **engage in school improvement** is good. Staff members are open to professional dialogue and to school improvement. Recommendations made during previous incidental inspections are being implemented.

# **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 welcomes the very positive Whole School Evaluation, Leadership and Learning report. The Board wishes to thank the whole school community who contributed to the process. It also acknowledges the courteous and professional manner in which the Inspectors interacted with the management, staff students and parents of the school. The Board congratulates senior management, staff and students of the school on the excellent findings of the management, leadership, teaching and learning taking place in Scoil Cionóg Naofa. Of particular note are the standards of behaviour and discipline which are very high and the way in which pupils conducted themselves in such an exemplary manner.

#### **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 and staff acknowledge the recommendations made in the report and we plan to incorporate them in our school improvement plan and implement them as part of our continuous improvement process.