Whole School Evaluation
REPORT

Carriglea NS,
Carriglea, Dungarvan, County Waterford
Uimhir rolla: 16950R

Date of inspection: 30 May 2011
1. Introduction

Carriglea NS is a co-educational, rural primary school under the patronage of the Catholic Bishop of Waterford and Lismore. There are 75 pupils enrolled currently and attendance rates are good. The board of management was given an opportunity to comment in writing on the findings and recommendations of the evaluation, and the response of the board will be found in the appendix to this report.

2. Summary of Findings and Recommendations for Further Development

The following are the main strengths of the work of the school:

- Very positive relationships exist between the members of the school community.
- The board of management provides significant support to the school.
- The principal and teachers work diligently to promote learning in the school.
- The parents and parents’ association provide valuable support to many aspects of school life.
- The standard of teaching and learning is commendable and literacy and numeracy standards in the school are laudable.

The following main recommendations are made:

- There should be further differentiation of literacy and numeracy programmes in mainstream classroom settings to ensure that the needs of all pupils are met more effectively.

- Moltar a thuilleadh deiseanna cainte a chruthú do na daltaí chun a féin-mhuinín i leith labhairt na Gaeilge a neartú. **Additional speaking opportunities should be created for pupils to strengthen their confidence in using the Irish language.**

- School self-evaluation practices should be developed further to provide for continuous improvements in teaching and learning.

3. Quality of School Management

- The board of management is commended for the significant support provided to the school and for the provision and maintenance of the very attractive school building and grounds. Individual members carry out their roles with dedication and the board plays an active role in considering and ratifying relevant school policies.

- The principal provides good-quality leadership and directs the work of the school energetically and efficiently. She promotes positive working relationships and fosters a strong culture of cooperation amongst all members of the school community. She is ably supported by the post-holders who perform their duties diligently and contribute in a meaningful way to the management of the school. In order to further enhance this contribution, duties that address curricular priorities should be extended in order to ensure continued school improvement.
• School accommodation is of a very good standard and is well maintained. The wide variety of resources available for teaching and learning is used effectively. The recently acquired ICT resources are used successfully by the teachers in the implementation of the curriculum.

• The parent body, along with the parents’ association, provides valuable practical and financial support to the school and input constructively into school policy review and development. In the parent questionnaires, all respondents reported that they are happy with the school.

• The pupils are courteous, mannerly and very well behaved. This behaviour is managed in an affirming and respectful manner by the teachers. In the questionnaires completed by pupils, all pupils reported that they were happy coming to school.

4. Quality of School Planning and School Self-evaluation

• The overall quality of school planning is satisfactory. Curriculum plans provide some guidance to inform classroom practice. As curriculum plans are reviewed, they should be contextualised further to the evolving needs of the school and have a greater focus on pupil learning outcomes. School self-evaluation practices should be developed further to provide for continuous improvements in teaching and learning. Greater involvement of and consultation with all parents in aspects of the planning process is advised.

• All teachers provide suitable long-term and short-term planning, as well as monthly progress reports to support their teaching.

• School authorities provided evidence that, in compliance with Primary Circular 0061/2006, the board of management has formally adopted the Department’s Child Protection Guidelines for Primary Schools. Evidence was provided to show that these child protection procedures have been brought to the attention of management, school staff and parents; that a copy of the procedures has been provided to all staff (including all new staff); and that management has ensured that all staff are familiar with the procedures to be followed. A designated liaison person (DLP) and a deputy DLP have been appointed in line with the requirements of the guidelines.

5. Quality of Teaching, Learning and Pupil Achievement

• The quality of teaching, learning and pupil achievement is commendable, with laudable standards achieved in literacy and numeracy. Lessons are well structured and paced and worthwhile efforts are made to present learning opportunities in an engaging manner. The pupils are encouraged and affirmed consistently. The questionnaire responses indicated that all pupils surveyed like coming to school and get on well with their fellow pupils.

