

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

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

**Scoil Mhuire,  
Robinstown, Navan, Co. Meath.  
Uimhir rolla: 17520U**

**Date of inspection: 02 April 2014**



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

### Introduction

A Whole-School Evaluation – Management, Leadership and Learning (WSE-MLL) was undertaken in Scoil Mhuire, in April 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 of the school was given an opportunity to comment on the findings and recommendations of the report; the board chose to accept the report without response.

Scoil Mhuire is presented in a very stimulating and well-maintained manner. It is under the patronage of the Catholic Bishop of Meath. Attendance levels are very good. The school has eleven teachers including the school principal. Current enrolment is 188 pupils.

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

- The overall quality of teaching and learning is very good.
- Pupils are making very good progress in literacy and numeracy.
- The principal and teachers work creatively and effectively to promote a stimulating, challenging and vibrant learning environment.
- Pupils are very interested in learning, applying themselves to their work with enthusiasm and pride.
- High quality focused and nurturing support is in place for pupils with special educational needs.
- The board of management is committed to promoting an inclusive school and providing a well-resourced learning environment for the pupils.
- The parents' association and ancillary staff provide very valuable support to the school.

The following **recommendations** are made:

- Greater emphasis should be placed on in-class support approaches and early intervention in junior infants.
- In the further development of numeracy, it is recommended that greater emphasis be placed on cooperative learning and problem-solving.

### Findings

#### 1. The learning achievements of pupils

- The overall learning achievements of pupils are highly commendable. Lessons make very good provision for the purposeful and active involvement of pupils. They are enthusiastic about their work, applying themselves to tasks and activities with focus and pride. Their work is presented to a high standard. Commendable emphasis is placed on Social, Environmental and Scientific Education (SESE).
- The quality of learning outcomes in Mathematics is very good. Strong emphasis is placed on the development of mathematical language and number knowledge. Content is effectively

connected to the life experience of the pupils. Resources are used to very good effect. Teachers make very creative provision for integrating mathematics across the curriculum. The school is well presented as a mathematics-rich environment. Good differentiation practices are in operation. It is recommended that, in certain contexts, greater provision for cooperative learning and problem solving be facilitated. The clearer delineation of mathematics trails in the school policy would also enhance provision.

- The quality of pupils' learning outcomes in literacy is very good. Focused programmes and interventions are in use to progress the pupils' word-attack and phonological skills. Pupils display a keen interest in reading and are exposed to a broad range of literature genres. Suitable provision is in place for the development of oral language skills. Very good emphasis is placed on poetry appreciation. Pupils write capably in a variety of genres, with the writing process being used effectively, in this regard. In some instances, differentiation practices should be further extended.
- Tá cailíocht na foghlama sa Ghaeilge go maith. Cuirtear béim inmholta ar amhráin, ar fhilíocht agus ar chluichí. Baintear úsáid fhíuntach as leabhair scéalaíochta. Léann na daltaí go h-ábailta agus tá stór saibhir foclóra acu. Tá cailíocht na scríbhneoireachta go han-mhaith i séanraí éagsúla. B'fhiú, níos mó béime a chur ar shaorscríbhneoireacht agus ar an gcur chuige cumarsáideach.
- *The quality of pupils' learning outcomes in Irish is good. Commendable emphasis is placed on songs, poetry and on games. Story books are used purposefully. Pupils read capably and they have a rich store of vocabulary. The quality of pupils' writing is very good in various genres. Further emphasis should be placed on creative writing and on the communicative approach.*

## 2. Quality of teaching

- The overall quality of teaching in the school is very good. Teachers are committed to the provision of a high quality programme of learning for the pupils. Lessons observed were well-structured and were characterised by the creative and effective use of appropriate resources and methodologies. It is recommended that a common approach to the recording of monthly progress reports in teaching and learning be established. While teachers' short-term plans delineate the content to be covered in a very focused manner, it is recommended that all plans make reference to methodologies, objectives, differentiation, linkage and assessment.
- Assessment of learning practices are of a very good quality. In some instances, there is potential for greater use of progress records and for pupil self-assessment across all curriculum subjects.
- Information and communications technology is used creatively in many contexts. It is recommended that an e-learning plan be prepared to facilitate the development of media and digital literacy.
- The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Interventions are very structured, focused and challenging, making very good provision for the active involvement of pupils. It is recommended that the school make greater provision for in-class support interventions including early intervention in junior infants. Parents of pupils with special educational needs should be provided with a copy of their child's individual education plan.

## 3. Support for pupils' wellbeing

- Pastoral care provision is very good. A very warm and nurturing learning environment has been created where pupils are very content. As witnessed during the evaluation, interactions between teachers and pupils were always most respectful and courteous. Responses to questionnaires administered during the evaluation indicated that pupils feel safe in school.

- 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 school is managed in a strategic manner by the board of management. It is actively involved in developing the school and managing resources.
- The principal provides high quality administrative, pastoral and curricular leadership. He is keenly interested in pupil progress and actively encourages new initiatives and strategies to develop pupils' learning and imagination. He is ably supported by the school's deputy principal who demonstrates an earnest and diligent approach to school management and leadership.
- Communication between home and school is very good. The parents' association provides strong support for the school. In responses to questionnaires administered during the evaluation, all parents indicated that they felt welcome in the school.

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

- The school engages in a wide range of self-evaluation practices.
- The school's focus on literacy for the forthcoming year details a number of initiatives. It is recommended that objectives and actions pertaining to these initiatives be more specifically defined in line with prioritised areas for development.

#### **Conclusion**

The school's capacity to develop further is very good. Staff demonstrate a keen interest in the continued development of the school.