

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

**Whole School Evaluation**  
**REPORT**

**Scoil San Treasa**  
**Kilshanroe, Enfield, Co. Meath**  
**Uimhir rolla: 184450**

**Date of inspection: 7 March 2013**



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

## 1. Introduction

Scoil San Treasa is a rural primary school under the patronage of the Catholic Bishop of Kildare and Leighlin. The 115 pupils are distributed across four multi-grade classrooms and their school attendance is very good. Pupil enrolment has risen steadily in recent years, necessitating the extension and upgrading of the existing facilities to their current high standard. The school serves as a focal point in the local community. 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.

## 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 is dedicated to supporting the continued development of the school.
- The principal and teachers demonstrate high levels of commitment to the school and its pupils.
- Teaching, learning and pupil achievement is of a high standard overall.
- Pupils are well behaved, and are keen and motivated learners.
- The work of the parents' association contributes significantly to the learning experiences provided for the pupils.
- Very good communication structures are in place between the parents' association and the principal and board of management.
- The maintenance of the school and grounds is worthy of high praise.

The following **main recommendations** are made:

- The setting out of a three-year action plan to guide the review of school policies is recommended.
- A review of the school's policy on Special Educational Needs should explore the extension of the current model of learning-support provision to include more in-class supports. It should also provide guidance on the establishment and use of base-line data for target setting in individual pupil learning programmes (IPLPs).

## 3. Quality of School Management

- The board of management gives praiseworthy support to the work of the school and discharges its responsibilities very competently. It keenly supports curricular and co-curricular initiatives that improve the quality of provision for pupils. The board is commended for its active role in the recent development of the school's facilities.
- The principal and deputy principal fulfil their duties in a professional and dedicated manner. With the cooperation of the other members of the school staff, they contribute

significantly to the quality of teaching and learning. Currently, the in-school management team meets informally. A formal approach to team meetings should now be adopted.

- Parents are very supportive of the work of the school. They are kept informed of their children's progress. The school has a highly committed parents' association. Their fund-raising activities, and enthusiastic support, contribute significantly to school-based initiatives and the learning experiences provided for the pupils. Very effective strategies have been developed to support communication between the parents' association and the principal and board of management.
- The school has a wide range of suitable teaching resources. Pupils have regular access to information and communication technology (ICT) as a learning tool. Teachers are commended for their frequent participation in continuing professional development. Ancillary staff provide dedicated support to the school. The school's staff rotation policy should be reviewed so that it clarifies and facilitates staff mobility across all teaching settings. The school and grounds are maintained to a very high standard.
- The management of pupils is very good. Pupils are well behaved, and are keen and motivated learners. The outcomes of pupil questionnaires administered during the evaluation show that all pupils surveyed feel safe in school, and the majority report that they are treated fairly by their teachers.

#### **4. Quality of School Planning and School Self-evaluation**

- The process and quality of whole-school curriculum planning is good. In general, curriculum policies guide the implementation of a broad and balanced curriculum in this multi-class school.
- A wide range of organisational policies contributes to the smooth running of the school. Policies include dates scheduling their future review. However, the development of a three-year action plan to manage the systematic review of policies is recommended.
- The quality and consistency of individual teacher planning is very good overall. Objective-based planning is evident in all mainstream classes.
- The school has prioritised specific aspects for development in relation to school-self evaluation. It is gathering further data with regard to its chosen area of development. The setting of specific targets for development is advised in this regard.
- 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**

- The quality of overall teaching, learning and pupil achievement is commendable. Lessons are carefully structured, well resourced and, in the main, are delivered with a suitable pace. The effective consolidation of learning was noted in all settings. Written work is well monitored in the majority of settings, and teachers provide useful guidance to the pupils to help them improve their work. Almost all parents, in their responses to questionnaires administered during the evaluation, agreed that teaching is good, and that work is matched to their children's abilities.

