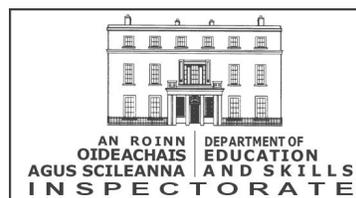


**An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna  
Department of Education and Skills**

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

**Scoil Mhichíl Naofa,  
Kill, Rathmolyon, Enfield, County Meath.  
Uimhir rolla: 18453N**

**Date of inspection: 5 February 2015**



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

### Introduction

A Whole-School Evaluation – Management, Leadership and Learning (WSE - MLL) was undertaken in Scoil Mhichíl Naofa in February 2015. 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 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 Mhichíl Naofa is located close to the village of Rathmolyon. The school is under the patronage of the Catholic bishop of Meath.

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

- The board of management and parents' association provide valuable support to the school.
- The principal and staff display a commendable commitment to the school self-evaluation process.
- The quality of teaching is good in the majority of learning settings.
- Learning outcomes in reading and Mathematics are very good for a significant number of pupils.
- Classroom environments are supportive of pupils' learning.
- Many pupils display confidence and competence with regard to the use of specific problem-solving approaches in Mathematics.
- Pupils participate very well in their learning activities.
- Assessment for learning strategies are being embedded successfully across the school.

The following **main recommendations** are made:

- Whole-school planning should be developed in a significant number of curricular areas as a priority.
- The development of a whole-school policy on Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) must be prioritised, and this should also clarify for teachers the timing of the delivery of the full *Stay Safe* programme.
- A broader and more balanced programme of learning in Social, Environmental and Scientific Education (SESE) should be delivered.
- Differentiated provision to address the varying levels of pupils' abilities should be further developed.
- The co-ordination and delivery of supports for pupils with additional learning needs should be reviewed.

- Discussion in relation to child protection should be formally recorded in the minutes of the board of management meetings.
- A review of the duties of in-school management and the strengthening of their roles in curriculum leadership is recommended.

## Findings

### 1. The learning achievements of pupils

- The overall learning achievements of the pupils are good. Results of standardised assessments in reading and Mathematics indicate very good levels of attainment for a significant number of pupils.
- Pupils participate very well in their learning activities. Independent writing skills are taught systematically. Nevertheless, a whole-school cyclical-approach to the teaching of comprehension strategies and writing genres should be developed. In Mathematics, many pupils display confidence and competence with regard to the use of specific problem-solving approaches.
- Ar an iomlán, tá cailíocht na foghlama sa Ghaeilge go maith. B'fhiú níos mó deiseanna rialta a thabhairt do na daltaí scríobh go neamhspleách. (*Overall, the quality of pupils' learning in Irish is good. Further opportunities for the pupils to engage in free writing would be worthwhile.*)
- Some worth-while independent project work has been completed by particular classes. Through their engagement with the *Green Schools Project*, pupils are developing a suitable understanding of environmental issues. There is scope however, to broaden pupils' learning in SESE. Pupils engage in a range of Visual Arts activities. However, their abilities to discuss and respond to the Visual Arts should be developed. To address these shortcomings in the pupils' learning experiences, and to support teachers in the implementation of a broad and balanced curriculum, whole-school plans should be developed as a priority in all curricular areas.
- Support for pupils with additional learning needs is provided by two part-time teachers. There is significant scope to improve the frequency and recording of some pupils' incremental progress.

### 2. Quality of teaching

- The quality of teaching is good in the majority of learning settings. There is scope, in some contexts, to explore collaborative learning opportunities. Differentiated provision to address the varying levels of pupils' abilities should be further developed. Classroom environments are supportive of pupils' learning. Assessment for learning strategies are being embedded successfully across the school.
- The quality of provision for pupils in receipt of additional supports is varied. The school should review the current approach to programme delivery. To this end, and in conjunction with the classroom teachers, the use of a wider range of focused in-class support models is recommended.
- Commendably, in mainstream classrooms, there is an agreed approach to documenting teachers' short-term planning. Some useful exemplars of long-term planning were noted. Where practice was best, these long-term plans set out clear programmes of work.

- Individual learning plans are in place for pupils in receipt of additional supports. In particular instances, some clear and focused short-term planning was noted. This effective approach should be emulated in all settings.

### **3. Support for pupils' well-being**

- The quality of the management of pupils observed during the evaluation was very good overall. Pupils participate in and share their successes during school assemblies.
- In their responses to questionnaires administered during the evaluation, a significant number of pupils reported very positive attitudes to school. However, a substantial cohort of pupils, expressed some concerns about aspects of their school experience. It is recommended that these concerns are further explored by the school.
- Questionnaires were administered to all parents during the evaluation process. The majority indicated that they were satisfied with the work of the school. In addition, the majority also confirmed that school reports give them a good picture about how their child is doing, and that they are well-informed about the school's antibullying policy. However, a significant number of parents reported that they didn't know, or disagreed about whether the school seeks the views of parents on school matters. It is recommended that the school continues to develop and embed the effective communication strategies that are currently evident.
- 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. A report on child protection matters is provided at every board of management meeting. However, a record of the discussion should be formally recorded in the minutes. Furthermore, a Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) policy should be developed as a priority. School policy should also clarify for teachers the timing of the delivery of the full *Stay Safe* programme.

### **4. Leadership and Management**

- The board of management is very supportive of the work of the school. Of particular concern to the board is the development of the school's facilities. Effective links are being forged with the parents' association, and a spirit of collaboration and partnership is fostered through appropriate channels of communication.
- The in-school management team comprises a principal, a deputy principal and a special-duties teacher. The principal is very committed to the school, and in particular, has successfully led the school self-evaluation process. She is ably supported by the other members of the team. A regular review of duties assigned to team members is recommended so as to ensure that the responsibilities allocated, reflect the identified needs of the school. In addition, the strengthening of their role in curriculum leadership is recommended. To guide this development, team members should meet formally, prepare an annual action plan for their post, and submit a summary of their achievements to the board of management at the end of each year.

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

- The impact of the school self-evaluation process is evident in teachers' practice. In its school improvement plan, the school should now set out targets against which it can measure improvements in the pupils' learning outcomes. In keeping with the

principles of the school self-evaluation process, a summary of the report and plan should be shared with the school community.

- As evidenced from teachers' commitment to working collaboratively, and to systematically implementing agreed whole-school improvement strategies, the school has good capacity to develop further.

# **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 accepts the findings and recommendations of this WSE-MLL report. We are pleased that the main strengths of the school were identified and that the commitment of all members of the school community was affirmed.

**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 acknowledges the recommendations for improvement in this report. The implementation of these recommendations has been prioritised as part of the school improvement plan and this work is now in progress.