

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

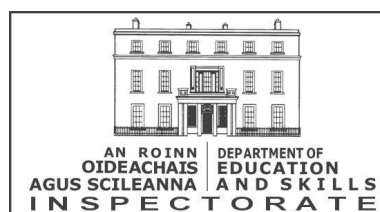
**Whole School Evaluation  
Management, Leadership and Learning**

**REPORT**

**SN Gleann na gCaorach Cill Iníon Léinín,  
Killiney Road, Killiney,  
Co. Dublin**

**Uimhir rolla: 19400U**

**Date of inspection: 14 January 2015**



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

### Introduction

A Whole-School Evaluation – Management, Leadership and Learning (WSE - MLL) was undertaken in SN Gleann na gCaorach Cill Iníon Léinín in January 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.

SN Gleann na gCaorach Cill Iníon Léinín, is a co-educational, vertical primary school under the patronage of the Church of Ireland Archbishop of Dublin. The attendance of the 235 pupils enrolled is generally very good.

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

- The commitment to the school's ethos, the strong sense of community and the highly commendable channels of communication
- The effectual manner in which the board of management undertakes its role.
- The overall high quality teaching, with purposeful use of a wide range of methodologies and resources
- The effective leadership and management skills of the principal
- The highly praiseworthy levels of pupil engagement and behaviour
- The overall very good standards of pupil learning achievements.
- The dedication of staff, their openness to embracing new initiatives and the willingness of individual members to play a leadership role
- The active support provided by parents

The following **main recommendations** are made:

- More consistent use should be made of baseline data to underpin differentiated programmes of learning and to provide sufficient challenge for all learners.
- In providing for pupils with special educational needs (SEN), it is recommended that learning targets are specific and measurable, that pupil attainment and progress is tracked systematically, and that the deployment of resources and models of support are reviewed and developed further.
- The school self-evaluation (SSE) process should be used to provide a structure whereby agreed whole-school initiatives are implemented in a cohesive manner and their impact monitored in a systematic way.

### Findings

#### 1. The learning achievements of pupils

- The overall learning achievements of pupils are very good. Pupil engagement levels and behaviour are highly praiseworthy and peer interactions are respectful and supportive.
- In English, a whole-school approach to the development of specific writing skills is impacting positively on pupils' writing abilities. It is also providing an effective scaffold for oral language development in many classes. A broad range of reading material is in use throughout the school, with some effective promotion of specific reading skills. A whole-school approach to the development of specific reading skills, including comprehension, is recommended. Pupils' reading standards generally are very good and in their questionnaire responses, most pupils indicate that they are doing well at

reading. Tá dearcadh dearfach na ndaltaí le sonrú sa Ghaeilge agus léiríonn siad tuiscint mhaith. Ní mór, áfach, scileanna labhartha na ndaltaí a fhorbairt ar bhonn níos céimniúla agus deiseanna rialta a thabhairt dóibh fíorchumarsáid a dhéanamh. *The pupils' positive view of Irish is evident and they demonstrate good understanding. However, the pupils' oral language skills should be developed in a more incremental manner and regular opportunities provided for their engagement in authentic communication.*

- Overall pupil achievement levels in numeracy are very good. Examples of best practice include, the effective use of concrete materials, a focus on mental mathematics across the strands and an active, problem-solving approach to learning. It is recommended that these approaches be embedded in all settings. In their questionnaires, most pupils report that they are doing well at Maths.
- In Social, Environmental and Scientific Education (SESE), the pupils are provided with regular opportunities to engage with their local environment through the school garden programme and to develop their scientific skills through participation in *Discover Primary Science*. Praiseworthy examples of the pupils' creativity in the Visual Arts are in evidence and the standard of their singing is lauded.
- While pupils with SEN engage positively in a range of learning activities, there is scope for development in their overall progression levels. The use of a comprehensive range of diagnostic assessment, in the identification and review of specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and timebound (SMART) targets in individual and group education plans is recommended. The whole-school record-keeping system should also be developed. In their questionnaire responses, almost all pupils report that they enjoy their lessons and learning.

