

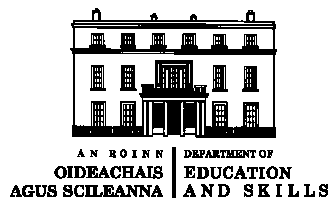
An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna

Department of Education and Skills

**Whole School Evaluation
REPORT**

**Scoil Eoin Phóil II, Arden View
Tullamore, Co. Offaly
Uimhir rolla: 19713S**

Date of inspection: 19 September 2013



1. Introduction

Scoil Eoin Phóil II is under the patronage of the Bishop of Meath and caters for boys only from third to sixth class. This DEIS (*Delivering Equality in Schools*) band 1 school has an enrolment of 156 pupils. While the attendance levels of the vast majority of the pupils are very good a significant number of pupils miss twenty days or more each year. As a means of reducing this number, the school is adopting further attendance strategies and is reviewing its attendance policy. 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.

2. Summary of Findings and Recommendations for Further Development

The following are the **main strengths** of the work of the school:

- Scoil Eoin Phóil is an inclusive, open and welcoming school where teachers are committed to the individual welfare needs and holistic development of every pupil.
- The board of management and parents' association are very supportive of the work of the school.
- The principal provides very good quality leadership.
- The management of pupils is excellent. Positive relationships are evident throughout the school and the pupils are very well-behaved, courteous and respectful.
- Relationships and communications are managed very effectively.
- The school building and grounds are maintained to a very good standard.

The following **main recommendations** are made:

- A wider variety of active-learning methodologies, supported by the use of appropriate curriculum resources, should be utilised in lessons.
- Greater emphasis should be placed on differentiation in curriculum planning and delivery to cater for pupils' varying learning needs.
- It is recommended that a review of the approaches to the teaching of English reading be undertaken to incorporate differentiated instruction for pupils with varying reading abilities.
- Where in-class support is provided there is need to identify clear roles and responsibilities for the teachers involved in relation to the planning and delivery of lessons.

3. Quality of School Management

- The board of management functions very effectively. It plays an active role in policy review and formation, and is highly commended for the manner in which the school grounds and building are maintained.
- The principal is a reflective practitioner and provides very good quality leadership. His well-developed organisational, administrative and interpersonal skills enable him to manage the school very effectively. He is committed to the individual welfare needs and the holistic development of all the pupils.
- The in-school management team meets regularly and carries out its duties conscientiously. While the duties attaching to these posts have been reviewed, it is recommended that the duties assigned further reflect the evolving priorities of the school.
- Resources are managed competently. Communal areas of the school and most classrooms host good quality displays to support teaching and learning. Provision for information and communications technology is very good. Consideration should now be given to acquiring a wider range of resources to support the implementation of the History, Mathematics and Gaeilge curriculums. The auxiliary staff carry out their duties diligently.
- The management of pupils is excellent. Positive relationships are evident throughout the school and the pupils are very well behaved, courteous and respectful. Responses to pupil questionnaires administered as part of the evaluation indicate that almost all pupils feel safe in class, know the school rules, can talk to their teachers and believe it is a good school.
- Relationships and communications are managed very effectively. Communication with parents and the community is regular and useful. The active and dedicated parents' association is very supportive of the work of the school. Analysis of responses to parent questionnaires indicates that the overwhelming majority of parents feel the school is well run, are happy with the school and feel welcomed in the school.

4. Quality of School Planning and School Self-evaluation

- The quality of the school planning and school self-evaluation process is good. In general, curriculum plans are informative for teachers' planning. The curriculum plan for Irish is prioritised for review. As part of this review, it is recommended that a systematic language programme, based on the themes of the curriculum, be devised.
- A wide range of organisational policies is evident and these support the smooth running of the school. There is a need for some of these policies to be updated in line with the school's current practice and the Department of Education and Skill's guidelines.
- The quality of individual teachers' planning is good. For the most part, short-term plans are based on specific content objectives, and long-term plans outline a broad and balanced programme. To build on this good practice, it is recommended that all teachers make specific provision for differentiation to cater for pupils at different levels of ability. Teachers in support settings should prepare weekly short-term planning in advance as recommended in the *Learning-Support Guidelines*.
- The process of school self-evaluation is well progressed. The school has produced its first school self-evaluation report which involved gathering evidence from a variety of

sources. It is currently devising a school improvement plan. It is recommended that data gathered from the longitudinal tracking of individual pupils' learning outcomes should be considered in the development of this plan.

