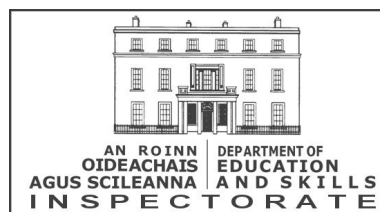


**An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna  
Department of Education and Skills**

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

**Scoil Íosagáin  
Coolgreany, Gorey, Co. Wexford  
Uimhir rolla: 17117P**

**Date of inspection: 1 May 2014**



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

### Introduction

A Whole-School Evaluation – Management, Leadership and Learning (WSE - MLL) was undertaken in Scoil Íosagáin in April/May 2014. 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 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 Íosagáin is a rural, co-educational primary school and operates under the patronage of the Catholic Archbishop of Dublin. The attendance of the ninety-six pupils enrolled is generally very good.

Scoil Íosagáin participates in the Department's Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools (DEIS) rural programme and in the Gorey School Completion Programme (SCP). The school also participates in the Health Promoting Schools initiative and the Green Schools initiative.

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

- The overall learning achievements of pupils, including pupils with special educational needs, are good, with a considerable number of pupils demonstrating very good progress in their learning.
- Overall, the quality of teaching is good, with very effective practice in evidence in a number of settings.
- The teachers are commended for the effective implementation of a range of literacy initiatives in English, including intensive reading interventions for pupils with special educational needs.
- Support for pupils' well-being is very good and the pupils experience a caring and encouraging school environment.
- Pupil interest and learning achievements in the performing arts areas of Music, dance and Drama are particularly praiseworthy
- The work of the school is supported by a hard-working board of management, principal, staff and parents' association, and the school enjoys the support of parents and wider school community.

The following **main recommendations** are made:

- The school improvement plan for literacy and numeracy should be based on a stronger and more thorough evidence base, which in turn should be used to identify and progress the school's literacy and numeracy priorities.
- In providing for pupils with special educational needs, the school should ensure that policy and practice provides, where relevant, for the meeting of pupils' social and emotional learning needs in both mainstream and support teaching settings. It is further recommended that the current models of in-class support be reviewed and developed to maximise the potential of team teaching to improve pupil learning outcomes.
- The school should ensure that the good teaching and learning practices in evidence in some classes regarding pupils' spoken competence in Irish are implemented consistently across the school.

## Findings

### 1. The learning achievements of pupils

- The overall learning achievements of pupils, including pupils with special educational needs, are good, with a considerable number of pupils demonstrating very good progress in their learning.
- Good quality learning outcomes are in evidence overall in English literacy and Mathematics. The school continues to make progress in improving pupil achievement in Irish. To advance this subject area further, it is recommended that the strong emphasis in some classes on developing pupils' spoken competence in Irish be implemented consistently across the school.
- Laudable pupil learning is in evidence in History, Geography and Science. Pupil interest and learning achievements in the performing arts areas of Music, dance and Drama are particularly praiseworthy and this provision is actively supported through Gorey SCP.
- Throughout the school, the pupils display a positive attitude to learning and are regularly challenged and stimulated by the learning activities provided for them. In the pupil questionnaire, most pupils stated that they enjoy their lessons and learning.

### 2. Quality of teaching

- Overall, the quality of teaching is good, with very effective practice in evidence in a number of settings. In particular, the teachers are commended for the successful implementation of a range of literacy initiatives in English, including intensive reading interventions for pupils with special educational needs.
- The teachers create a positive learning environment and in general draw on a variety of suitable teaching approaches that are well matched to the pupils' interests and ability levels. In some classes, formative assessment practices in literacy and numeracy are used skilfully, including constructive pupil-teacher conferencing.
- In the parent questionnaire, all parents expressed the view that teaching is good in the school and that it is helping their child to progress with reading and Mathematics.
- Overall literacy and numeracy provision for pupils with special educational needs is of a high quality and the teachers are successful in aiding pupils to achieve their personal learning goals. In providing for such pupils, the school should ensure that special educational needs policy and practice provides, where relevant, for the meeting of pupils' social and emotional learning needs in both mainstream and support teaching settings. It is further recommended that the current models of in-class support be reviewed and developed to maximise the potential of team teaching to improve pupil learning outcomes.

### 3. Support for pupils' well-being

- Support for pupils' well-being is very good and the pupils experience a caring and encouraging school environment. In the questionnaires, almost all pupils reported that they like their school and that they get on well with the other children, while all parents confirmed that the school helps their child's social and personal development.
- Pupils' well-being is also supported successfully through high quality communication between school and home, including the work of the active and dedicated parents' association, and through the supports provided through Gorey SCP.
- 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 works diligently to support the ongoing development of the school. In particular, significant attention is given to the maintenance of the school building and grounds, the promotion of the school in the local community and the consideration of some pertinent school policies. Some attention is afforded to teaching, learning and pupil achievement matters and it is advised that this aspect of the board's role be developed further.

- The principal fulfils his leadership and management role with enthusiasm and dedication. Since his appointment in recent years, he has progressed a number of curriculum and organisational initiatives to increase the range of learning experiences provided for pupils and to assist in the smooth day-to-day operation of the school. He is ably assisted by the deputy principal who demonstrates a well-developed understanding of the local community and uses this to positive effect in providing for pupils' personal development and well-being. In the parent questionnaire, almost all parents expressed the view that the school is well run.

#### **5. School Self-evaluation**

- A school improvement plan has been prepared by the principal and teaching staff for the purpose of improving pupil learning outcomes in literacy and numeracy. In order to ensure the effectiveness of this plan, it is recommended that it be based on a stronger and more thorough evidence base. This more indepth evidence base should then be used to identify clearly the literacy and numeracy priorities requiring development, specific improvement targets to be achieved over a three-year period and the changes in teaching and learning practices that are to be implemented across the school. The implementation of the school improvement plan should be monitored and evaluated formally on a regular basis.

#### **Conclusion**

Through the implementation of more rigorous school self-evaluation and school improvement practices, the school's capacity to develop further is good.

## **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 Scoil Íosagáin welcomes the positive Whole School Evaluation report of April/May 2014. The report both affirms the work already undertaken in the school and more importantly provides a road map, informing future planning and development. We appreciate the acknowledgement of participation in programmes such as the DEIS scheme and the Gorey School Completion, which have enhanced the children's attendance and participation in school life. The Board wishes to acknowledge the collective efforts of the whole school community who contributed to the process.

### **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 wish to also acknowledge the recommendations and have put in place procedures to ensure the successful implementation of same.

In respect of the recommendation that the school improvement plan on literacy and numeracy, we have initiated procedures to ensure a stronger and thorough evidence base from which we may identify and progress the school's literacy and numeracy policies.

In respect of the recommendation regarding provision for children with special educational needs, we have included policy and practice which reflects these needs. We also have made progress towards the provision of increased in-class supports for children with special educational needs.

Glacadh le moltaí maidir le múineadh na Gaeilge labhartha ionas go mbeadh sé de dhualgas orainn na dea-cleachtais, atá ann i ranganna áraithe cheana féin, a chur ar fáil go forleathan tríd na ranganna uilig.