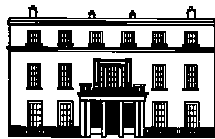


An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna
Department of Education and Skills

Whole School Evaluation
REPORT

Scoil Náisiúnta Na Lanaí Glasa
Seafield Avenue, Clontarf, Dublin 3
Uimhir rolla: 177301

Date of inspection: 2 November 2015



AN ROINN | DEPARTMENT OF
OIDEACHAIS | EDUCATION
AGUS SCILEANNA | AND SKILLS

1. Introduction

A Whole-School Evaluation was undertaken in Scoil Náisiúnta Na Lanáí Glasa in November 2015. The school, situated in Clontarf, Dublin 3, caters for boys and girls from junior infants to sixth class. The school operates under the patronage of the Church of Ireland Archbishop of Dublin. In recent years, the pupil population has increased rapidly; there are now 272 pupils enrolled. Overall pupil attendance levels are good. 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.

During the whole-school evaluation, provision for Irish, English, Mathematics and Visual Arts was inspected.

2. Summary of Findings and Recommendations for Further Development

The following are the **key findings**:

- The quality of the work of the board of management is very good. The board is very well informed about the standards of pupil attainment and is actively involved in ensuring that appropriate targets are set for improving learning outcomes. There is not a clear and consistent link between agreed improvement targets and teachers' individual classroom planning.
- School management and staff are very successful in encouraging positive relations with parents and the wider whole-school community.
- Tá cáilíocht an teagaisc agus foghlam sa Ghaeilge measartha le scóip chun forbartha i roinnt gnéithe den teagasc. *Teaching and learning in Irish is fair, with scope for development in certain aspects of the teaching.*
- Although attainment in Mathematics and literacy is very good, all lessons should be pitched at a level commensurate with pupils' observed abilities.
- Very good practices regarding summative assessment are well established. There is insufficient use of assessment data to inform differentiated programmes of learning for groups within class levels.
- The teachers are deeply committed to their pupils' well-being and demonstrate a highly commendable work ethic and commitment to their own continuous professional development.

The following **main recommendations** are made:

- It is recommended that teachers' individual planning for pupils' future learning needs be more closely linked to the interpretation of data on pupils' baseline competencies and attainment levels.
- In order to ensure the effective implementation of agreed actions for whole-school improvement, it would be useful for teachers to incorporate defined targets into their short-term plans and monthly records.

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Chun scileanna cumarsáide na ndaltaí a fhorbairt, ba chóir go mbeadh raon níos leithne abairtí ag teastáil ó mhúinteoirí; moltar dóibh Gaeilge níos saibhre a úsáid. <i>To develop pupils' communicative skills, teachers should require a greater range of sentences; it is recommended that richer Irish be used.</i> |
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3. Quality of School Management

- The quality of school management is very good overall. The quality of the work of the board of management is very good. The board communicates conscientiously with the school community. The chairperson maintains a visible presence in the school. It is highly commendable that the board is very well informed about the standards of pupil attainment and is actively involved in ensuring that appropriate targets are set for improving learning outcomes. The ongoing issue in relation to the presence of dogs on the school grounds must be resolved by the board as a matter of priority.
- The work of the in-school management team is of a very high quality. The team is led capably by the principal, who displays strong commitment to the school and has built very constructive working relationships with parents and the wider school community. The principal has empowered staff to take on leadership roles, thereby fostering leadership capacity within the school. She is ably supported in a highly effective and reflective manner by the acting deputy principal. The in-school management team is keenly interested in the progress of pupils and has encouraged staff to engage in a range of worthwhile pedagogical approaches and initiatives.
- The quality of the management of resources is very good. All classrooms present as organised learning environments equipped with a broad range of good-quality resources for teaching and learning. However, there is scope in some settings for an increased emphasis to be placed on the development of stimulating print-rich and number-rich classroom environments. The school building and grounds are maintained to a very high standard.
- During the evaluation, the management of pupils' behaviour was very effective. Pupils engage with high levels of enthusiasm in their learning. Teachers have been very successful in creating an affirming learning culture. Pupils' responses to the questionnaires administered during the inspection process indicate that almost all like the school and feel that their teacher listens to them and pays attention to what they say.
- Communication with parents is very effective. Features of very good practice include a detailed and regularly updated school website and the provision of regular opportunities for parents to engage in a range of curricular and co-curricular activities. The parents' association is very active and highly supportive of the school.