- 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 teaching, learning and pupil achievement varies from good, to provision that requires scope for development. The teachers are good communicators and engage the pupils appropriately during learning activities. Best practice observed reflected well-structured and lively lessons. In general, whole-class teaching is the main methodology utilised. It is recommended that all lessons incorporate a variety of active-learning methodologies and the use of suitable resources. In addition, teachers should ensure that learning activities are more appropriately differentiated to challenge and support pupils in their learning.
- Baineann éagsúlacht le caighdeán an teagasc, na foghlama agus gnóthachtáil na ndaltaí sa Ghaeilge. Tá foclóir maith ag na daltaí agus, i roinnt ranganna, is féidir leo ceisteanna a fhreagairt agus a chumadh go cumasach. Í roinnt ranganna sinsearach, tá scileanna cumarsáide na ndaltaí ar leibhéal cuí. Í suímh eile áfach, tá deacrachtaí ag na daltaí abairtí a chumadh, ceisteanna a fhreagairt agus cumarsáid a dhéanamh. Breathnaíodh roinnt ceachtanna dea-struchtúrtha le trí thréimhse cumarsáide chinnte iontú. Ba chóir an dea-chleachtas seo a leathnú ar fud na scoile. Moltar ionchur teanga ar leith a phleanáil, a mhúineadh agus a threisiú go rialta. Tá éagsúlacht níos leithne d'ábhar léitheoireachta ag teastáil chun cur leis an téascleabhar atá in úsáid.
- *The quality of teaching, learning and pupil achievement in Irish is varied. Pupils have a good vocabulary and, in some classes, they can compose and answer questions capably. In some senior classes, pupils have an appropriate level of communication skills. In other settings however, pupils have difficulty structuring sentences, answering questions and communicating. Some well-structured lessons were observed incorporating three phases of communication. This competent practice should be extended throughout the school. It is recommended that specific language input should be planned, taught and regularly reinforced. A wider variety of reading material is required to supplement the text book in use.*
- There is scope for development in the quality of teaching, learning and pupil achievement in English. The pupils demonstrate a positive attitude to reading, and outcomes for some pupils have improved. A whole-school approach to the development of comprehension skills is in place. Reading standards for the low achieving pupils show scope for development and require targeted approaches. It is recommended that differentiated reading programmes be devised and implemented for all pupils. The pupils' listening skills are well developed. There is further capacity to advance their expressive language skills.
- The quality of teaching, learning and pupil achievement in Mathematics is good. Competent whole-class teaching, and appropriate levels of pupil engagement in lessons, are evident in many classrooms. There is a good focus on the embedding of problem-solving strategies and on the acquisition of mathematical language. Learning for the very able pupils has progressed significantly over the lifetime of the current DEIS plan. The challenge for the school is to raise learning standards for low-achieving pupils. It is

recommended that provision for Mathematics is underpinned by differentiated teaching approaches and targeted group teaching that is more closely aligned to the individual needs of pupils. The use of collaborative learning activities and the development of oral mathematics should be a feature of all teachers' practice.

- There is scope for development in the quality of teaching, learning and pupil achievement in History. For the most part, lessons are teacher-directed and include content-focused learning tasks. It is recommended that a skills-based approach to teaching and learning is implemented, and that all lessons incorporate a wider variety of active-learning methodologies and resources. The pupils are enabled to learn about significant events and buildings in the locality through some use of fieldwork and engagement with local historians. In some classes the pupils demonstrate a good knowledge of the local environment.
- There are good approaches to the assessment of pupils' learning and the compilation of records at a whole-school level. Outcomes of assessment should be further utilised to inform differentiated planning and teaching.

6. Quality of Support for Pupils

- In general, the quality of teaching and learning for pupils with special education needs is good, although some possibilities for improvement exist. Support for pupils is provided in a positive, caring way. Lessons in withdrawal settings are well-structured and appropriately resourced. There is scope to develop the manner in which the supports are organised, however. Where in-class work is provided there is a need to identify clear roles and responsibilities for the teachers involved in relation to the planning and delivery of lessons. Individual plans are drawn up for all pupils in receipt of support. It is recommended that specific and measurable targets are included in these plans to meet the pupils' diagnosed learning needs.
- This is an inclusive, open and welcoming school in which effective interventions are put in place to support all pupils. An extensive range of literacy and numeracy initiatives to promote parental involvement is facilitated through the Home School Community Liaison programme, School Completion Programme and class teachers.

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Appendix

School response to the report

Submitted by the Board of Management

Area 2 Follow-up actions planned or undertaken since the completion of the inspection activity to implement the findings and recommendations of the inspection

- 1) We have begun trailing a number of active methodologies in Irish and have organised to receive professional development in active methodologies for Maths and Science later this year.
- 2) We are using standardised scores to differentiate within the groups already organised for Learning support purposes and these groupings are constantly being reviewed. This differentiation is being recorded in our fortnightly notes. Weekly notes are also being prepared by both Learning support and Resource teachers as recommended.
- 3) We have visited a number of schools to look at their approach to differentiated instruction for pupils with varying reading abilities. We plan to trial our own graded and differentiated approach in the short-term with a view to implementing a new approach starting in September 2014. We have liaised with the PDST to organise professional development on this subject and our approach to reading has formed part of our School Improvement Plan for Literacy.
- 4) Time is set aside at Class planning meetings to forward plan the clear roles and responsibilities for the teachers involved in in-class support.
- 5) The Board of Management is currently endeavouring to improve the resources we have at our disposal in order to provide a wider range for the subjects of Irish, Maths and History.