

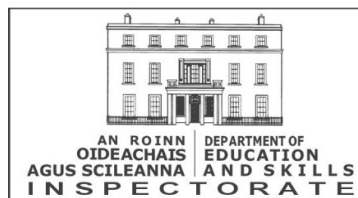
**An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna
Department of Education and Skills**

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

REPORT

**Corduff National School
Lusk, County Dublin
Uimhir rolla: 15650A**

Date of inspection: 15 October 2015



Whole-School Evaluation – Management, Leadership and Learning Report

Introduction

A Whole-School Evaluation – Management, Leadership and Learning (WSE - MLL) was undertaken in Corduff National School in October, 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, with board and parent representatives, completed parent and pupil questionnaires, and a selection of school documents. 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.

There are 111 pupils enrolled in the school. Enrolment figures are stable and attendance levels are very good.

The evaluation has found:

- The quality of education being provided is of a very high standard and pupils are achieving very well across a range of curriculum areas. There is scope to enhance the range of Irish used in some lessons.
- Teaching is of a good standard. All teachers were observed to teach stimulating, well-paced and well-structured lessons.
- Very good regard is paid to the development of focused programmes of support for pupils with special educational needs (SEN). While a number of worthwhile approaches are taken in relation to SEN support, the particular practice of providing in-class support by means of teacher support to individual pupils within whole-class lessons is limited in value.
- School leadership is of a very high quality with clearly delineated, understood and well-implemented roles and responsibilities between the board, the principal and the in-school management team.
- Communication with parents is informative and managed very effectively.
- The capacity to engage in school improvement is very good, given the strong sense of shared purpose within the school community and the interest of the board and teachers in providing pupils with rich learning experiences.

The following **main recommendations** are made:

- Cé go múintear na ceachtanna Gaeilge trí Ghaeilge tríd an scoil, moltar Gaeilge leanúnach níos leithne a úsáid i roinnt ranganna le go gcloisfidh na daltaí Gaeilge níos saibhre. *Even though Irish lessons are taught through the medium of Irish across the school, a broader range of continuous Irish is required in some classes so that pupils can hear a richer range of Irish.*
- The observed practice of providing in-class support to individual pupils with SEN should be extended to group-centred teaching.

1. The learning achievements of pupils

- The overall learning achievements of pupils are of a very high quality. Pupils present as enthusiastic and confident learners. Displays of learning in the Visual Arts exemplify creativity and an appropriate mastery of skill and media in the making of such art. Interesting learning experiences are provided in Social, Environmental and Scientific Education. Pupils sing tunefully and demonstrate a very good level of musicianship in their playing of the tin-whistle. Worthwhile provision is in place in order to ensure that pupils have access to the full range of the curriculum in Physical Education. Pupils engage in self-assessment practices with interest and enthusiasm. Examples of insightful commentary by pupils on their work were noted during the evaluation.
- Pupils are achieving very well in numeracy. Skill development is suitably emphasised and permeates lessons. A strong emphasis is placed on open-ended questions that are very effective in creating opportunities for pupils to talk about their learning and clarify their

understanding. Collaborative learning is also effectively deployed to enhance conceptual understanding.

