

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

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

**Scoil Phádraig Naofa**  
**Foxwood,**  
**Rochestown,**  
**Co. Cork**  
**Uimhir rolla: 20335T**

**Date of inspection: 31 January 2013**



**A N R O I N N | D E P A R T M E N T O F**  
**O I D E A C H A I S | E D U C A T I O N**  
**A G U S S C I L E A N N A | A N D S K I L L S**

## 1. Introduction

Scoil Phádraig Naofa, established in 2008, is situated in the suburbs of Rochestown, approximately ten kilometres from Cork City Centre. The school has grown organically over the years and enrolment has now reached third class. The school is under the patronage of the Catholic Bishop of Cork and Ross. 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:

- The board of management is effective and is committed to ongoing school development.
- The parents are proactive in supporting the school.
- The quality of teaching and learning in the school is of a very high standard.
- Teaching and learning in English and in Mathematics is particularly strong.
- The principal is a very effective leader.
- The pupils display an excellent attitude to learning.
- Positive and supportive home school links have been established with parents in facilitating them to support their children in a productive and meaningful manner.

The following **main recommendations** are made:

- The establishment of a formal mentoring system is advised in the ongoing support of newly qualified teachers.
- Closer links between the school plan, teacher's individual plans and the monthly progress records should be established.
- Moltar an teanga labhartha sa Ghaeilge a chur chun cinn.  
*An increased emphasis on developing competency in spoken Irish is recommended.*
- Moltar freisin comhordaitheoir a cheapadh don Ghaeilge chun clár leanúnach a bhunú ar gach leibhéal den scoil.  
*The appointment of a coordinator in Irish is recommended.*

### **3. Quality of School Management**

- A wide range of expertise is evident among board members and they make an important contribution to school development. The board of management has been very proactive in addressing the development needs of the school. The endeavours of the chairperson and the principal are worthy of particular mention. The board is commended in making funding available to teachers for their continued professional development. Policies presented to the board are discussed and ratified. Going forward the board is advised to place an increased emphasis on curriculum development.
- The principal is a reflective practitioner and takes her instructional leadership role very seriously. She maintains an active and visible presence in classrooms and throughout the school. She has a clear focus on the learning needs of the pupils. A great clarity in practices and procedures among staff is a direct result of her endeavours to date. The in-school management team have undertaken an extensive range of duties. These duties are fulfilled competently and with great commitment. There is a commendable generosity of spirit among other members of staff to undertake additional responsibilities. In-school management personnel should consider compiling a short report on the completion of their duties and present this to the board at the end of the year.
- The board has invested generously in a wide range of educational resource material to complement pupils' learning. Resources are managed effectively and an inventory of all stock is maintained carefully. The board is commended in their recruitment of a professional and dynamic staff. There is a clear agenda to add to their skill base. Staff meetings held outside of school times are an important factor in programme evaluation and in teacher professional development. Management is advised to develop a staff rotation policy to ensure a variety of teaching settings is experienced. The establishment of a formal mentoring system is advised in the ongoing support of newly qualified teachers.
- Parents are commended on the high level of support they provide to the school. Selected expertise among parents is sought regularly and utilised. Positive and supportive home school links have been established with parents in facilitating them to support their children in a productive and meaningful manner. This is a welcoming school and communication with parents is good. Parents are routinely informed of the progress of their children. The results from parent questionnaires indicate almost all parents are satisfied with the quality of teaching and learning in the school.
- During the evaluation the pupils were well-mannered and responsive. A very good work ethic is established in classrooms and pupils are eager for challenge. A spirit of inclusion, empathy and respect is promoted throughout the school. School structures are systematic and ensure a consistency in supporting pupils both pastorally and academically. Pupils' needs are addressed effectively through an extensive range of activities provided during and after school time. The results from pupil questionnaires is very positive.

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

- School planning processes and implementation are good. Planning is a work in progress and as the school grows a good measure of reflection and adjustment is taking place regularly. In many cases whole-school plans indicate the programme of work for each class. Teachers' classroom planning is collaborative. It is noted good practice that the

content for each class is outlined in a monthly framework. Planning systems should now be reviewed with a view to the collaborative development of agreed short-term plans, with lesson content linked to clear learning objectives, methodologies, and in which essential resources are clearly indicated. The challenge going forward is to build closer links between the school plan, teacher's individual plans and the monthly progress records, to ensure a consistency and continuity in core curriculum delivery.

