

An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna

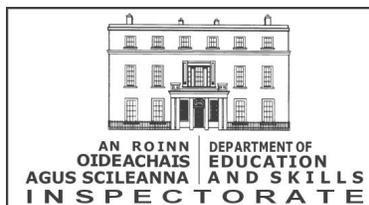
Department of Education and Skills

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

REPORT

**Scoil Chiaráin
Collins Avenue East, Donnycarney, Dublin 5
Roll number: 17732M**

Date of inspection: 4 February 2016



Whole-School Evaluation – Management, Leadership and Learning Report

Introduction

A Whole-School Evaluation – Management, Leadership and Learning (WSE - MLL) was undertaken in Scoil Chiaráin CBS, Donnycarney, Dublin 5 in February 2016. 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 Chiaráin CBS operates under the patronage of the Archbishop's House and under the Trusteeship of the Edmund Rice Schools Trust. The school participates in the Department of Education and Skills' Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools (DEIS) programme and receives support from the School Completion Programme. There are 132 boys enrolled currently across five mainstream classes and three autistic spectrum disorder (ASD) classes. Attendance rates are good.

The evaluation has found:

- Overall, the quality of the learning achievements of pupils is good.
- Teaching is of a high standard overall throughout the school. There is scope to improve the effectiveness of the in-class model of support.
- Assessment of learning practices are well developed in all settings. There is need to further develop the range of assessment for learning strategies.
- Pastoral care provision is of a very high quality and communication between home and school is good.
- The quality of management and leadership is good.
- The school positively engages with the process of school self-evaluation (SSE). There is need to develop more specific targets for improvement through this process.

The following **main recommendations** are made:

- The in-class support model should be extended and further developed to optimise its potential.
- A policy should be devised identifying a range of whole-school assessment strategies to inform teaching and learning.
- The SSE process should analyse baseline data to set more specific targets aimed at improving attainment levels in literacy and numeracy.

Findings

1. The learning achievements of pupils

- Overall, the quality of the learning achievements of pupils is good. Pupils have regular opportunities to engage in a wide range of curricular, co-curricular and extra-curricular activities. They demonstrate a particular interest and enthusiasm for areas of Social, Environmental and Scientific Education.
- Overall, the quality of pupils' learning outcomes in literacy is good. Pupils express themselves clearly and write well in a variety of genres across the curriculum. While pupils read with accuracy, their comprehension strategies should be further developed.
- The quality of learning in numeracy is good. Pupils' computational skills and their appropriate use of concrete materials are well developed in whole-class lessons. Pupils would benefit from opportunities

to engage in mathematical activities in small group settings. There is scope to further engage pupils in problem solving and in making mathematical connections to real life experiences.

- Ar an iomlán, léiríonn na daltaí dearcadh dearfach i leith fhoghlaim na Gaeilge. B'fhiú scileanna labhartha na ndaltaí a fhorbairt go céimniúil ó rang go rang. Cé go léann na daltaí le líofacht áirithe, ní mór a gcuid scileanna a fhorbairt, trí úsáid bhreise a bhaint as fíorleabhair. Cleachtann siad scríbhneoireacht fheidhmiúil go rialta. *Overall, pupils demonstrate a positive attitude to learning Irish. Pupils' speaking skills should be developed incrementally from class to class. While they read with fluency, pupils' skills should be further developed through the use of real books. They engage regularly in functional writing.*

