

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

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

**Gaelscoil Ros Eo
Rush, Co. Dublin
Roll number: 20334R**

Date of Inspection: 19 September 2014



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
T H E I N S P E C T O R A T E

Whole School Evaluation Report – Management, Leadership and Learning

Introduction

A Whole School Evaluation of Management, Leadership and Learning (WSE – MLL) was undertaken in Gaelscoil Ros Eo in September 2014. This report is based on a sample 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.

Gaelscoil Ros Eo is a co-educational, Irish-medium school established in 2008. It is under the patronage of An Foras Pátrúnachta. There are 156 pupils enrolled in the school. Pupils attend from the surrounding district. The school is on the Department's building list and is awaiting a permanent building.

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

- The teaching skills of the teachers are of a high standard.
- A broad range of worthwhile experiences is provided to the pupils and the pupils are performing well across the curriculum.
- A good relationship is demonstrated between pupils and teachers and the management of pupils is very good across the school.
- The teachers work in a collegial manner and they engage in both professional discussion and reflection.
- The school has made a very good start to the school self-evaluation process.

The following **recommendations** are made:

- As part of short-term planning for Irish, it would be worthwhile identifying compatible language, as well as identifying specific vocabulary. It is also recommended that teachers establish a mechanism for recording frequently occurring mistakes in pupils' Irish with a view to addressing these on a systematic basis.
- More emphasis should be placed on developing mathematical skills systematically according as mathematics content is taught, and on providing pupils with a wider experience of mathematics.

1. Pupils' Learning Achievement

- A broad range of worthwhile experiences is provided to the pupils and they are performing well across the curriculum. It is good practice that teachers choose suitable songs for pupils according to their interest and vocal range. The pupils show a good understanding of musical concepts. Good-quality work is displayed in the Visual Arts. To develop this and to strengthen the pupils' understanding of art concepts, it is recommended that more emphasis be placed on looking and responding to different types of works of art.
- The quality of learning in Irish is good, with pupils speaking in Irish with both understanding and confidence. To expand this good practice, it is recommended that compatible language be identified in short-term planning as well as specific vocabulary. It is also recommended that teachers establish a mechanism for recording frequently occurring mistakes in pupils' Irish with a view to addressing these on a systematic basis. Pupils are able to read at a suitable level through the medium of Irish and there is a wide range of enjoyable books in classroom libraries. It is recommended that the structure of reading lessons be reviewed in order to attend specifically to the development of reading skills. Worthwhile creative activities in writing were observed and good-quality work is evident across the class-levels. Written work is monitored very efficiently and several teachers provide very effective written feedback. It is recommended that this practice be extended throughout the school.

- In Mathematics, good practice is evident in the emphasis placed in the infant class on implementing an active programme not linked to workbooks. To improve on the current standard of good results being achieved in Mathematics, it is recommended that more emphasis be placed on the systematic development of mathematics skills through the content of lessons in Mathematics. It is also recommended that a wider experience of mathematics be provided, such as creating problems as well as solving problems and solving a broader range of mathematical problems rather than just word problems.
- Pupils demonstrate very good skills in English. Older pupils demonstrate a commendable understanding of what it means to be a good reader. Good attention is paid to making pupils aware of the progression in writing that is required across the class-levels. In the on-going development of pupils' spelling skills, it is suggested that the cultivation among pupils of a strategy for dealing with unfamiliar words be promoted. Such a strategy could also be useful for spelling in Irish and across the curriculum.
- The school keeps an account of pupils' progress in various ways. It would be worthwhile including skills as well as content in the checklists that are being maintained in different subjects. Appropriate records have been kept of the progress of pupils who are in receipt of additional support.

2. Quality of teaching

- The teaching skills of the teachers are of a high standard. In every mathematics lesson observed, there was clarity in the teaching of concepts. Good care was also taken to teach mathematical language carefully. The music lessons observed were interesting, enjoyable and challenging. In the physical education lesson observed, there was a clear structure, challenge and purpose to the lesson and good feedback was provided to the pupils during the lesson. It is clear from the questions that teachers ask pupils that teachers attend to all of the different levels in the classes. Tasks are suited to the ability, interest and age of the pupils. Pupils are actively involved in the lessons and pair work and group work are organised well by each teacher. This contributes greatly to developing the communication skills of pupils.
- An attractive and purposeful learning environment has been created as a very important support to the pupils' learning. To enrich this provision, it is recommended that the emphasis in vocabulary displays be placed on categorising words, that the different categories be displayed next to each other and that they be discussed regularly with pupils.
- The support teacher interacts purposefully with pupils with special educational needs. Concepts are explained clearly and lessons have a definite structure. There is good linkage between the teaching in the support classes and in the mainstream classes.

3. Support for pupils' wellbeing

- As part of the inspection, parents and pupils from third to sixth class were given an opportunity to complete a confidential questionnaire on aspects of the work and life of the school. The questionnaire responses showed that the majority of parents and pupils are satisfied with educational provision in the school.
- Pupils have a keen interest in learning. Teachers have good knowledge of all of the pupils. A positive relationship was demonstrated between pupils and teachers. The management of pupils is very good across the school and good work habits have been developed.
- 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 operates effectively and has a central role in school life. It is recommended that the general results of standardised tests in English, Mathematics and Irish be discussed with the board.
- The principal, newly appointed from January 2014, displays open and insightful management skills. He has a very good understanding of the context of the school and

of the strengths of staff and pupils. With the assistance of the deputy-principal, he acts reflectively to promote a more open relationship between the school and parents.

5. School Self-Evaluation

- Spelling in English is the current priority within the school self-evaluation process. Teachers have made a very good start in identifying areas for improvement. Appropriate evidence was collected and a suitable action plan is now in place. To support the teachers' efforts, it is recommended that the whole-school strategy being established for the teaching of spelling in Irish extend over the curriculum in general.

Conclusion

The school has good capacity to undertake school improvement due to the good knowledge that the teachers have of pupils, the collegial manner in which the teachers work and the collaborative spirit that exists among all members of the school.

Appendix

School response to the report

Submitted by the Board of Management

Area 1: Observations on the content of the inspection report

As a school, we think this is a fair report. We agree with the strengths and recommendations that have been identified in the 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

Currently, the school is engaged in reviewing Mathematics as part of its process of self-evaluation. With the results of that process and the recommendations from this report, the school will proceed to develop the skills of Mathematics into the future.

This year, the school began implementing a particular programme in spelling in English. This scheme is directed towards teaching strategies so that pupils can be more independent in their writing. In addition to this, the teachers are developing their own system for spelling in Irish with the emphasis placed on developing these same skills for independence.