4. Quality of School Planning and School Self-evaluation

- The quality of school planning and school self-evaluation (SSE) is good. A collaborative process is adopted in policy formation and review. Contextualised administrative and organisational plans are evident and these are regularly updated. The ordered learning environment that has been created is testament to the effective implementation of these plans. Detailed policies are in place for all curricular areas. In questionnaires administered as part of this evaluation, a significant minority of teachers indicated some concern in relation to the impact of these whole-school curriculum policies on teaching and learning in the school; this should be explored further by the school.

- All teachers prepare long-term and short-term plans that are appropriately delineated in terms of content and learning activities. However, in many instances, short-term planning requires additional detail with regard to how new learning builds upon previous learning and how the range of pupil ability level will be accommodated. It is recommended that teachers' individual planning for pupils' future learning needs be more closely linked to the interpretation of data on pupils' baseline competencies and attainment levels. Monthly progress records are maintained in a readily accessible manner. A review of these records indicates that the curriculum is being implemented in a broad and balanced manner. However, there is inconsistency among records with regard to the recording of skill development. All teachers should ensure that skill development is recorded clearly.
- The school has engaged very positively in the process of SSE in literacy and numeracy. In identifying key areas for development, the school has carefully analysed test results and has engaged in consultation with teachers, pupils and parents. Almost all teachers note that work in SSE benefits pupils' learning. In order to ensure the effective implementation of agreed actions for whole-school improvement, it would be useful for teachers to incorporate defined targets into their short-term plans and monthly records.
- 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

- Tá cáilíocht an teagaisc agus na foghlama sa Ghaeilge measartha le scóip chun forbartha i roinnt gnéithe den teagasc. Tá raon leathan d'achmhainní súl ar fáil i ngach rang. Baintear úsáid as modhanna teagaisc gníomhacha. Tá béim chúí curtha ar scileanna éisteachta agus tuisceana na ndaltaí. Léiríonn na daltaí go bhfuil stór leathan focal acu agus i roinnt cásanna, tá sé ar a gcumas abairtí iomlána bunúsacha a struchtúru i gceart. Chun an scil seo a fhorbairt, ba chóir go mbeadh raon níos leithne abairtí ag teastáil ó na múinteoirí. Moltar, freisin, Gaeilge leanúnach níos leithne a úsáid le go gcloisfidh na daltaí teanga níos saibhre. Léann na daltaí le tuiscint and foghraíocht chúí. Cuirtear béim láidir ar scileanna scríbhneoireachta feidhmiúla a chur chun cinn. Chonacthas samplaí maithe de scríbhneoireacht phearsanta na ndaltaí. Baintear úsáid éifeachtach as trialacha caighdeánacha chun dul chun cinn na ndaltaí a mheas go caighdeánach.

Teaching and learning in Irish is fair with scope for development in certain aspects of the teaching. There is a broad range of visual resources in each class. Use is made of active teaching methodologies. Appropriate emphasis is placed on pupils' listening and comprehension skills. The pupils demonstrate that they have a wide vocabulary and, in some instances, they are able to structure basic sentences correctly. To develop this skill, teachers should require a greater range of sentences. It is also recommended that a wider, more continuous flow of Irish be used so that the pupils will hear richer language. Pupils read with understanding and appropriate pronunciation. A strong emphasis is placed on the promotion of functional writing skills. A number of good examples of pupils' personal writing were seen. Effective use is made of standardised assessments to assess pupils' progress using a standardised measure.

- The quality of teaching, learning and pupil achievement in English is good. Many pupils are very confident and capable communicators and demonstrate skilful presentation skills. To enhance attainment, oral language lessons in all settings should be underpinned by a clear focus on specific skill development. Reading standards are very good. Therefore, reading lessons need to be situated within the context of progressively

more challenging objectives that are made explicit to pupils. Pupils receive regular opportunities to write in a range of genres. However, in some instances, these genres could be explored in a more systematic and progressive way. The presentation of pupils' work requires attention among a number of pupils in many classrooms. A stronger emphasis should be placed on the consistent use of the agreed style of handwriting throughout the school.