2. Quality of teaching

- Overall, teaching is of a high standard throughout the school. Teachers engage pupils in learning effectively through the use of a range of methodologies. Purposeful learning environments are provided in classrooms and displays of pupils' work are evident throughout the school. Almost all parents, in Inspectorate questionnaires, agreed that teaching is good in the school.
- The overall quality of teaching provided for pupils with special educational needs is good. Teachers engage in both in-class and withdrawal models of provision. Team teaching is focused currently on the delivery of the Guided Reading programme which would be further enhanced by incorporating appropriate comprehension strategies. There is scope also to extend in-class provision to provide support in numeracy.
- Teaching in the ASD settings is effectively focused on the needs of individual pupils and their learning priorities. Individual education profiles are developed collaboratively and pupils' progress is recorded accurately. Teachers compile detailed assessment profiles for individual pupils and there is need to use this information to inform target setting. The ASD settings are resourced appropriately to facilitate positive learning experiences for pupils.
- Overall, the quality of teachers' planning is good with agreed whole-school approaches in place for long-term and short-term planning and the recording of monthly progress. Greater emphasis on the identification of assessment and differentiation strategies, including those for more able pupils, would enhance the quality of short-term planning.
- Assessment of learning practices are well developed in all settings. To complement this work, there is need to further develop the range of *assessment for learning* strategies incorporating peer and self-assessment. A policy, informing whole-school assessment practices, should be developed.

3. Support for pupils' well-being

- Pastoral care provision is of a very high quality. Staff interactions with pupils are very positive and affirming. The school fosters an inclusive culture, with integration and reverse integration of pupils to and from the ASD unit, as a feature of its practice. The work of the special needs assistants contribute very effectively to pupils' positive learning experiences. Responses to questionnaires, administered during the evaluation, indicate that almost all pupils like school and feel safe in their class and playground.
- There is a genuine sense of place and identity within the school. Engagement with national and local initiatives contribute greatly to the overall learning experiences of pupils. The introduction of a pupil council would progress the development of the pupils' voice within the school.
- Communication between home and school is good. The parents' association works effectively to support the development of the school. Parental involvement in policy development should be progressed, however. In responses to questionnaires, almost all parents indicated that there is a

good atmosphere in the school and that they feel welcome in the school. The work of the home-school-community liaison coordinator is very effective.

- 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 quality of management and leadership is good. The board of management is committed to the on-going development of the school and has ensured that it is very well resourced. Allocation of specific roles to board members would enhance the operation of the board. An agreed annual report should be communicated to parents. Policies for the implementation of Relationships and Sexuality Education and *Stay Safe* should be developed as a priority.
- The principal has been effective in leading change in recent years and this is impacting positively on the overall development of the school. She is committed to nurturing the well-being of pupils. The deputy principal ably supports the work of the principal. The in-school management team has a range of duties, aligned to the school's priorities, which they fulfil diligently.

5. School Self-evaluation

- The school engages positively with the SSE process. Regular updating of DEIS action plans as part of this process is recommended. The identification of baseline data, following greater analysis of standardised tests, would inform more specific target setting aimed at improving attainment levels in literacy and numeracy. A summary of the school's improvement report should be communicated to parents annually.

Conclusion

The school's capacity to develop further is good. It has demonstrated a willingness to engage in school improvement and has already achieved success in many aspects of this process.

Appendix

School response to the report

Submitted by the Board of Management

Part A: Observations on the content of the inspection report

The inspection report has acknowledged the strengths of Scoil Chiaráin CBS, in both its teaching and learning, as well as the positive and caring environment we have developed within our school community. We take pride in the holistic care we provide for the boys of our school, and this has been acknowledged within the report.

This report has recognised that we are providing a high standard of education to the boys of our school, and has offered us direction as to how to further improve on the excellent work already being done.

Part B: Follow-up actions planned or undertaken since the completion of the inspection activity to implement the findings and recommendations of the inspection

In class model of support – We are reviewing a variety of in-class support models in literacy and numeracy. These will be brought to the staff for discussion with a view to implementation in Sep 2016.

Assessment for Learning - In line with the development of whole school assessment policy, strategies to facilitate the further development of assessment for learning will be a priority.

SSE/Bell Curve/Targets – We have acquired the DataBiz programme. This will aid us in gaining greater insight into the progression of our tracker children. We will then set specific targets to improve standardised scores in literacy and numeracy.

A comprehension framework for addressing comprehension is being discussed at staff level for complete implementation in September 2016.