

An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna

Department of Education and Skills

**Whole School Evaluation
REPORT**

**SN na Maighne
Moyne, Thurles, Co. Tipperary
Uimhir rolla: 17681V**

Date of inspection: 18 September 2013



1. Introduction

Moyne National School is a co-educational school which operates under the patronage of the Catholic Archbishop of Cashel and Emly. The school is the focal point in the local community.

The school has four mainstream class teachers and there are 87 pupils enrolled. The attendance levels of the majority of pupils are very good.

This report presents the findings of a whole-school evaluation undertaken in the school in September 2013. The evaluation focused on the quality of teaching and learning in English, Irish, Mathematics and Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE). 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.

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 supports the school in an effective manner.
- The school climate and atmosphere are very positive and the school is highly regarded by pupils and parents.
- The staff members are very committed to the school and to the pupils, and they demonstrate very good abilities to collaborate and to work effectively as a team.
- The members of the in-school management team undertake a broad range of roles and responsibilities.
- The principal demonstrates very good capacity to lead the school.
- Overall, good to very good standards are achieved by pupils.
- School self-evaluation has been commenced very successfully.
- A very broad range of extra-curricular activities is provided.

The following **main recommendations** are made:

- A whole-school approach to the teaching of comprehension strategies and reading skills should be agreed and implemented and pupils' writing should be developed and extended.
- A review of supports for pupils should focus on providing differentiated instruction in literacy in mainstream classrooms.
- Assessment for learning should be emphasised further.

3. Quality of School Management

- The board of management works effectively to support the school. Individual board members are assigned roles which they discharge conscientiously. The board has overseen the refurbishment and extension of the school building and it provides a wide range of resources to support teaching and learning. It is recommended that agreed reports of board meetings be communicated to parents.
- Parents are very supportive of the school. There is regular informal contact between parents and teachers. During the whole-school evaluation representatives of the Parents' Association expressed their high levels of satisfaction with the management and leadership of the school and with the educational provision which their children receive. The involvement of parents in policy development and in supporting their children's learning should be further facilitated.
- In most settings, pupils' behaviour is positive and classroom environments are well managed. The teachers in the school display a deep commitment to the personal and social welfare of the pupils and to developing pupils' confidence and skills. A range of school policies has been devised to facilitate this work. Very good attention is given to providing a range of extra-curricular activities for pupils. In the questionnaires, pupils responded very positively to various aspects of school life.
- The principal's work in leading and managing the school community is highly effective. She promotes a very positive school climate and maintains open communication with the board, parents and staff. The principal is well-supported by the members of the in-school management team who undertake a broad range of tasks and responsibilities. Staff members display an openness and willingness to reflect on and to discuss their instructional practices. These characteristics of strong school leadership, as well as an increased emphasis on instructional leadership by the principal and the in-school management team, are required to facilitate the achievement of the targets outlined in the school improvement plan.

4. Quality of School Planning and School Self-evaluation (SSE)

- Whole-school planning processes receive good attention. The principal's proactive work in SSE is commended. A very good school self-evaluation report has been devised and an improvement plan for literacy and numeracy has been developed. Significant progress has been achieved by the staff to date in implementing the agreed targets. The provision of continuous professional development in the area of literacy, which reflects the priorities outlined in the action plan, is recommended. It is also advised that the teachers use assessment data to design and implement high-quality interventions in literacy and to monitor these initiatives regularly.
- All teachers provide good-quality short-term and long-term planning. The lessons observed during the evaluation were well-prepared. It is recommended that further attention should be placed on outlining the expected learning outcomes of lessons.
- 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

- Good lessons were observed at each class level and the teachers implement a broad range of methodologies. There is good collaboration between mainstream class teachers and members of the special educational needs (SEN) team particularly in the infant and junior classes.
- Caitear dua agus fuinneamh le teagasc na Gaeilge sa scoil. Úsáidtear an Ghaeilge go minic i rith an lae agus eagraítear Lá Gaeilge go seachtainiúil. Baintear feidhm as modheolaíochtaí éagsúla le linn na gceachtanna. Ina measc, áirítear rólghlacadh, scéalta, obair bheirte, cluichí teanga agus úsáid na teicneolaíochta. Múintear amhráin agus dánta go rialta agus léiríonn na daltaí tuiscint chuí ar an ábhar atá múinte. Leagtar béim inmholta ar mhúineadh chultúr na hÉireann. Léann na daltaí go muiníneach agus go cruinn. Moltar deiseanna níos rialta a thabhairt do na daltaí na bunstructúir teanga a chleachtadh sa tréimhse cumarsáide.

Irish is taught with energy and effort. Irish is used regularly during the school day and an Irish Day is organised each week. A variety of methodologies is used in lessons. Role-play, pair work, language games and the use of technology are used during lessons. Songs and poems are taught regularly and pupils display an appropriate understanding of the content taught. Very commendable emphasis is placed on teaching the Irish culture. The pupils read confidently and accurately. It is recommended that more regular opportunities be given to pupils to practise the structures of the language during the communicative stage.

- The teaching and learning in English at each class level are commendable. Oral language skills are developed in a focused manner through play and through direct instruction in the infant and junior classes. Pupils read their class readers with good understanding. Whole-class instruction is supplemented through shared reading, the use of big books, language experience approach and novels. A comprehension programme *Building Bridges to Understanding* is being implemented in the current school year. A genre approach to the teaching of writing is being introduced and this is a positive development. Pupils' handwriting is commendable but the quality of pupils' written outcomes should be improved. It is recommended that a greater range of reading materials, particularly levelled readers, be provided to support the introduction of a differentiated reading programme. The assessment of skills in the three strand units of oral language, reading and writing should be an ongoing feature of the school.
- The quality of teaching in Mathematics is good and pupils' learning outcomes are very good. Well-structured lessons are undertaken with good emphasis placed on oral maths, mathematical games, concrete materials and ICT to explore mathematical concepts, particularly in the infant classes. The learning support and resource teachers work in the classrooms to provide supports to pupils during lessons and this development is commendable. Oral mathematical activities are emphasised in the middle and senior classes and mathematical concepts and skills are developed commendably.
- The quality of teaching and learning in Social, Personal and Health Education is good. The lessons observed had a clear focus and involved a variety of well-structured activities. In addition to teacher-led discussion, other methodologies including pair-work, circle-time and group work were used to good effect. There is scope for pupils to interact with each other in a more respectful manner in a minority of settings.
- The teachers record assessment results carefully and the pupils' achievements are tracked and monitored. It is recommended that assessment data be generated and

analysed by the teachers at whole-school level at regular intervals. Data in relation to pupil achievement should be used to inform teaching and learning and to monitor the intervention programmes which are currently in place.

6. Quality of Support for Pupils

- Overall, many aspects of the provision for pupils with learning difficulties and special educational needs are good. The teachers have developed very positive relationships with the pupils and they have a very clear overview of pupils' learning needs. During the evaluation the lessons observed were well structured and were based on the specific needs of the pupils. Team teaching is a new feature of the work and in-class support is provided for pupils at some class levels. It is recommended that high-quality interventions such as *Literacy Lift Off* be introduced in the early years and guided reading promoted in the middle and senior classes. To facilitate these developments there is a need to review the deployment of available resources in order to achieve the best learning outcomes for pupils.
- The quality of teachers' planning is generally good and individual profile and learning programmes are drawn up in consultation with parents, health professionals and class teachers. In some instances there is potential for specific targets to be monitored and assessed regularly so that pupil progress is reviewed at regular intervals during the instructional terms.

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