• A variety of effective assessment practices is in use including teacher observation, monitoring of written work, and teacher-designed and standardised tests. Consideration should be given to the consistent recording and communication of such data. Pupils’ progress in standardised tests in English and Mathematics is tracked appropriately. Parents receive good quality information about their children’s progress.

• Tá cáilíocht an teagaisc agus na foghlaíma sa Ghaeilge go maith. Úsáidtear modhanna múinte agus acmhainní oiriúnacha, ar an iomlán, chu n suim na ndaltaí a mhúscailt. Tá foclóir cuí ag formhóir na ndaltaí agus tá a scileanna labhartha á bhforbairt go céimniúil. Moltar tuilleadh deiseanna cainte a chruthú doibh chun a féin-mhuinín i leith labhairt na
The quality of teaching and learning in Irish is good. On the whole, suitable teaching methodologies and resources are used to stimulate the pupils’ interest. A majority of pupils have acquired appropriate vocabulary and their oral skills are being developed progressively. It is advised that additional speaking opportunities are created to strengthen the pupils’ confidence in using the Irish language. Reading is approached suitably and the majority of pupils read with understanding. It is advised that extra Irish reading material be provided for pupils. The standard of written work is good.

The quality of teaching, learning and pupil achievement in English is commendable. Appropriate emphasis is placed on oral language development and the pupils express themselves confidently and articulately. Reading skills are taught effectively and novels are used appropriately from junior to senior classes. The use of supplementary readers should be further developed in all classrooms to aid in effective differentiation. Writing skills are taught suitably in most classes and the pupils write in various genres and for different purposes and audiences. Further engagement in the writing process is advised throughout the school.

Overall standards in teaching, learning and pupil achievement in Mathematics are good and in the questionnaires a majority of pupils indicated that they feel they are doing well in Mathematics. Effective use is made of illustrative materials, manipulatives, displays and talk and discussion to ensure that the pupils understand the concepts taught. Learning is differentiated effectively in some classes. To further develop this area, greater emphasis should be placed on mental Mathematics and the implementation of problem solving strategies on a whole-school basis.

The quality of teaching and learning and pupil achievement in Science is good. In lessons, effective use is made of a wide variety of resources including the local environment. The implementation of a broad science programme ensures that there is appropriate balance between the acquisition of scientific knowledge and the development of skills. The teachers use appropriate active-teaching methodologies and the pupils engage enthusiastically in investigative learning and experiments. The school has won a Discover Primary Science award and is working towards its third flag in the Green Schools initiative. Pupil participation in maintaining the school garden enhances the learning experience.

6. Quality of Support for Pupils

Effective practice to support pupils with special educational needs and pupils from the Travelling community is in evidence. The pupils receiving supports are making good progress. Staff members collaborate effectively in determining the nature and levels of support received by pupils and the staged approach to assessment, identification and programme planning is implemented well. Focused group and individual learning plans are prepared appropriately. A range of tests is used effectively to screen pupils who experience difficulty and to monitor progress on an ongoing basis. To advance provision further for pupils with additional learning needs, alternative models should be explored to develop the level of in-class support provided in the school.

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Appendix

School response to the report

Submitted by the Board of Management

Area 1: Observations on the content of the inspection report

The staff and B.O.M. were very pleased to have the opportunity of partaking in a WSE, which was carried in such a professional manner. This report clearly outlines the excellent work going on in our school and affirms the dedication and commitment of the staff, management and parents. The staff found the evaluation process both helpful and encouraging. The school community are committed to providing high quality education and care to all our pupils.

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 B.O.M. are happy to report that we have begun to implement the recommendations of the report. To further promote differentiation of our Literacy programmes we have purchased further supplementary reading schemes for all class levels. All classes within the school will be involved in a whole school paired reading scheme. Greater emphasis is being placed on oral Irish throughout the school day, in the yard, the hall and the classrooms. Communication to all staff members through the medium of Irish is encouraged. A whole school emphasis is being placed on mental maths as part of our daily lessons. The B.O.M. and staff will continue to implement the recommendations and they will continue to be a high priority at all staff meetings.