- Tá caighdeán na múinteoireachta agus na foghlama sa Ghaeilge go maith ar an iomlán. Baintear úsáid as cluichí agus áiseanna chúí chun deiseanna cainte a chruthú do dhaltaí. I ranganna áirithe, éiríonn le formhór na ndaltaí cumarsáid shimplí a dhéanamh bunaithe ar na téamaí idir lámhe. Chun fíorchumas labhartha na ndaltaí a fhorbairt, moltar leanúnachas agus forbairt idir téamaí na gceachtanna a chothú ó rang go rang. B'fhiú freisin níos mó taithí a thabhairt do dhaltaí na frásaí nua a chleachtadh i suímh réalacha. I ranganna áirithe, tá cnuasach breá rann de ghlanmheabhair ag na daltaí agus aithrisíonn siad iad le dea-fhoghraíocht. B'fhiú an chleachtas seo a threisiú ar bhonn uile scoile. Léann daltaí áirithe le cruinneas. Cuirtear gníomhaíochtaí oiriúnacha ar siúl sa scríbhneoireacht.
- *The quality of teaching and learning in Irish is good overall. Appropriate games and resources are used to provide opportunities for the pupils to speak. In particular classes, the majority of the pupils successfully engage in simple discussions based on the themes currently under exploration. To develop pupils' real communication skills, it is recommended that there is continuity and development between the lesson themes from class to class. More opportunities for pupils to practise new phrases in realistic contexts should be used. Pupils in particular settings have committed to memory a fine collection of rhymes and can recite them with good pronunciation. This practice should be strengthened at whole-school level. Particular pupils read with accuracy. Appropriate writing opportunities are provided.*
- The quality of teaching, learning and pupil achievement in English is of a high standard. Careful attention is given to the development of pupils' oral language skills. A wide range of responses to interesting and challenging poetry was noted during the evaluation. Pupils have access to a variety of differentiated reading materials and many pupils display very positive attitudes to reading. Regular visits from the mobile library service augment the variety and range of available reading material. Pupils have opportunities to edit and redraft their written work and many pupils write with commendable confidence. To further enhance provision for English, a cyclical approach to the exploration of reading and writing genres should be developed.
- Teaching and learning in Mathematics is good. In all classrooms there is a systematic approach to the incremental development of pupils' mathematical language. Good work is undertaken in the strand of number, and an appropriate balance between the strands is achieved through the school. A whole-school approach to the implementation of a wider range of oral mathematics activities is recommended. The wider use of the school environment, and the development of mathematics trails are also recommended as a further means of concept development and consolidation. While outcomes in mathematics are very good for the majority of pupils, there is scope, however, to further improve some pupils' learning outcomes.
- Teaching, learning and pupil achievement in Science is of a good quality. Pupils are developing suitable awareness of life processes, seasonal change, and energy and forces. Some good work in design and make activities was also noted. Pupils have opportunities to identify and investigate animals and plants from wider environments. However, further opportunities to develop an incremental awareness of local habitats, and the extension of recurring scientific themes from class to class, are recommended. The development of a range of trails in the school environment is advised. Some good practice was observed with regard to the development of the pupils' skills in predicting and fair-testing. The school has recently achieved *Green School Status*.
- All teachers make use of a wide range of suitable assessment modes. Whole-school standardised assessment data is carefully recorded. A system to monitor individual pupil's progress and attainment for the duration of their time in school is recommended.

## 6. Quality of Support for Pupils

- The quality of teaching and learning for pupils with special educational needs is good. The interactions observed in the supplementary teaching settings were very affirming and encouraging of the pupils. Learning environments are bright, print-rich and mathematics-rich. However, with the increased teaching resources now available, the board should make every effort to provide additional and specifically-dedicated teaching environments in a timely manner.
- Supports for pupils with additional needs are provided by one full-time and two part-time teachers. Teaching is organised primarily on a withdrawal basis with provision for in-class intervention at an early stage of development. As the in-class work is expanded, it should be guided by the need to facilitate early intervention and flexible approaches in line with the needs of the pupils.
- Whole-school organisation for pupils on the continuum of support is in evidence. Comprehensive individual education plans (IEPs) reflect priority learning needs identified in the relevant professional reports. The use of diagnostic assessment is recommended to establish base-line data for target setting in individual pupil learning programmes (IPLPs). The frequency and approach to teachers' short-term planning should also be informed by Departmental guidelines. It is recommended that the school's special education policy be reviewed to comply with Departmental circulars and with the *Learning Support Guidelines* (2000), and that it should formally document aspects of evolving practice within the school.
- The recent introduction of a book rental scheme reduces financial pressure on parents.

# 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 and staff of Scoil San Treasa, Kilshanroe, would like to thank the inspector for the professional and courteous manner in which the WSE was conducted. We are delighted that the report reflects and acknowledges the positive aspects of our school and the close working relationship that exists between the Board of Management, staff and parents, in order to enhance the quality of the educational experience of each child.

#### **Area 2: 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 and staff acknowledge the recommendations made in the report, a number of which coincide with areas identified in our Social Self Evaluation process. To date the following areas have been addressed.

A single record card for each pupil has been drawn up to monitor individual pupil's progress and is now being used by all staff.

The SEN policy is currently under review by the staff to create a more informed and systematic approach to the teaching and learning of children with special educational needs.

The Board of Management are drafting an Action Plan for the next three years in light of the report, including policy review, improvement of accommodation for the SEN department and continued overall development of the school.