

**An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna**

**Department of Education and Skills**

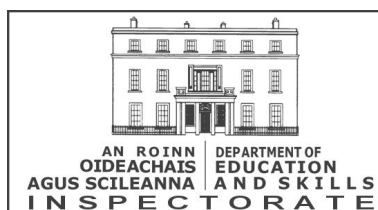
**Whole School Evaluation  
Management, Leadership and Learning**

**REPORT**

**All Saint's National School,  
Carnew, Co. Wicklow**

**Uimhir rolla: 14972R**

**Date of inspection: 17 October 2013**



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

### Introduction

A Whole-School Evaluation – Management, Leadership and Learning (WSE - MLL) was undertaken in All Saints' National School, Carnew, Co. Wicklow in October 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.

All Saints' National School is under the patronage of the Church of Ireland Bishop of Cashel and Ossory and has an enrolment of 27 pupils. The school has recently had an increase in pupil enrolment. The attendance levels of pupils are very 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.

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

- the welcoming, inclusive atmosphere and the strong sense of community
- the very good learning achievements of pupils
- the motivation and well-developed independent learning skills of pupils
- the very good quality of teaching
- the high level of parental support and
- the commitment of the board, principal and staff to the provision of a high quality programme of learning.

The following **main recommendations** are made:

- to augment the pupils' learning further, the range of opportunities for higher-order learning should be extended and a greater focus should be placed on *assessment for learning* and
- to build on the high level of support expressed by parents, the establishment of a formal Parents' Association should be pursued.

### Findings

#### 1. The learning achievements of pupils

- The overall learning achievements of pupils are very good. Pupils experience a broad and balanced curriculum and are motivated to learn. In mainstream classrooms, there is evidence of good active, collaborative learning and pupils' independent learning skills are well developed.
- In literacy, the standardised test scores show that pupils are attaining at very good levels in reading. During the evaluation, pupils read fluently across a range of genres. Pupils enjoy writing and engage well with the writing process. To further improve their writing fluency, additional free writing opportunities should be provided. Pupils are given opportunities to express themselves orally in a variety of cross-curricular contexts.
- In Mathematics, pupils are attaining very good learning outcomes across all strands. The majority of pupils agree in surveys that they are doing well. Their confident manipulation of concrete materials and their facility with oral and mental Maths are particular strengths.
- Sa Ghaeilge, tá caighdeán maith a bhaint amach ag na daltaí. Tá sé ar chumas ag roinnt mhaith acu cumarsáid leanúnach a dhéanamh. *In Irish, pupils are achieving at a good level. Most are able to engage in sustained communication in the language.*
- Learning in Visual Arts places emphasis on creativity and pupils' work across a range of media is attractively displayed. In Music pupils have a good understanding of literacy, can use percussion instruments effectively and the standard of singing is praiseworthy.
- Overall pupils, including those with additional learning needs, are making very good progress. To ensure that pupils' perceptions about their own learning, match their very good learning outcomes, there is a need for greater focus on *assessment for learning*.

## 2. Quality of teaching

- The overall quality of teaching is very good. Lessons witnessed during the evaluation were well structured, utilised a wide range of resources and were based on clear planning. Teachers regularly engage in on-going reflection and continuing professional development.
- The quality of teaching provided for pupils with additional learning needs is high. To compliment small group teaching, the use of in-class support has been recently introduced. As it becomes embedded it will allow for greater targetting of individual pupil needs.
- Successes in the teaching of literacy include the explicit teaching of reading skills, the use of graded reading materials and class novels, as well as the introduction of Aistear. The teaching of comprehension skills has recently been identified as a priority area. While the teaching of oral language is of a high quality, greater emphasis should be placed on the use of higher-order language skills. In writing, further opportunities should be provided for pupils to engage in free writing.
- There are significant strengths in the teaching of Mathematics including a commendable focus on oral and mental mathematics. Recent analysis of standardised tests has identified the need for a greater focus on pupils' problem-solving and higher-order thinking abilities.
- In Music appropriate focus is placed on the development of the concepts; however, care should be taken to ensure the use of a starting note for singing.
- Sa Ghaeilge baintear úsáid as réimse leathan modhanna teagaisc chun an teanga a mhúineadh. Moltar deiseanna sa bhreis a thabhairt do dhaltai an teanga a úsáid go neamhspleách. *In Irish a wide range of methodologies are used to teach the language. It is recommend that further opportunities are given to pupils to use the language independently.*
- ICT is used by all teachers to good effect. Emphasis should now be placed on embedding ICT to support individual pupil learning.
- There are good practices around assessment, including the analysis of standardised tests and the use of a range of assessment methods. It is recommended that mechanisms be developed to track individual pupil attainments and that greater focus be placed on *assessment for learning*.

## 3. Support for pupils' well-being

- The quality of support for pupils' well-being and the relationship between pupils and staff is very good. Pupils are well managed and their behaviour is very good. In questionnaires all pupils agree that they know the school rules and that they feel safe in school.
- The school is welcoming and inclusive and a very good sense of community is cultivated. Strong relations exist between the school, the parents and the wider community.
- 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 provides very commendable support to the school and conducts its business effectively. Clear priorities have been identified and the board is committed to the provision of a high quality programme of learning for pupils. The board should consider the collation and publication of an annual report.
- The principal provides effective leadership to the school community. She and the special duties teacher, work effectively as an in-school management team and decision-making is collaborative.
- In questionnaires, parents express a very high level of satisfaction with the school. This high level of parental support should be harnessed through the establishment of a formal parents' association.

## 5. School Self-evaluation

- The school has recently engaged in a robust self-evaluation of literacy. It was based on evidence collected from pupils and parents and drew on the analysis of standardised tests as well as on teacher reflection.

## **Conclusion**

Given the commitment to the provision of a high quality programme of learning by the school community and the progress on the recommendations of the most recent incidental inspection, the school's capacity to develop further is very good.

## **Appendix**

**School response to the report**

**Submitted by the Board of Management**

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

The positive findings of the report reflect the conscious efforts of the school to provide a high quality inclusive programme of learning.

We are delighted that it recognises the very good learning achievements and independent learning skills of our pupils.

We are pleased that the ethos of collegiality which extends to the high level of parental support was recognized in the report.

We will continue to reflect and self-evaluate in order to implement higher learning outcomes for the children on an on-going basis.

We welcome this report and see it as an opportunity to grow and develop.

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

1. Going forward we plan to place a greater focus on assessment for learning.
2. We are actively involved in forming a Parent Teacher Association to build on the high level of parental support in All Saints' National School.