- Within literacy, pupils are attaining very well. They have well-developed oral language skills. There is evidence that pupils are very interested in reading. Particularly good provision is in place for meeting the needs of more-able readers who are attaining very well in reading. A range of writing genres has been explored to a high standard. Copybook work is generally neat, well presented and monitored very effectively by teachers. The recent focused and co-ordinated endeavours of teachers to develop pupils' spelling skills has been worthwhile. In the junior classes, there is scope for further emphasis to be placed on the systematic learning, display and writing of sight words related to the pupils' own lives and interests; this will enhance pupils' independent writing skills.
- Is breá an bhéim atá curtha ar Ghaeilge neamhfoirmiúil le linn an lae agus í á cloisteáil i measc na ndaltaí timpeall na scoile. Tá béim bhreá curtha ar fhorbairt foclóra agus chumarsáide sna ceachtanna Ghaeilge. Aithnítear go bhfuil raon leathan foclóra ag na daltaí: b'fhiú anois do na múinteoirí níos mó deiseanna a thabhairt do na daltaí a n-abairtí féin a chur le chéile. Cé go múintear na ceachtanna Gaeilge trí Ghaeilge tríd an scoil, moltar Gaeilge leanúnach níos leithne a úsáid i roinnt ranganna le go gcloisfidh na daltaí Gaeilge níos saibhre. Léann na daltaí le foghraíocht cheart agus le tuiscint bhreá. Tá caighdeán maith acu sa scríbhneoireacht. *The emphasis placed on informal Irish throughout the day and its use by pupils around the school is very commendable. Vocabulary development and communication are suitably emphasised within lessons. Pupils demonstrate that they have a broad vocabulary: teachers now need to provide pupils with more opportunities to structure their own sentences. Even though Irish lessons are taught through Irish across the school, a broader range of continuous Irish is required in some classes so that pupils can hear a richer range of Irish. Pupils read with correct pronunciation and good understanding. They have attained a good standard in writing.*
- The teaching and learning of pupils with SEN is of a good quality. It is very effective practice that lesson objectives are shared with pupils and that they are aware of how these objectives are improving their learning. A strong emphasis is placed on the progressive and systematic development of skills. A number of worthwhile approaches to providing in-class support for pupils are in evidence. However, the practice observed during the evaluation of providing in-class support to pupils with SEN by means of teacher support to individual pupils within whole-class lessons is limited in its impact and needs to be extended to group-centred teaching. Such extension will make better use of teachers' skills and enhance learning for these pupils. The potential for supporting pupils with social learning needs through focused group work should be explored further.

2. Quality of teaching

- The quality of teaching is good. All teachers observed taught stimulating, well-paced and well-structured lessons. Teachers are very effective at probing pupils' thinking and synopsising their learning. They were observed to be very well prepared and adept at implementing a broad range of teaching methodologies in a broad range of organisational settings. Underpinning these effective practices is the high regard that teachers have for pupils and the commitment of teachers to creating rich learning experiences. In a few instances, pupils could have been more attentive during some lessons. Attention levels in these instances will be enhanced through ensuring that expectations with regard to attention levels are maintained across all lessons.

3. Support for pupils' well-being

- The management of pupil is successful in creating a positive and ordered learning environment. In a questionnaire completed as part of this evaluation, very strong levels of satisfaction were expressed by both pupils and parents with regard to both the welfare and educational dimension to school-life.
- The inclusion of pupils with SEN is very successful. It is grounded in the clear identification of pupils' needs and the careful consideration of how pupils can be integrated into all aspects of school-life.

- 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 among Primary and Post-Primary Schools*.

4. Leadership and Management

- The overall quality of leadership and management is very good. The board of management is correctly constituted and fulfils its responsibilities with due regard to proper procedure and protocol. It is very commendable that the board is aware of current priorities within the area of teaching and learning.
- The in-school management team has clearly identified roles and responsibilities and fulfils these effectively in a spirit of collegial partnership. The principal brings an energy and enthusiasm to her role and has a clearly articulated vision for learning within the school. It is very commendable that this vision is shared with and understood by pupils. Communication with parents is informative and managed very effectively.

5. School Self-evaluation

- School self-evaluation (SSE) is being undertaken in a focused manner. Whole-school planning for SSE is included in teachers' individual planning; this is a very worthwhile practice. SSE is leading to improvements in learning for pupils. It is also good practice that the SSE process is communicated effectively to parents.

Conclusion

The capacity to engage in school improvement is very good given the strong sense of shared purpose within the school community and their interest in providing pupils with rich learning experiences. The emphasis placed by teachers on both reflection and action will ensure focus and direction to school development.

Appendix

School response to the report

Submitted by the Board of Management

Part A: Observations on the content of the inspection report

The Board of Management welcomes the positive account of teaching, learning, leadership and management at Corduff National School. The Board would like to congratulate and thank the Principal, Teachers, Ancillary Staff, Pupils and Parents for their shared commitment to creating and maintaining a welcoming and effective learning community.

Part B: Follow-up actions planned or undertaken since the completion of the inspection activity to implement the findings and recommendations of the inspection

The Board and teaching staff acknowledge the recommendations to further enhance specific areas. This work is already underway and will also be addressed through the school's ongoing School Self-Evaluation and School Improvement Planning processes.