

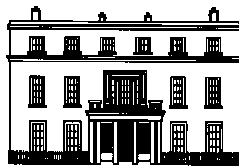
**An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna**

**Department of Education and Skills**

**Whole School Evaluation  
REPORT**

**Camolin National School  
Camolin, Enniscorthy, Co. Wexford  
Uimhir rolla: 15354T**

**Date of inspection: 19 September 2013**



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

## 1. Introduction

Camolin National School is a co-educational, vertical primary school under the patronage of the Catholic Bishop of Ferns. There are 104 pupils enrolled and the attendance of almost all pupils is 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.

## 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 works diligently and is committed to supporting the continuous development of the school.
- The principal leads and manages the school successfully.
- The teachers work effectively as a team and are committed to ensuring ongoing innovation in teaching and learning.
- The pupils are valued members of the school community and their pastoral needs are managed effectively.
- The overall quality of teaching is very good and in general, commendable levels of pupil learning and achievement are in evidence.
- The school building and grounds are maintained to a very high standard.

The following **main recommendations** are made:

- The school should update its plan for Social, Personal and Health Education and develop policies for relationships and sexuality education and special educational needs to guide provision in these areas.
- As a means of strengthening home-school partnerships, the school should promote greater parental involvement in the work and life of the school.
- Moltar plean córasach a chur i bhfeidhm maidir le múineadh na Gaeilge labhartha agus béim níos láidre a leagadh ar fhorbairt scileanna cumarsáide na ndaltaí. *It is recommended that a systematic plan for the teaching of spoken Irish be implemented and a greater emphasis placed on the development of the pupils' communication skills.*
- In English, it is advised that a focused, whole-school approach to the development of speaking and listening skills be put in place to increase the pupils' richness of language.
- In order to further improve learning outcomes for pupils with special educational needs, current practice should be reviewed and developed.

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

- The board of management works diligently and is committed to supporting the continuous development of the school. It engages in a range of tasks that aid day-to-day operation, including the development of school policy. The board is praised for its review of pupil achievement in literacy and numeracy and a further strengthening of this aspect of its role would be beneficial. In order to increase parental understanding, the board is advised to issue an annual report on the operation of the school.
- The principal leads and manages the school successfully and in the parent questionnaires, almost all parents expressed the view that the school is well run. The principal has established a high level of professional credibility and a positive school climate characterised by a shared commitment to the learning and care of pupils. She encourages continuing professional development and the undertaking of leadership roles to promote school improvement. She is ably assisted by the deputy principal who carries out her assigned duties in a professional and competent manner.
- The teachers, special needs assistants and ancillary staff exemplify a strong ethos of teamwork and professional engagement. The school building and grounds are maintained to a very high standard. The school is well provided with a wide range of teaching and learning resources. These resources, in particular ICT, are used effectively in all classrooms.
- In promoting home-school relationships, the school ensures that parents are kept well informed regarding their children's progress and school events. In the questionnaires, almost all parents agreed that there is a good atmosphere in the school and that the school is welcoming of parents. However, the responses also highlight the potential to involve parents more directly in the work and life of the school, including in the development and review of school policy. The activity of the long-standing parents' association in assisting with the provision of school resources and some school events is praiseworthy. It is now timely that the role and operation of the association be reviewed to further strengthen home-school partnerships.
- The management of pupils is very good and in the questionnaires, almost all pupils reported that they get on well with the other children at school. They are valued members of the school community and their pastoral needs, including those pupils with specific learning, emotional or social needs, are managed effectively.

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

- Under the principal's leadership and in cooperation with the teaching staff and board of management, significant progress has been made in the area of school planning. The curriculum plans and organisational policies that have been developed or revised to date are being used well. It is now essential to progress remaining areas of the school plan, in particular reviewing the existing plan for Social, Personal and Health Education and developing policies for relationships and sexuality education and special educational needs. The school has prioritised literacy through its school self-evaluation work and admirable progress is being made in this area.
- Classroom planning is of a high quality. The teachers are commended for ensuring strong links between the primary curriculum, the school plan, their long-term and short-term planning and classroom practice. Informative monthly progress records are maintained.

- 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 overall quality of teaching is very good and in general, commendable levels of pupil learning and achievement are in evidence. The teachers structure their lessons well and draw on a wide variety of teaching approaches. A growing range of assessment modes is in use, including increased opportunities for the pupils to engage in meaningful self-assessment. In the questionnaires, a majority of pupils confirmed that they enjoy their lessons and learning while almost all parents expressed the view that teaching is good in the school and that their child is doing well.
- Sa Ghaeilge, cé go mbaineann na hoidí úsáid as raon de chur chuigí, gníomhaíochtaí agus áiseanna oiriúnacha, tá scóp chun forbartha i bhfoghlaim agus i ngnóthachtáil na ndaltaí. Tá tuiscint mhaith ag formhór na ndaltaí ach tá gá le béim níos láidre a leagadh ar fhorbairt a scileanna cumarsáide. Chun an sprioc seo a bhaint amach, moltar plean córasach a chur i bhfeidhm maidir le múineadh stór focal, struchtúir teanga agus gramadach na Gaeilge chun a chinntiú go bhfuil leanúnachas agus dul chun cinn ó rang go rang. Léiríonn cuid de na daltaí caighdeán oiriúnach sa léitheoireacht agus sa scríbhneoireacht. Ba chóir anois úsáid a bhaint as ábhair léitheoireachta agus tascanna scríbhneoireachta breise ar leibhéil chumais na ndaltaí.

