

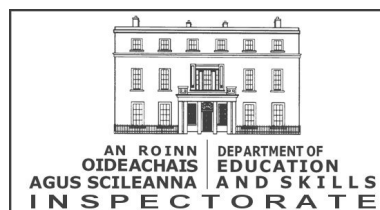
**An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna
Department of Education and Skills**

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

**Scoil Naomh Treasa
Urris, Clonmany
County Donegal**

Uimhir rolla: 16108J

Date of inspection: 23 March 2015



Whole-School Evaluation – Management, Leadership and Learning Report

Introduction

A Whole-School Evaluation – Management, Leadership and Learning (WSE - MLL) was undertaken in Scoil Naomh Treasa in March 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 was given an opportunity to comment in writing on the findings and recommendations of the report; a response was not received from the board.

Scoil Naomh Treasa, under the patronage of the Roman Catholic Bishop of Derry, has sixty-one pupils enrolled. School attendance levels are very good. There are three mainstream class teachers on the staff.

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

- There is a positive atmosphere in the school that is supported by very caring relationships with the pupils.
- The teaching principal is committed to the continued development of teaching and learning.
- The members of the board of management support the work of the school purposefully.
- The parents' association works diligently to fundraise in support of the school.
- The overall learning achievements of pupils are commendable.
- The celebration of the pupils' literacy and artistic work is highly commendable.
- The pupils have an excellent record of sporting achievements.

The following **main recommendations** are made:

- Moltar a thuilleadh béime a chur ar chothú scileanna éisteachta agus scileanna léitheoireachta sa Ghaeilge. *Further emphasis should be placed on developing listening and reading skills in Irish.*
- An assessment policy should be drawn up to outline how the pupils' learning will be assessed on an on-going basis in every subject.
- The school is advised to develop structured in-class supports and team-teaching strategies to reduce the need to withdraw pupils for learning support.
- It is recommended that the principal monitors teaching and learning on an on-going basis in all classrooms to ensure appropriate progression is made in pupils' learning from class to class.

Findings

1. The learning achievements of pupils

- The overall learning achievements of pupils are commendable. Very good levels of pupil engagement were noted during the evaluation in most classrooms. In questionnaires, almost all parents agreed that their child is doing well in school.
- Pupils' early literacy skills are developing very well. They have access to a variety of reading materials and are enthusiastic, confident readers. More effective differentiation of reading texts is recommended in some classes. The pupils recite a good number of poems successfully.
- The pupils engage in a wide range of writing genres. While the overall quality of this work is very good, the quality of written work in the middle classes needs to be improved in terms of presentation, spelling and handwriting.
- Sa Ghaeilge, cé go bhfuil rannta, amhráin, focail agus frásaí eagsúla ar eolas go han-mhaith ag na daltaí, tá scóip chun forbartha a dhéanamh ar a scileanna éisteachta

agus a scileanna léitheoireachta. *In Irish, while pupils know a range of rhymes, songs, words and phrases very well, there is scope to develop their listening and reading skills further.*

- Learning outcomes in Mathematics are very good. Pupils engage in active numeracy learning and benefit from regular practice in mental maths.
- Pupils' learning in Social, Environmental and Scientific Education (SESE) is very good. There are regular opportunities for pupils to create art and their work is displayed prominently. The pupils have an excellent record of sporting achievements. While the pupils sing a range of songs, instrumental tuition would enhance pupils' learning in Music.
- Pupils with additional and special educational needs are making good progress in accordance with their abilities.
- In questionnaires, almost all pupils agreed that they enjoyed lessons and learning. There was some variation in their responses in respect of opportunities to participate regularly in group work, use of computers during some lessons and having a say in how things are done in the school; these findings should prompt discussion and follow-up at school level.

