

An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna

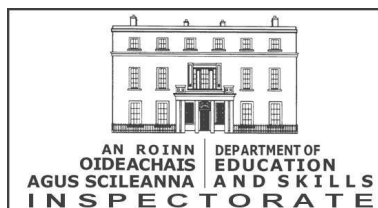
Department of Education and Skills

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

REPORT

**Scoil Naomh Éanna
Carraroe, County Sligo
Uimhir rolla: 14636B**

Date of inspection: 25 November 2013



Whole-School Evaluation – Management, Leadership and Learning Report

Introduction

A Whole-School Evaluation – Management, Leadership and Learning (WSE - MLL) was undertaken in Scoil Naomh Éanna, Carraroe in November, 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. 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.

Scoil Naomh Éanna is a co-educational primary school located on the outskirts of Sligo town. It has a current enrolment of 289 pupils. The school is under the patronage of the Catholic bishop of Elphin. An incidental inspection was undertaken in the school in October 2011.

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

- The contribution of the board of management to the organisation and maintenance of the school is very effective.
- Overall, the quality of teaching is good with some excellent individual practices observed.
- Teachers create very positive, stimulating learning environments with high expectations of pupil behaviour and achievement.
- A strong work ethic is in evidence among staff and there is very good commitment to continuing professional development.
- Pupils demonstrate very high levels of engagement in learning activities, and their attainment in Mathematics, in particular, is very good.
- The school provides a wide range of co-curricular and extracurricular activities to enhance pupils' educational provision.

The following **main recommendations** are made:

- There is a need for stronger leadership to effect curriculum development and to ensure that agreed initiatives are implemented, monitored and evaluated.
- In order to ensure continuity and progression in all subject areas, the principal needs to lead a more collaborative and cohesive approach to curriculum implementation.
- Teachers should consider a wider range of purposeful assessment procedures to support teaching and learning.
- In all classrooms, teachers should implement structured differentiated programmes in literacy to accommodate pupils of different abilities and to maximise their individual outcomes.
- A greater emphasis should be placed on the use of information and communication technologies to support teaching and learning.

Findings

1. The learning achievements of pupils

- The overall learning achievements of pupils are good. Pupils demonstrated high levels of engagement and co-operation in the observed lessons.
- Learning outcomes in Mathematics are very good. Learning outcomes in literacy are good. Pupils were confident and effective communicators and most display effective literacy skills. Literacy is supported through attractive, print-rich environments. A more

systematic approach to differentiated reading texts is required to ensure that pupils of all abilities are challenged appropriately. Most pupils can express themselves appropriately in writing. However, their experience of writing from class to class is varied and a whole-school approach is needed. The quality of some pupils' handwriting and presentation of work is very good, however, there is a need for greater consistency in approaches to handwriting across the school.

- Tá gnóthachtáil na ndaltaí go maith sa Ghaeilge labhartha. Tá úsáid teagmhasach na Gaeilge go héifeachtúil ag na daltaí. Ba choir ord agus eagar sa bhreis a chur ar chur chuige na léitheoireachta, na scríbhneoireachta agus ar úsáid briathra trasna na scoile. Moltar úsáid a bhaint as scrúdú caighdeánach sa Ghaeilge amach anseo. *In oral Irish, learning outcomes are good. Pupils' incidental use of Irish is very effective. A more systematic approach to reading, writing and verb usage should be implemented across the school. The use of a standardised test in Irish is recommended for future implementation.*

2. Quality of teaching

- The overall quality of teaching is good, with some excellent individual practice observed. It would be beneficial if teachers had opportunities to share their expertise and skills in a more systematic way. Teachers display very good commitment to continuing professional development.
- All teachers provide individual classroom planning, some of a very high standard. However, teachers should plan in a more cohesive manner to avoid gaps in curricular provision as pupils progress from class to class. Whole-school approaches to spelling, phonological awareness and writing genres should be implemented, monitored and evaluated. While effective in some classrooms, the potential of information and communication technologies is not fully exploited across the school.
- Pupils' progression in English literacy and numeracy is well monitored in the main. Formal assessment at infant level needs to be extended to ensure that appropriate early-intervention programmes are implemented.
- The quality of teaching provided for pupils with special educational needs (SEN) is good, and in some cases, very good. Overall, there is purposeful target setting and recording of progress. The special education team has undertaken various initiatives within classrooms. The team should convene regular formal meetings so as to develop a more cohesive approach to SEN provision. Additionally, it should provide a more proactive role in advising on and supporting best literacy interventions.

3. Support for pupils' well-being

- Pupils are managed very well in most settings. They display an appropriate respect for their teachers and peers. Pupils' responses in questionnaires, administered during the evaluation, were very positive about the school. Special needs assistants support the needs of individual pupils very effectively. Additional structured break-time activities should be developed to further enhance the social inclusion of all pupils.
- The school is compliant with child protection requirements.

4. Leadership and Management

- The board of management has been very effective in the organisation and maintenance of the school. It is informed of overall school attainments in literacy and Mathematics. The chairperson is a frequent and supportive visitor to the school. Ancillary staff supports the work of the principal and the board very efficiently.
- The work of the principal is effective in the day-to-day organisation of the school. He has successfully created an appreciation of and commitment to the Irish language and culture through a range of extra- and co-curricular activities. His involvement in in-class support as part of the literacy strategy is commended. There is a need for stronger leadership to effect curriculum development and to ensure that agreed initiatives are implemented, monitored and evaluated. In order to ensure continuity and progression in all subject areas, the principal needs to lead a more collaborative and cohesive approach to curriculum implementation.

- Members of the in-school management team undertake various and appropriate duties. Considering the skills and experience within this team, there is greater potential to support and monitor the implementation of whole-school initiatives, aided by a process of action planning.
- The parents' association supports the work of the school and undertakes various fundraising activities on its behalf. Parents assist in some school-based initiatives. However, there are opportunities for greater and more consistent parental engagement in curricular initiatives. Parental questionnaires, administered during the evaluation, indicate an overall positive disposition towards the school.

5. School Self-evaluation

- The school is beginning to develop school self-evaluation processes. Teachers have identified the need for a whole-school integrated approach to literacy and they have begun to work on the development of pupils' comprehension skills. Work in this area is progressing well. The school improvement plan should distinguish between the maintenance of specific literacy initiatives and the introduction of new initiatives to clarify the actions required from individual teachers.

Conclusion

The school's capacity to **develop** further is good but it is dependent on effective leadership to promote cohesion and collaboration in the school's improvement agenda and on individual teachers' willingness to engage with this agenda.

Appendix

SCHOOL RESPONSE TO THE REPORT

Submitted by the Board of Management

Area 1 Observations on the content of the inspection report

The verbal report presented to the staff and Board was very positive but the written report appears less affirming.

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 Principal and staff have embraced all aspects of the recommendations and are currently implementing same.