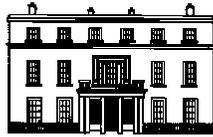


**An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna**  
**Department of Education and Skills**

**Whole School Evaluation**  
**REPORT**

**Moneystown NS,**  
**Moneystown, Roundwood, Co. Wicklow**  
**Uimhir rolla: 13246G**

**Date of inspection: 19 April 2013**



**AN ROINN | DEPARTMENT OF**  
**OIDEACHAIS | EDUCATION**  
**AGUS SCILEANNA | AND SKILLS**

## 1. Introduction

Moneystown NS is a rural, co-educational school in the parish of Roundwood. It is under the patronage of the Catholic Archbishop of Dublin. The overall attendance of the 110 pupils enrolled is 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.

## 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 effectively and is commended on the structures that have been put in place to ensure its efficient functioning.
- The principal demonstrates effective leadership and management qualities and a climate characterised by open communication, collaboration and teamwork is promoted successfully.
- The quality of overall teaching, learning and pupil achievement is good with some very good teaching skills in evidence.
- The openness of staff to embracing new initiatives to bring about continuous school improvement is commended.
- The parents' association, the parent body and the local community are very supportive of the school.
- Pupils are well behaved and engage in activities with interest.
- A positive culture of self-evaluation and planning for improvement is purposefully promoted.

The following **main recommendations** are made:

- Ní mór scileanna labhartha na ndaltaí a fheabhsú agus deiseanna níos rialta a thabhairt dóibh páirt a ghlacadh i bhfíorchumarsáid. *It is recommended that pupils' communicative skills be improved and more regular opportunities to participate in authentic communication be provided.*
- Increased provision of collaborative and independent learning opportunities with a clearer focus on the development of specific learning skills is recommended.
- A more integrated, systematic approach to literacy development should be implemented and reflected in both planning and practice.
- Assessment for learning strategies should be agreed and implemented on a whole-school basis to inform explicit differentiation to cater for the range of pupil ability levels.

### **3. Quality of School Management**

- The board of management operates effectively. Members are very cognisant of their roles and responsibilities and bring a broad range of skills and knowledge to the management of the school. The board is commended on the structures that have been put in place to ensure its efficient functioning. In particular, its involvement in strategic planning, policy development and its consideration of pupil achievement are praised. Accounts of expenditure are being carefully maintained in line with Section 18 of the Education Act, 1998, and the planned external certification of accounts is already in process. The provision of an annual report by the board to the school community on the work of the school is also planned.
- The recently appointed principal demonstrates effective leadership and management qualities. Her vision includes a commitment to high standards of achievement, the provision of a broad and balanced curriculum and the promotion of a reflective professional learning community. A climate characterised by open communication, collaboration and teamwork is promoted successfully. Continuous professional development is valued and encouraged. In their questionnaire responses, almost all parents indicate that they are happy with the school and that it is well managed. The principal is capably supported by the members of the in-school management team who undertake their duties diligently. The openness of staff to embracing new initiatives to bring about continuous school improvement is commended.
- The management of resources is very good. In their questionnaire responses, almost all parents report that facilities are good in the school. A very good range of resources is employed to support teaching and learning and the newly developed school library is used successfully to encourage pupils' interest in reading. While some examples of the purposeful use of ICT are evident, consideration should be given to its increased use by pupils. The school building and grounds are maintained to a high standard and are enhanced through attractive displays of the pupils' work. Ancillary staff efficiently support the work of the school.
- High quality relationships and communication with the school community are evident. The parents' association, the parent body and the local community are very supportive of the school. They contribute positively to provision for pupils through activities such as the literacy initiatives and to the range of resources in use. All parents report that the school is welcoming of them and almost all are happy with their child's achievement. Proposals to involve parents in numeracy activities and the promotion of parental involvement in the formulation and review of pertinent school policies are commended and are worthy of extension.
- The management of pupils is very good. Pupil teacher interactions are positive and supportive. Pupils are well behaved and engage in activities with interest. Their sense of responsibility is constructively promoted. In their questionnaire responses, pupils rate highly their relationships with other pupils and their teachers.

### **4. Quality of School Planning and School Self-evaluation**

- A positive culture of self-evaluation and planning for improvement is purposefully promoted and is beginning to impact positively on the promotion of whole-school approaches to provision. A strategic plan, outlining a range of curriculum and organisational priorities, has been formulated. Surveys of the views of parents and pupils

have been conducted and analysed. Curriculum plans have been reviewed and priority areas identified and a schedule for the review of organisational policies has been prepared. Additional guidance in relation to teaching approaches and procedures for monitoring should be provided to support systematic implementation of agreed whole-school approaches and their impact on pupil learning.

