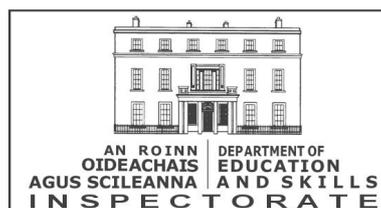


**An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna  
Department of Education and Skills**

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

**Scoil Na Maighdine Muire,  
Ballyduff,  
Enniscorthy,  
Co. Wexford  
Uimhir rolla: 18687P**

**Date of inspection: 6 March 2014**



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

### Introduction

A Whole-School Evaluation – Management, Leadership and Learning (WSE - MLL) was undertaken in Scoil Na Maighdine Muire in 2014. 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.

There are 97 pupils enrolled and the attendance of almost all pupils is very good.

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

- School staff and board of management display commendable levels of commitment to the holistic development and welfare of all pupils and this is successfully fostered through the school's wide range of co-curricular and extra curricular activities.
- The principal is praised highly for the quality of the administrative and curricular leadership she provides to the school. She has successfully promoted a strong culture of collaborative team work and collegiality.
- There is high quality teaching in the school. Staff are diligent and hardworking and demonstrate skilful management of multi-grade class groups.
- Pupils are motivated and positively engage in lessons and are achieving good learning outcomes.
- Commendable support is given to pupils with additional learning needs.
- The school has a supportive board of management and parent body.

The following **main recommendations** are made:

- The board of management should issue an annual report on the operation of the school.
- Staff at the school should develop their use of assessment for learning approaches at all class levels.
- I múineadh na Gaeilge moltar béim níos mó a chur ar an gcur chuige cumarsáide agus scileanna labhartha na ndaltaí a fheabhsú trí deiseanna níos rialta a thabhairt dóibh páirt a ghlacadh i bhfíorchumarsáid i bpéirí agus i ngrúpaí.  
*In the teaching of Irish more emphasis on the communicative approach through affording the pupils regular opportunities to use Irish in real-life situations in pairs and groups is advised.*

### Findings

#### 1. The learning achievements of pupils

- The overall learning achievements of pupils are good. Pupils demonstrate a positive attitude to learning and engage in lessons and activities provided with interest and enthusiasm.
- Results of standardised testing indicate that attainment in literacy and numeracy are of a good standard. Pupils develop their writing skills across a range of curricular areas and the standard of their writing is high. Pupils are given many opportunities to express themselves orally in a variety of contexts. In the main pupils enjoy reading and are developing their skills well. Overall pupils are achieving at a reasonably good level in Irish but there is a lack of confidence when it comes to spoken Irish. More emphasis on the communicative approach through affording the pupils regular and

frequent opportunities to communicate in real-life situations in pairs and groups is advised.

- In Mathematics pupils are attaining good outcomes. In the surveys most pupils agree that they are doing well in Maths.
- Other noteworthy learning achievements are in evidence in Social, Environmental and Scientific Education, Drama and the Visual Arts with impressive displays of their work in classrooms and around the school.
- Pupils with additional learning needs participate well in all school activities and also record good progress.

## **2. Quality of teaching**

- There is high quality teaching in the school. Lessons observed during the evaluation were well structured, utilised a wide range of resources and were based on clear planning. All teachers demonstrate very good skills in managing multi-grade class groups and their awareness of and capacity to respond to the learning needs of individual pupils is praised highly. Teachers regularly engage in on-going reflection and continuing professional development.
- The school is commended for the introduction of a whole-school approach to the teaching of writing. The planned introduction of the specific teaching of comprehension strategies is acknowledged. Mental maths and problem solving have been identified as areas needing attention in Mathematics. The inclusion of a mental maths component in all Mathematics lessons is praised. In most classes mental maths is based on the text book. Other ways of conducting mental maths should also be explored. Literacy and numeracy are well linked with other areas of the curriculum.
- There is good practice in relation to assessment of pupil progress with teachers using a wide range of assessment modes, including the use of checklists, teacher tests and work samples. To build on this good practice the use of assessment for learning approaches at all class levels is advised.

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

- The quality of support for pupils' well-being and the relations between pupils and staff are very good. Pupils are well managed by teachers and they engage very well in lessons. The school provides a learning environment where efforts as well as achievements are acknowledged and the pupils' successes in a wide range of extra-curricular and co-curricular activities are recorded and celebrated.
- There is commendable support for pupils with additional learning needs. A variety of approaches is used with teachers either offering in-class support or through the withdrawal of pupils in groups or individually as appropriate. The school's focus on early intervention and prevention and its use of a wide range of diagnostic tests to identify specific learning needs of pupils is praised.
- 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 board of management conducts its business effectively and ensures that it discusses developments in relation to teaching and learning in the school regularly. The board is praised for the quality and maintenance of the school building. Enrolment numbers are increasing steadily from year to year and the board of management is forward-looking in seeking an additional classroom to accommodate

these numbers. It is recommended that the board issue an annual report on the operation of the school.

- The principal is praised for the quality of the administrative and curricular leadership she provides to the school. She is highly successful in creating a climate of care and promoting a culture of team-work and collaborative decision-making that allows for the distribution of duties and responsibilities amongst all members of staff and ensures that the skills of all are valued and utilised. She is ably supported by the members of the in-school management team who carry out their duties diligently.

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

- Staff at the school have engaged in a comprehensive self-evaluation of literacy and numeracy. It was based on evidence collected from pupils and parents and drew on the analysis of standardised tests as well as on teacher reflection. Clear targets and actions for securing improvement have been agreed and implementation on a whole-school basis has begun. A School Improvement Plan has been compiled and disseminated to the school community.

#### **Conclusion**

Given the commitment to the provision of a high quality programme of learning by the school community and the teachers' commitment to engagement in ongoing professional development, the school's capacity to develop further is very good.

## **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 is very pleased with the findings of the Whole School Evaluation. We are glad it acknowledges and commends the valuable contribution made to the school by our whole school community. The Board appreciates the relevance of the recommendation and will endeavour to implement the suggested improvements in the coming year.

**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 accepts the findings of this report and will immediately begin the implementation process. The practice of issuing an Annual Report has already commenced with a report being issued in June 2014.