

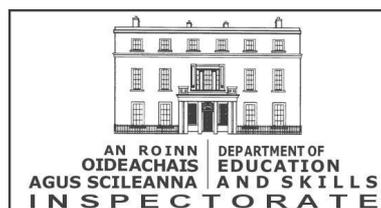
**An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna
Department of Education and Skills**

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

REPORT

**Presentation Primary School
Warrenmount, Dublin 8
Uimhir rolla: 13611D**

Date of inspection: 13 May 2015



Whole-School Evaluation – Management, Leadership and Learning Report

Introduction

A Whole-School Evaluation – Management, Leadership and Learning (WSE - MLL) was undertaken in Warenmount Primary School in May 2015. 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, board and parent representatives, the in-school management team, members of the special education needs team and literacy co-ordinators; 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.

Presentation Convent Primary school is situated in the heart of the inner city in Dublin 8. It caters for pre-school children in its Early Start unit, for boys and girls to first class and for girls only to sixth class. The school operates under the trusteeship of the Presentation Order and the patronage of the Catholic Archbishop of Dublin. The profile of the pupil cohort has changed significantly in recent years. 47% of the pupils speak English as a second language and approximately 40% of the pupils come from religious backgrounds other than Roman Catholic. Efforts to improve attendance have been very successful and the attendance of the 311 pupils enrolled is generally very good. The school participates in Band 1 of DEIS (Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools), has the services of a home-school-community liaison (HSCL) co-ordinator and participates in the School Completion Programme.

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

- This is a welcoming, inclusive school and very good links are fostered with the local community.
- Very good attention is given to the care and well-being of the children.
- The overall quality of teaching is very good with some excellent teaching practices evident.
- Very good learning achievements are being achieved in aspects of literacy and numeracy.
- The school is effectively managed by the principal and board of management.
- Positive relationships have been developed with the general parent body.
- The focus on continuing professional development and the ongoing piloting, sharing and modelling of best practice are at a very high level in this school.
- A number of carefully chosen literacy and numeracy initiatives are in use and are having a positive impact on teaching and learning.
- The engagement and interest levels of the pupils are very high.

The following **main recommendations** are made

- It is recommended that the school self-evaluation (SSE) process be used to plan a comprehensive approach to addressing the pupils' oral language needs through the school.
- Greater use of assessment information and baseline data to inform differentiated objectives for learning and to support teachers in tracking pupil progress is recommended.
- A review of the DEIS action plan in relation to partnership with parents should be undertaken so that more specific targets and actions to further parental engagement with their childrens' learning can be developed.
- It is recommended that the principal lead a review of the current model of learning support so that a better balance can be achieved between differentiated teaching in mainstream classes, team-teaching in class, and the withdrawal of pupils.

Findings

1. The learning achievements of pupils

- A number of literacy initiatives such as *First Steps*, *Book Blitz* and *Literacy Lift-Off* are being implemented and are impacting positively on learning outcomes. Pupils are achieving at very good levels in English reading and some high-quality personal writing is on display. The use of quality criteria to assist teachers in monitoring pupils' writing skills is recommended. Overall, pupils have a very good understanding of the various comprehension strategies, are genuinely motivated to read and are exposed to a wide range of literature.
- Some good learning in Mathematics is being achieved with a number of pupils achieving at very high levels. Pupils are generally confident in using various procedures and have acquired good skills in recalling tables and number facts. Further opportunities should be given to pupils to develop their mathematical thinking skills by engaging in a more in-depth manner with mathematical concepts.
- *Aistear: the early childhood curriculum framework* is used to good effect in the Early Start unit. Its recent introduction in the infant classes is a very positive development for pupils' learning.
- Pupils with special educational needs are making good progress overall. It is recommended that the full range of an individual pupil's needs be incorporated into his/her single education plan and based on a broader range of diagnostic information.
- Pupils have acquired a wide vocabulary in Irish along with a positive attitude towards the subject. Opportunities should be given to pupils to use and practise the Irish language they know in a variety of contexts. Pupils experience broad and interesting programmes in SESE and Arts. The quality of pupils performance in singing and the instrumental work in the senior classes is highly praised. A range of personal, social and health skills is promoted effectively through comprehensive SPHE, Stay Safe and PE programmes and an after-schools programme.
- Some very good approaches to assessment are in use. These include the sharing of clear lesson objectives with the pupils, teachers' observations and a range of standardised and teacher-designed tests. In some individual classes, pupils are given clear formative feedback on their written work. Greater use of assessment information and baseline data to inform differentiated objectives for learning and to support teachers in tracking pupil progress is recommended.