- The staff is committed to engaging in school self-evaluation and have identified numeracy for development this year.
- 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 and learning in this school is very good. Teachers work cooperatively at the various levels throughout the school. Their focus is on structured learning, most particularly in the areas of literacy and numeracy, with core skills systematically developed and consolidated. Results from standardised testing in literacy and in numeracy are highly commendable. The challenge for teachers going forward is to address the learning needs of the higher achieving pupils in a coherent and consistent manner. All teachers maintain an assessment folder documenting pupil progress in a variety of curricular areas. This good practice needs further development to ensure a consistent and informative tracking of pupils' progress.
- Déanann na hoidí iarracht chreidiúnach an Ghaeilge a chur i bhfeidhm sa scoil. Baintear leas fóna as fearas léirithe agus as an gclár bán idirghníomhaíochta mar thacaíocht don fhoghlaim. Úsáidtear straitéisí torthúla chun cumas éisteachta, labhartha agus tuisceana na ndaltaí a chur chun cinn. Tá stór leathan amhrán is rann ag na daltaí agus canann agus aithrisíonn siad go bríomhar taitneamhach iad. Baineann na daltaí mórthaitneamh as na cluichí a chleachtar agus moltar na daltaí a chur ag caint le linn na foghlama. Déantar iarracht chreidiúnach leanúnachas cainte a chothú. Moltar do na hoidí athrá na teanga a chleachtadh go minic chun cumas foghlama na ndaltaí a threisiú.

Léann na daltaí go cruinn cumasach agus tá eolas ar leith acu ar ábhar na foghlama. Moltar ábhar léitheoireachta sa bhreis a aimsiú chun an léitheoireacht a chur chun cinn a thuilleadh fós.

Tá tús maith déanta ag foireann na scoile an scríbhneoireacht a chur chun cinn. Aithnítear sampáí deasa de dhea-pheannaireacht i mórchuid de na cóipleabhair. Moltar deiseanna rialta a thabhairt do na daltaí an scríbhneoireacht a chleachtadh idir fheidhmiúil is chruthaitheach. Moltar córas measúnaithe a fhorbairt ina mbeadh céimeanna cinnte leagtha síos do gach leibhéal, maidir le dul chun cinn sa Ghaeilge. Moltar freisin comhordaitheoir a cheapadh don Ghaeilge chun clár leanúnach a bhunú ar gach leibhéal den scoil.

- *The teachers make a creditable attempt to promote Irish. Good use is made of resource material to complement the learning. Productive strategies are utilised to develop the pupils' skills. The pupils recite a wide range of verse and song. Pupils should be encouraged to use Irish during game activity.*

*The pupils read with fluency and display a good understanding of the text. Staff is advised to source additional reading material to develop the pupils' reading abilities further.*

*The pupils' are afforded opportunities to develop their writing skills in many classrooms. There are good examples of penmanship in many of the copybooks. An increased emphasis on developing writing both functionally and creatively is advised. A whole school approach in the assessment of Irish should be developed. A coordinator for Irish should be appointed.*

- The quality of teaching in English is very good. The language proficiency of pupils is very impressive in all classes. Literacy development is very well monitored. Systematic structured teaching is occurring from infants upwards. The Jolly Phonics focus gives great consistency to the development of reading skills. There is an excellent expertise within the staff and teachers are able to orchestrate effective and interesting instructional episodes for pupils and generate interest and enthusiasm. There is great variety in teaching methods with a wide range of teaching materials, including information and communication technology (ICT) available. Pupils' writing is developed systematically, they are encouraged to write in a variety of genre and overall the quality of penmanship is good and very good in many cases.
- The quality of teaching in Mathematics is excellent. A fun based active learning approach is adopted by teachers. Clear and systematic instruction is given in all classes and pupils have plenty opportunities to practice and consolidate their learning. There is a very strong emphasis on exploratory learning. The whole-school approach to mathematics should be the model applied to other curricular areas across the school. There is a clear and consistent focus on language and terminology.
- The quality of teaching and learning in Music is excellent. The music programme enables all pupils to participate in a wide range of enjoyable music-making activities, and provides for their sensory, emotional and creative development. Co-teaching is a praiseworthy feature in music tuition and results in high standards in pupil achievement. Pupils perform a wide repertoire of song in English and in Irish and performances are extended with a productive use of percussion. Pupils' skills in music appreciation are carefully nurtured.

## **6. Quality of Support for Pupils**

The special education needs (SEN) teachers are hard-working and conscientious. Planning documents are good with detailed learning profiles compiled. Planning is inclusive and involves all relevant personnel. A consistent recording of short-term plans is recommended to ensure a greater consistency in programme delivery. The recording of base line criteria is advised when setting targets around social and emotional development. Learning activities are varied, well organised and matched to the priority learning needs of pupils. A variety of interventions is established that includes elements of withdrawal and in-class support. As the system is evolving a review of current interventions is appropriate. The special needs assistants provide good quality care and support to pupils.

*Published June 2013*

# **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 of Scoil Phádraig Naofa, Baile an Róistigh would like to thank the inspectors who completed our Whole School Evaluation. This was a wonderfully affirming process for the pupils, school staff, parents association, wider parent community and school board of management. Our young and vibrant school has endeavoured to provide educational excellence in a new and growing community.

This report captures the distinctive spirit of our school and community in a rapidly expanding area of Cork City. It has provided a timely boost to all stakeholders in our school and a springboard to the future growth and development of Scoil phádraig Naofa, Baile and Róistigh. All our school community is immensely proud of our development since opening in Sept. 2008 and is wonderfully optimistic about the future growth of our school and community.

### **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 undertakes to promptly implement the recommendations outlined in the whole school evaluation report.