- The quality of teaching, learning and pupil achievement in Mathematics is very good. It is evident that pupils are very positively disposed towards Mathematics and that they demonstrate a very good ability to engage in collaborative learning activities. Features of the very good practice observed include the effective use of manipulatives, an emphasis on discussion, and a consistent focus on estimation and problem-solving. A useful range of teaching and learning practices is deployed in the delivery of the mathematics curriculum. It is very commendable that there are systems in place for their regular review. In order to optimise the impact on learning, clearly articulated and appropriately challenging objectives should be identified for each of these practices.
- The quality of teaching, learning and pupil achievement in Visual Arts is very good. Lessons are structured effectively to foster creativity and facilitate specific skill development. Lessons make very good use of discussion and visual resources to create a stimulating context for lessons. The development of pupils' skills in looking and responding to art is progressing very well. Pupils are enthusiastic about their learning and their work is displayed attractively.
- The overall quality of teaching, learning and pupil achievement is good. Lessons are well-prepared, purposeful and structured clearly. The teachers are deeply committed to their pupils' well-being and demonstrate a highly commendable work ethic and commitment to their own continuous professional development. To enhance the impact of these well-developed teaching skills, teachers should ensure that all lessons are pitched at a level appropriate to pupils' abilities. In the questionnaire completed by parents as part of the evaluation process, almost all of those surveyed agree that teaching is good and that their child enjoys school.
- The quality of assessment approaches is good, overall. Very good practices regarding summative assessment are well established. The longitudinal tracking and analysis of individual pupils' attainment in a range of curricular areas is praised. Teachers should ensure that a whole-school approach is taken to the assessment of pupil attainment relative to general cognitive ability. This will facilitate the tracking of pupils over time and will assist in the process of evaluating the effectiveness of particular interventions and supports. An increased use of formative feedback to pupils will further enhance assessment practice.

6. Quality of Support for Pupils

- The quality of provision for pupils with special educational needs and pupils with additional learning needs is good. A very effective record of pupils' needs and achievements is maintained. Pupils' priority learning needs are identified in a focused manner. It is very good practice that the involvement of parents is prominent in the identification and recording of these needs and achievements. In some instances, there is a lack of coherency between priority learning needs and short-term learning objectives. Situating learning needs more visibly within short-term planning will assist in establishing this coherency. Where best practice in support settings was observed, lessons featured a broad range of methodologies, provision for active pupil involvement and creative use of a range of appropriate resources to stimulate pupil discussion. These features need to characterise all support lessons. In some instances, there is scope to better correlate the

learning activities of the classroom and the learning activities of the support setting. This will assist in optimising the impact of this additional support. Special-needs assistants demonstrate a finely tuned awareness of the needs of their assigned pupils and support them with sensitivity and care.

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 of Scoil Náisiúnta Na Lanaí Glasa welcomes this WSE Report.

The report confirms the deep commitment of the teaching staff to their pupils' well-being and recognises that they demonstrate a highly commendable work-ethic. The Board is particularly pleased that the report refers to the classrooms as 'organised learning environments equipped with a broad range of good quality resources for teaching and learning'. Finally, the Board is pleased to note that effective management of pupils' behaviour leads to pupils 'engaging with high levels of enthusiasm in their learning'.

The Board congratulates the Principal and all members of staff for their dedication and hard work and also commends the parents for their continued support.

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 of Management has considered the WSE recommendations carefully and is fully committed to working towards their implementation.

The Principal was advised to head up an Irish enrichment programme in the senior classes. She is teaching third to sixth class using a series of short stories. The lessons focus on listening skills, comprehension skills, story writing and word skills based on using sophisticated language. This takes place for twenty minutes per class per day. It will cease at the end of the year.

The newly appointed teachers have now had an opportunity to familiarise themselves with the Whole School Plans. These will now be incorporated into short term plans and monthly notes.