## **2. Quality of teaching**

- The overall quality of teaching is of a high standard. Lessons are well structured and a wide range of methodologies and a variety of resources are employed purposefully. To build on these good practices, more regular opportunities should be provided for pupils to engage in problem-solving, open-ended tasks and higher order thinking. The planned development in the provision and use of Information and Communication Technology by pupils is welcomed.
- The dedication of staff and their openness to embracing new initiatives for the benefit of pupils, as evidenced from the introduction of in-class teaching and the implementation of a number of literacy and numeracy initiatives, including the *Aistear* framework, are highly commended. To enhance provision, there is a need to review the deployment of resources and to ensure that in-class support consistently targets specific learning skills of pupils. In addition, the formal implementation of a staged approach to assessment, identification and programme planning is recommended. While there are good practices in evidence in the majority of learning support/resource teacher settings for pupils with SEN, management needs to address the poor quality provision evident in one of these settings.
- The school's approach to assessment has developed significantly and a variety of approaches to the recording of pupil progress are in evidence. More consistent use should be made of baseline data to underpin differentiated programmes of learning and to provide sufficient challenge for all learners. Pupils' work is monitored regularly with some formative oral and written feedback and conferencing in evidence. The dissemination of this practice to all settings is advised.
- Lessons in SESE, Arts Education and Physical Education are well structured and implemented overall, with some effective integration of subject areas.

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

- The pupils experience an inclusive learning environment. The dedication to, and provision for, their care and wellbeing is of a high quality. There is a commitment to the school's ethos and regular assemblies are purposefully used to celebrate pupil achievements and to promote a strong sense of community. The ancillary staff provide valuable support to the work of the school.
- In their questionnaires, all pupils report that they can seek help from a teacher or adult if they are being bullied. Pupil voice is promoted through the *Green Schools'* initiative and through consultation opportunities led by the principal. So that pupils are more regularly involved in decision-making that affects them, the re-establishment of a student council is advised.

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 is properly constituted and functions in an effectual manner. In line with best practice, the board now issues an annual report on its operation and ensures that accounts are externally audited. It is timely that the board's role in the consideration of teaching and learning matters be strengthened. The planned cessation of the allocation of a mainstream class teacher in a support setting is noted and should be proceeded.
- The principal demonstrates effective leadership and management skills. Innovation in teaching and learning and continuing professional development are encouraged. The skills and expertise of the teachers are nurtured and a shared sense of purpose is evident. The in-school management (ISM) team are committed to the school, meet regularly and have a range of assigned duties. The principal has enabled distributional leadership among the staff, with individual teachers willingly undertaking specific areas of responsibility.
- The management of relationships and communication with the school community is highly commendable. A system of parents' representatives is used to foster communication with the wider parent body. Parents are supportive of the work of the school and contribute beneficially to the range of resources in use. In their questionnaire responses, all parents report that they are happy with the school overall and that they know who to talk to in the school if there is a problem. Consideration should be given to the establishment of a parents' association affiliated with the National Parents' Council-Primary.

### 5. School Self-evaluation

- Creditable work has been undertaken to date in SSE. Areas for improvement have been identified and it is evident that initiatives are beginning to impact positively on pupils' learning. The SSE process should be used to provide a structure whereby agreed whole-school initiatives are implemented in a cohesive manner. To optimise the impact of this process, it is recommended that: more focused targets be set, that actions include specific pedagogical approaches and that agreed monitoring mechanisms are implemented systematically.
- In order to reflect the school's changing needs and priorities, specific duties assigned to the ISM team should be reviewed regularly and members should develop their curriculum leadership role further.

## **Conclusion**

The school's capacity to develop further, through the consistent implementation of agreed whole-school approaches and initiatives, 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**

**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 has taken on board the recommendations made and the implementation of these has been prioritised as part of the school's self-evaluation and school improvement plan.