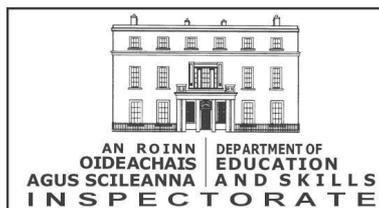


**An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna
Department of Education and Skills**

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

**Scoil Naomh Pádraig
Knockroon, Headford, Co. Galway
Uimhir rolla: 14278B**

Date of inspection: 5 November 2014



Whole-School Evaluation – Management, Leadership and Learning Report

Introduction

A Whole-School Evaluation – Management, Leadership and Learning (WSE - MLL) was undertaken in Scoil Naomh Pádraig, Knockroon, Headford, Co. Galway, in November 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. The board of management of the school was given an opportunity to comment on the findings and recommendations of the report; the board chose to accept the report without response.

Knockroon National School is a rural, co-educational school in the parish of Donaghpatrick-Kilcoona. There are three mainstream teachers in the school. Three learning-support and resource teachers work in the school on a part-time basis. There are 64 pupils currently enrolled and attendance is very good. It is recommended, however, that the school publish an attendance strategy to maintain and improve attendance patterns. The school is under the patronage of the Catholic Archbishop of Tuam.

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

- The board of management is very supportive of the work of the school.
- The principal demonstrates effective administrative, management and leadership skills.
- The teachers use a variety of effective teaching methods.
- Teachers' planning and preparation are good.
- The learning achievements of most pupils range from good to very good.
- The pupils are very well-behaved and well-motivated.

The following **main recommendations** are made:

- The service provided for pupils with learning difficulties and special educational needs should be more effectively co-ordinated.
- Additional emphasis should be placed on the analysis of assessment data on pupil achievement at each class level.
- A parents' association should be established in the school.

Findings

1. The learning achievements of pupils

- The overall learning achievements of pupils are good, with the learning achievements of a majority of pupils in English and Mathematics being very good. The quality of work completed in History, Music, Drama and Visual Arts is particularly praiseworthy.
- Most pupils achieve good to very good standards in English. Pupils' oral language skills are well developed. Most pupils' reading standards are good, with a large number of pupils achieving very high standards in reading. Classroom libraries are well-stocked and pupils are encouraged to read for pleasure. Writing standards are good at each class level, with most pupils producing very good written work in a variety of genres, especially poetry. The presentation of pupils' work from junior infants to sixth class is good.
- Taispeánann daltaí dearcadh dearfach d'fhoghlaim na Gaeilge. Is féidir leis an gcuid is mó de dhaltá páirt a ghlacadh i gcomhrá bhunúsach, cé go moltar níos mó aire a thabhairt do seo ag gach rang-leibhéal chun níos mó muiníne agus líofachta a chinntiú. Cé go bhfuil gnóthachtáil den chuid is mó de dhaltá sa léitheoireacht go maith ar an iomlán, ba ghá tuiscint a fheabhsú san achar seo. Cé go bhfuil cuid den

scríbhneoireacht a dhéantar an-mhaith, ba ghá scileanna scríbhneoireachta chruthaitheach a fhorbairt a thuilleadh.

Pupils demonstrate a positive attitude to the learning of Irish. Most pupils can engage in basic conversation, although it is recommended that this work receives more attention at each class level to ensure greater confidence and fluency. While most pupils' achievement in Irish reading is good overall, there is a need to improve comprehension in this area. While some very good work is done by pupils in Irish writing, there is a need to further develop pupils' creative writing skills.

- Pupils at each class level recite a very wide range of poems, rhymes and songs in both languages.
- Pupils demonstrate good knowledge of mathematical concepts and demonstrate a very positive attitude to Mathematics. Active learning is given due emphasis and pupils develop mathematical skills through talk and discussion, as well as participation in worthwhile activities and problem-solving exercises. Effective use of concrete materials was observed.
- The progress made by most pupils in the school is good, with most pupils making good or very good progress, especially in English and Mathematics. Pupils with special educational needs receive good to very good support in many respects. There is a need, however, to co-ordinate the service provided more effectively to further enhance the quality of the service provided.

2. Quality of teaching

- The overall quality of teaching in the school is good, with most of the teaching observed being good.
- The quality of teachers' planning and preparation in the mainstream classes is good, although there is a need to ensure that each teacher adheres to an agreed school-wide approach.
- The mainstream teachers demonstrate competence in managing multi-grade classes. Group activities are regularly organised across a range of curricular areas. There is a need, however, to differentiate some of these activities more effectively, particularly to cater for the needs of pupils with learning difficulties in each classroom.
- Each teacher provides a stimulating print-rich and mathematics-rich classroom environment to enhance the teaching and learning process. Pupils' written work is regularly monitored and corrected, with useful feedback provided.
- Useful assessment information is gathered on the progress of each pupil. It is recommended, however, that this data be more comprehensively analysed. This analysis should assist in more clearly identifying and addressing individual pupils' learning needs. The more effective use of diagnostic testing as part of the learning support and resource provision should be central to this work.
- Many aspects of the teaching for pupils with special educational needs is good, with some of the teaching being very good. There is a need, however, to place more emphasis on addressing pupils' priority learning needs. There is also a need to consider how in-class support can be provided in a more effective manner, for example, to address the need for greater differentiation between class groups. A more structured approach to early intervention should form part of this work.

3. Support for pupils' well-being

- The management of pupils in this school is very good. Pupils are very well behaved. They are courteous and welcoming to visitors and they are eager to discuss what they have learned.
- Pupil questionnaires indicate that pupils like school and that they feel safe in their class and in the playground. They know that there are clear rules in the school against bullying and misbehaviour.
- A good relationship is evident between teachers and pupils in each mainstream and support setting. In the case of pupils attending learning support and resource classes, it is recommended that parents receive a copy of their child's learning programme, as appropriate.

- Parents are kept well-informed of the work of the school through regular meetings with teachers and by notes/newsletters on relevant matters of interest. There is no parents' association in the school at present. It is recommended that a parents' association be established.
- Parents' questionnaires indicate that, overall, parents are happy with the school. They are of the view that the school is well run, that teaching is good in the school and that the school is helping their children's progress in reading and Mathematics.
- Confirmation was provided by the school authorities that the Board of Management has formally adopted the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*, without modification or amendment, 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 works hard to improve the facilities and services available for teachers and pupils. Building work completed in recent years. The board is properly constituted and meets very regularly. The treasurer makes a financial report at each board meeting. The school accounts are certified annually and are very well maintained. The board discusses assessment and test results at its meetings. It is recommended that further analysis of these results become a regular feature of board meetings and staff meetings.
- The principal was appointed in 1999. She is competent and diligent in her leadership, management and teaching roles. Her vision for the school is that each child be provided with the best learning experience the school can provide. The principal receives very good support from the deputy principal and from the other teachers.
- The school building and grounds are well maintained. The school is well-equipped with teaching aids and other resources. Interactive whiteboards are used effectively to enhance the teaching and learning process at each class level.

5. School Self-evaluation

- Good work is done in the evaluation and reporting on the learning and progress of pupils. Formal parent-teacher meetings are held each year. Parents receive a written report on the progress of their children at the end of each school year.
- The school has engaged positively with the school self-evaluation (SSE) process. A range of evidence, including surveys of parents' views, was used to set targets. The school has identified a number of appropriate targets in literacy. The school improvement plan (SIP) sets out clear actions to address the findings identified in the SSE report. The school is due to complete the school self-evaluation process for numeracy shortly.

Conclusion

The school's capacity to develop further is good.