2. Quality of teaching

- The overall quality of teaching is good. Individual practice ranged from fair to very good, with some excellent individual practice observed. Where practice was excellent, there were well-planned thematic approaches and highly effective active and differentiated learning opportunities for pupils.
- All teachers prepare comprehensive classroom planning. Teachers use information and communication technology (ICT) effectively to enhance lessons. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is supported well through print-rich classroom environments.
- Ar an iomlán, tá an soláthar sa Ghaeilge go sásúil, le scóip chun forbartha a dhéanamh ar snáitheanna an churaclaim *Eisteacht* agus *Léitheoireacht*. *Provision for Irish is satisfactory overall, with scope to develop the curriculum strands Listening and Reading.*
- Pupils' progress in literacy and numeracy is tracked efficiently. There is effective assessment for learning approaches (AfL) in use in some classrooms; such practice should be shared and implemented schoolwide.
- Currently, four teachers—one of whom is part-time—provide support to pupils with additional and special educational needs. The quality of learning-support teaching provided for pupils in literacy and numeracy is very good. Most provision is on a withdrawal basis. Structured in-class supports and team-teaching strategies should be developed to reduce the need to withdraw pupils.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good overall. To enhance provision, further advice should be sought from the National Educational Psychological Service to ensure that pupils' priority needs are supported fully.
- In questionnaires, almost all parents agreed that the school is helping their child to progress with reading with most agreeing that the school is helping their child make progress in Maths. Almost all pupils agreed that their teacher explains things clearly, talks to them about how to improve their work and that homework is checked.

3. Support for pupils' well-being

- The management of pupils is highly praiseworthy in most classrooms. However, during the evaluation, it was observed that classroom rules needed to be implemented more consistently in one setting.
- Responses to pupils' questionnaires indicate that all pupils like school, feel safe in the class and in the playground and believe their school to be a good school. It is advised that a student council be established to further facilitate pupils in expressing their views on relevant school matters.
- In questionnaires, all parents agreed that their child is treated fairly and respectfully at school, almost all agreed that their child enjoys school and that that parents are welcome in the school.
- 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 work of the board of management is generally good. Very effective financial management is in evidence and, commendably, annual meetings are held with the parent body. It is imperative, however, that the board, in consultation with parents, tackles the issue of late arrival to school. During the evaluation, it was observed that a few pupils travelling by bus arrived to school between 9.00am and 9.10am. Pupils should be at school for 8.50am which is the time selected for the commencement of the official school day by this school. In particular, the board needs to liaise with those providing school transport so that pupils travelling by bus are at school on time.
- In questionnaires, while the majority of parents agreed that the school regularly seeks their views on school matters, a number did not. This finding should prompt further consideration at board level.
- The parents' association (PA) works very hard to support the school through regular fundraising activities. The PA should explore the supports available to it from the National Parents' Council (Primary) to enhance parents' participation as partners in the education of the pupils.
- The in-school management team comprises the principal and the deputy principal. The principal is committed to the continued development of teaching and learning and encourages the staff to work towards a common vision. She has contributed very positively to school development since her appointment. It is recommended that the principal monitors teaching and learning on an on-going basis in all classrooms.
- The deputy principal attends to assigned duties conscientiously. Going forward, the duties of the deputy principal should be ratified formally by the board and reviewed regularly. Leadership training should be sought in respect of this management role.
- The highly efficient work of the secretary contributes significantly to the smooth operation of the school.
- Home-school communication is good. In questionnaire responses, almost all parents reported that they feel welcome in the school; most agreed that they are happy with the school, that it is well run and that discipline is good.

5. School Self-evaluation

- A comprehensive planning process is undertaken. An assessment policy should be drawn up to outline how the pupils' learning will be assessed on an on-going basis in every subject. It is recommended that the Irish policy be reviewed.
- While policies are displayed on the parents' notice board, a website would provide parents with continued access to key policies. Questionnaire responses indicated that a significant minority of parents were either unsure or disagreed that they had been informed of the anti-bullying policy and the relationships and sexuality policy. This should be addressed.
- There has been good engagement with school-self evaluation. Overall, the targeted actions for improvement in the school improvement plan are impacting positively on pupils' learning in literacy.

Conclusion

The school's capacity to engage in continuous school improvement is good, given the vision of the principal and the commitment of the staff to the pupils in their care.