- The quality of individual teacher planning and the recording of progress varies. To optimise the impact of planning on pupils' learning, it is recommended that classroom planning focus more strongly on pupil learning outcomes and skill development. Clearer links should also be established between individual teacher planning and in-class initiatives. In reviewing practice, consideration should be given to a more integrated approach to learning, particularly in literacy and numeracy. The use of monthly progress records to assess the effectiveness of curriculum intervention at a whole-school level is highly praised.
- 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

- The quality of overall teaching, learning and pupil achievement is good with some very good teaching skills in evidence. Praiseworthy aspects of practice include higher-order questioning of pupils and well-planned, differentiated collaborative learning opportunities. Pupils engage positively in lessons. In their responses, almost all children report that teachers explain things clearly. In order to enhance the learning experiences for pupils, increased provision of collaborative and independent learning opportunities with a clearer focus on the development of specific learning skills is recommended. Some good team-teaching practices were observed and the introduction of the Aistear programme is lauded. The school is encouraged to further develop these aspects of pedagogy.
- Commendable approaches to assessment of learning, particularly in literacy and numeracy, are evident across the school. Some useful self-assessment approaches have also been introduced and a comprehensive analysis of standardised test results has been undertaken. Assessment for learning strategies should now be agreed and implemented on a whole-school basis. Assessment outcomes should be used to further inform individual teacher planning and to cater for the differing learning needs of individuals and groups, including the very able pupils.
- Tá obair shásúil ar siúl i ngnéithe áirithe do sholáthar na Gaeilge tríd an scoil. Baintear úsáid oiriúnach as acmhainní agus as modhanna teagaisc éagsúla agus tá stórfhocal breá leathan ar eolas ag cuid is mó de na daltaí. Ní mór scileanna labhartha na ndaltaí a fheabhsú agus deiseanna níos rialta a thabhairt dóibh páirt a ghlacadh i bhfíorchumarsáid. B'fhiú taithí sa bhreis a thabhairt do dhaltaí ar na frásaí nua a chleachtadh, agus a gcumas labhartha ag láimhseáil na mbriathra a fhorbairt a thuilleadh. Sa léitheoireacht, léann formhór de na daltaí le tuiscint chuí agus sonraítear roinnt samplaí maithe de scríbhneoireacht phearsanta. Chun cabhrú leis an sealbhú teanga, moltar na scileanna teanga a chomhtháthú ar bhealach níos nádúrtha.
- *Satisfactory work is evident in various aspects of the provision in Irish across the school. Effective use is made of resources and a variety of teaching approaches and most pupils demonstrate a broad vocabulary range. It is recommended that pupils' communicative skills be improved and more regular opportunities to participate in authentic*

*communication be provided. It is advised that pupils be provided with greater opportunities to practise the newly introduced phrases and to further develop their competence to use verbs correctly in their spoken language. Most pupils read with appropriate understanding and some good personal writing samples were in evidence. To assist language acquisition, a more natural linkage of language skills is recommended.*

- In English, the school's promotion of reading is highly praised and reading standards generally are very good. In their questionnaire responses, all parents report that the school is helping their child to progress with reading and most pupils indicate they are doing well at reading. In the main, pupils demonstrate appropriate oral language competence across a range of topics and themes. Poetry is exploited in some classes and it is recommended that all pupils are given the opportunity to recite poetry. The development of the pupils' personal writing across a range of genres has been prioritised and some fine examples of the pupils' work are in evidence. To enhance the pupils' skills a more integrated, systematic approach to literacy development is recommended. In so doing, a consistent focus on the incremental development of specific oral, reading and writing skills is needed. As part of this process, consideration should be given to the more widespread use of novels.
- In Mathematics, high quality teaching and learning overall is evident. Well structured lessons involve the use of activity-based approaches and the promotion of oral computation skills. Some effective examples of mental mathematical activities and the promotion of problem-solving strategies are in evidence and should be extended across all classes. Pupils engage in activities with understanding and in their responses, a majority of pupils report they are doing well at Mathematics. Greater emphasis on the promotion of mathematical language and differentiated, collaborative, problem-solving activities would further benefit pupil progress.
- In Music, the school's current focus is on the development of the school choir and the performance strand of the curriculum. Commendable work has been undertaken in this regard and pupils sing a range of songs and perform on the tin whistle with ability and enthusiasm. Some good examples of lessons involving listening and responding activities and the development of the pupils' composition and literacy abilities are in evidence. Pupils participate in activities with interest. The sharing of existing good practice and the incremental implementation of a balanced programme across all strands are recommended.

## **6. Quality of Support for Pupils**

- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is of a high quality and careful consideration is given to a continuum of support. Supplementary teaching is provided through a combination of pupil withdrawal and the recently introduced in-class support. Education plans reflect DES guidelines and are regularly reviewed in consultation with class teachers, parents and pupils, where relevant. In devising individual-learning targets additional attention should be afforded to incorporating, in all instances, the specific outcomes of assessment data and reports. Lessons are well structured and teacher/pupil interactions are encouraging and supportive. An extensive range of resources is used to support pupils' learning, including ICT. The pupils engage purposefully in a suitable range of activities and positive levels of pupil progress in the achievement of their learning goals are in evidence.

*Published September 2013.*

# **Appendix**

## **School response to the report**

### **Submitted by the Board of Management**

#### **Area 1: Observations on the content of the inspection report**

The BOM of Moneystown NS would like to take this opportunity to thank the pupils, parents and staff for their support of our school, which was clearly evident during the WSE process. The BOM commends the Inspector on her professionalism throughout the entire process and wishes to acknowledge the very positive findings of the report.

The WSE report identified a number of key strengths that reflect the positive relationships and shared goals of the management, staff, parents and pupils of our school.

The Board of Management praises the fact that the report also recognises the value placed upon professional development and continuous school improvement.

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

As lauded in the report, the culture of self-evaluation and planning for improvement is purposefully promoted in our school. Cognisant of this fact, the management and staff plan to use the WSE report constructively to inform the self-evaluation process currently established in Moneystown National School.