2. Quality of teaching

- The overall quality of teaching is very good with some excellent teaching evident. Among the very good practices in use are: high expectations of pupils' learning, explicit teaching and clear explanations of concepts and procedures, sharing of lesson objectives with the pupils and teaching of higher-order skills. Lessons are generally well structured and resourced and a good balance is achieved between whole-class and pair/group work.
- The focus on continuing professional development and the ongoing piloting, sharing and modelling of best practice are at very high level in this school. This has resulted in a cohesive approach to teaching practices and the use of particular methodologies. The regular reviewing of teaching methods is also commended.
- In order to cater for the range of pupils' ability, including those with special educational needs, the school has put in place a model of support that primarily focuses on team-

teaching in class and the withdrawal of small groups and individual pupils for intensive teaching. It is recommended that the principal lead a review of this model so that a better balance can be achieved between differentiated teaching in mainstream classes, team-teaching in classes and the withdrawal of pupils.

- Some very good teaching methodologies are used in the development of mathematical skills. Very good emphasis is placed on developing number facility among the children in the junior classes and, in some classes, good links are made to mathematics in the environment. The *Maths Recovery* programme is well established and in recent years has been extended to mainstream classes to very good effect. To bring about further improvements in pupils' learning in Mathematics, assessment information should be used more explicitly to inform the mathematics programme for each class grouping.
- There is a balanced and integrated approach to the teaching of literacy. The school staff has identified oral language as a key area for future development and some initial work has begun to address this priority. It is recommended that the SSE process be used to plan a comprehensive approach to addressing the pupils' oral language needs through the school.

3. Support for pupils' well-being

- Pupils are managed very effectively and pupils' behaviour is very good. They present as interested, motivated and enthusiastic learners. Results from the questionnaire data indicate that pupils feel safe in their classrooms, are confident about anti-bullying procedures and that they, and their classmates, are treated fairly. Consideration should be given to the further development of pupils' awareness of their own skills and abilities. The unity of commitment among the members of staff to the individual care of pupils, combined with the work of the care team and the HSCL, means that pupils' wider care and social needs are also addressed. Opportunities are given for pupils to participate in a range of after-school activities that are funded by the School Completion Programme.
- 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 very supportive of the school and fulfils its functions to very good effect. Members have attended regular training, are clear about their roles and responsibilities and ensure compliance with legislative requirements. They are aware of the teaching and learning standards in the school and discuss and contribute to a range of policies and plans. The board supports adaptations to school practices to address the diversity among the families served by the school. In this context, the patron should give consideration to the way in which this diversity can be represented at board level.
- The principal manages the school effectively and maintains a positive working environment. She oversees the development, implementation and review of the DEIS action plan and the acquisition and deployment of resources for teaching and learning. Staff members are encouraged to take initiative, to lead, to engage in professional development and to share their knowledge and expertise.
- The principal is supported readily by the in-school management team. The willingness of staff members at all levels in the school to take on leadership roles and to drive new initiatives has contributed significantly to improvements in teaching and learning. A review of posts is planned for the coming year and this will facilitate the linking of school priorities more directly with individual duties.
- Good communication exists between home and school and a strong sense of community and belonging is evident. In general, parent respondents to the questionnaire stated that

they were happy with the information about their childrens' progress and the arrangements for parent/teacher meetings. The school notice board and the newsletter are effective means of communication. The questionnaire returns indicate that, while the majority of parents were informed regarding the behaviour and bullying policies, a significant number of them were not familiar with the policy for Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE); this needs to be addressed. The HSCL Co-ordinator has developed very good relationships with parents, has organised a wide range of appropriate courses and developed useful links with local agencies and partner bodies. A review of the DEIS action plan in relation to partnership with parents should be undertaken so that more specific targets and actions to further parental engagement with their childrens' learning can be developed.

5. School Self-evaluation

- The school has a three-year DEIS action plan outlining the targets and actions for pupils' attendance, partnership with parents and for literacy and numeracy. The school also has drawn up a SSE report for a similar three-year period. It is advised that the three-year DEIS plan and the school improvement plan be aligned into one document to provide a more cohesive and user-friendly guide for the school.
- Targets for improving attendance are founded on very good baseline information and actions have been implemented consistently and effectively. Good outcomes for attendance are being achieved. Targets and clear actions for improving literacy and numeracy are identified in the plan and these generally inform the daily work of the teachers. It is recommended that a broader range of evidence-based targets be set in the next three-year DEIS action plan. While a meaningful yearly review of the implementation of the literacy and numeracy plans has been carried out, further emphasis should be placed on the monitoring of progress and practice to ensure that what is planned is impacting directly on pupils' learning.

Conclusion

There is a very positive and supportive culture in the school for parents, pupils and staff. A belief in the pupils' abilities, combined with the commitment among the staff to improving learning and to professional development, will facilitate ongoing improvements in both teaching and learning in the coming years.

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 Presentation Primary school Warrenmount would like to acknowledge the affirmation of the work of the school contained in this W.S.E/MLL Report. The Board is encouraged by the strengths and good practices identified in the report.

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 also acknowledges and accepts the recommendations for further development as laid out in the report.

Actions and procedures to address the recommendations have commenced and will be followed through during the school year.