*In Irish lessons, although the teachers draw on a range of appropriate approaches, activities and resources, there is scope to develop pupil learning and achievement. Most pupils demonstrate good understanding but a greater emphasis on the development of their communication skills is required. To achieve this goal, it is recommended that a systematic plan be put in place regarding the teaching of vocabulary, language structures and grammar to ensure continuity and progression from class to class. Some pupils demonstrate an appropriate standard in reading and writing. It is advised that additional reading materials and writing tasks suited to the pupils' ability levels be used.*

- Teaching, learning and pupil achievement in English is of a high quality. Most pupils display a good level of competence and confidence when speaking. There is potential nevertheless to further develop their richness of language and their ability to express their thoughts. It is advised that a focused, whole-school approach to the development of speaking and listening skills be put in place. Through the school's implementation of a range of high quality reading initiatives, commendable improvement in reading standards is in evidence. In the questionnaires, most pupils reported that they think they are doing well at reading. The pupils' written work is of a good quality overall and the school's provision of well-structured opportunities for the pupils to experience a range of writing activities is praiseworthy.
- Teaching and learning in Mathematics is of a good quality and most pupils surveyed report that they believe they are progressing well. Praiseworthy features of provision include the clear explanation of new concepts, skilful teacher questioning and the effective use of resources and hands-on learning tasks. In the main, pupil achievement in Mathematics is of a competent standard. In a number of class settings, the teachers focus strongly on developing mental mathematics skills and this practice would benefit from consistent, schoolwide implementation. In order to improve pupil achievement further, it is advised that they be provided with regular opportunities to engage in mathematical problem-solving, including the use of mathematical trails.

- Effective practice is in evidence in teaching, learning and pupil achievement in Geography. Pupil interest and curiosity are generated successfully through the use of ICT, maps and photographic images and the development of investigation skills. The teachers are commended for the emphasis on integrating learning in Geography with History and Science, the promotion of pupils' understanding of their local environment and the development of mapping skills. The school's participation in the *Green Schools* programme successfully promotes understanding of environmental awareness and care.

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

- The quality of support for pupils with special educational needs (SEN) is competent. It is characterised by high levels of consultation between support teachers and class teachers and positive teacher/pupil interactions. A number of in-class initiatives to address literacy and numeracy needs are being implemented successfully in tandem with the withdrawal of pupils for individualised and small-group tuition. In the main, the progress of pupils with additional learning needs is commendable.
- In order to develop the quality of provision further, a number of areas should be addressed. Selection criteria and the SEN caseload should be reviewed to ensure that pupils in need of support are being provided for and that opportunities for prevention and early intervention are prioritised. In devising programmes of learning, the school should draw on a greater range of diagnostic tools and ensure greater specificity of learning targets and actions. Assessment and record-keeping systems should be strengthened to aid continuity in learning and the evaluation of individual pupil progress.

*Published December 2013*

# **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 Camolin NS wish to thank the D.E.S. Inspector for her courtesy and professionalism regarding the manner in which the W.S.E. was carried out. We also thank her for recognising and acknowledging the excellent teamwork, collegiality and positive environment in the school.

The high standards of teaching and learning were also noted, as well as our good use of I.T. One of the most rewarding aspects of the W.S.E. was the confidential questionnaire issued to parents and pupils; it is very encouraging to see such a high level of satisfaction from both parents and pupils. The report gives great encouragement to all involved.

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

We are actively working on implementing the recommendations of the inspector.

1. The school's current SPHE plan is being reviewed and the staff is currently involved in RSE training.
2. An open afternoon was held in October to display children's work and progress in the Junior and Senior Infant classroom. This will be introduced in all classrooms throughout the year.
3. Gaeilge – Tá béim níos láidre leagtha ar fhorbairt scileanna cumarsáide na ndaltaí agus tá plean againn chun a chinntiú go bhfuil leanúnachas agus dul chun cinn ó rang go rang. There is greater emphasis on the development of the pupils' spoken Irish with a clear plan in place throughout the classes to ensure continuity.
4. We have initiatives already in place e.g. First Steps Speaking and Listening.
5. We have reviewed the SEN caseload since receiving the report and had made the necessary adjustments to ensure ample opportunity for prevention and early intervention. We have also built on our existing range of diagnostic tools.