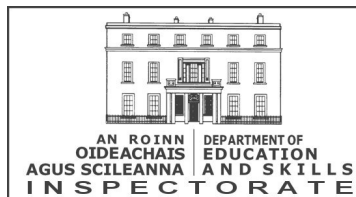


**An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna
Department of Education and Skills**

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

**REPORT
Scoil Bhríde,
Nurney, County Kildare
Uimhir rolla: 16345A**

Date of inspection: 25 January 2016



Whole-School Evaluation – Management, Leadership and Learning Report

Introduction

A Whole-School Evaluation – Management, Leadership and Learning (WSE - MLL) was undertaken in Scoil Bhríde in January 2016. 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 accepts the report as the final inspection report available for publication and wishes to respond formally to the report. The Board agrees that the response submitted will be included as an appendix to the published report. The board's response is submitted below.

Scoil Bhríde National School is a co-educational, vertical primary school under the patronage of the Catholic Bishop of Kildare and Leighlin. The staff comprises an administrative principal, eight mainstream teachers and three support teachers, two of whom are shared with neighbouring schools. There are 220 pupils enrolled and attendance levels are very good.

The evaluation has found:

- Teaching and learning is of a high quality, although learning in Irish shows scope for improvement.
- A positive atmosphere prevails and pupils present as eager learners.
- The board and staff are highly commended for providing quality learning spaces for pupils.
- While the principal and in-school management team work diligently, curriculum leadership needs to be enhanced.
- Teachers are committed to regular engagement in continuing professional development.
- While assessment strategies are evident in classrooms, a whole-school assessment policy is needed.

The following **main recommendations** are made:

- Curriculum leadership needs to be enhanced to further improve teaching and learning and to enshrine current school practices in updated school policies.
- Ar an iomlán, ní mór na ceachtanna Gaeilge a bheith pleanáilte le struchtúr níos éifeachtaí chun cur le hinniúlacht agus muinín na ndaltaí ag úsáid teanga. *Gaeilge lessons overall need to be better planned and structured to enhance pupils' competence and confidence in using language.*
- A whole-school assessment policy should be devised to support the use of assessment in differentiating teaching and learning for pupils.

Findings

1. The learning achievements of pupils

- The overall quality of pupils' learning achievements is high. Pupils present as eager learners. However, their competence and confidence in oral language needs to be further developed.
- Pupils' reading attainments are good. A variety of reading material is used to support the development of their literacy. Information from assessment should be used to closely match reading material to pupils' abilities.
- Learning achievements in Mathematics are good. Teaching approaches to aspects of numeracy, articulated in school self-evaluation documents, support ongoing learning. A greater use of concrete materials during lessons is advised.
- Good learning is evident in Social, Environmental and Scientific Education. Nonetheless, a stronger emphasis should be placed on local history and geography.
- Tá scóip le forbairt maidir le torthaí foghlama na ndaltaí sa Ghaeilge. Tá réimse mhaith d'fhocail agus abairtí de ghlanmheabhair acu. Is léir, áfach, nach bhfuil sách muintínne ag na daltaí ag labhairt teanga. Ar an iomlán, ní mór na ceachtanna Gaeilge a bheith pleanáilte le struchtúr níos éifeachtaí chun sách deiseanna a thabhairt do na daltaí teanga a chleachtadh i suímh difriúla. *There is scope for development in the pupils' achievement in Irish. They know a good range of vocabulary and sentences by heart. It is clear, however, that pupils lack confidence in speaking the language. Gaeilge lessons overall need to be better planned and structured to ensure pupils are given sufficient opportunities to consolidate newly learned language in different contexts.*
- Pupils with special educational needs are making good progress. The school should optimise its deployment of teaching resources to ensure that individual learning needs are appropriately addressed.
- A range of assessment strategies is used in the school. These should be documented in a whole-school assessment policy. Information from assessment should be used to inform differentiated learning objectives in teachers' planning.

2. Quality of teaching

- Teaching in the school is of a high quality overall. Effective whole-class teaching ensures high levels of pupil engagement during lessons. Very stimulating learning environments are provided. Teachers are committed to regular engagement in continuing professional development.
- Learning outcomes in teachers' short-term planning should be clearly linked to curriculum objectives, and should be differentiated for pupils of varying abilities. Collaborative group work and provision of opportunities to develop pupils' oral language skills should be stronger features of lessons.
- High quality teaching is provided for pupils with special educational needs. It is recommended that support be firmly focussed on pupils' individual needs. The recording of specific learning outcomes for all classroom interventions in short-term planning is advised.

3. Support for pupils' well-being

- During the evaluation pupils' behaviour was exemplary. Successful strategies which support pupils' well-being and confidence should now be enshrined in a whole-school plan for Social, Personal and Health Education.
- An active parents' association supports the school through various initiatives. In questionnaires administered prior to the evaluation, almost all parents expressed happiness with the school.
- The school provides a range of co-curricular and extra-curricular activities which support pupils' holistic development.
- 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 quality of school leadership and management shows scope for development. The board of management has successfully overseen infrastructural and managerial changes in the school. A safe and pleasant learning environment is provided for pupils. The board is advised to plan for the cyclical review of all policies.
- Ancillary staff support the smooth operation of the school.
- The principal, who was appointed in 2014, is successfully established and engages very well in school organisational matters. The deputy principal and in-school management team diligently undertake their assigned duties. The curriculum leadership role of team members needs enhancement to encompass a greater focus on leading improvements in teaching and learning.
- The school has a range of curriculum plans. It should ensure these are contextualised to the school while providing effective guidance to teachers' practice. Provision should be made for those areas for which there is no curriculum planning to date.

5. School Self-evaluation

- The school has engaged positively in school self-evaluation. In reviewing plans, the staff should ensure that targets are measurable and timebound.

Conclusion

The school's capacity to develop further and engage in school improvement is very good.

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Appendix

School response to the report

Submitted by the Board of Management

Part A: Observations on the content of the inspection report

The BOM of Scoil Bhríde, on behalf of all stakeholders, acknowledges this very positive WSE_MLL report. It affirms excellent practices in the school. The teaching staff/Management were encouraged by many of the following findings:

- Teaching and learning is of high quality
- Very good attendance levels
- Positive atmosphere
- Effective whole-class teaching
- High Learning achievements
- Behaviour is exemplary
- Literacy, numeracy and SESE attainments are good
- Range of extra activities offered support pupils' holistic development
- Principal engages very well in school organisational matters
- High quality teaching for pupils with SEN
- Highly commended for very stimulating, quality learning environments
- Principal/school management team work diligently
- Teachers committed to regular CPD
- Range of assessment strategies evident
- Positive engagement in SSE
- School's capacity to develop and engage in improvement is very good
- Almost all parents expressed happiness with the school

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 school has already addressed a number of the recommendations and created a time line to address remaining issues:

- Oral Irish is our third area for review under SSE June 2016. There will be a three year SIP in place for the teaching and learning of oral Irish with a focus on improved lesson planning and structure and increased opportunities for pupils to consolidate newly learned language.
- An in-school management team review has been undertaken to enhance the curriculum leadership role of team members encompassing a greater focus on leading improvements in teaching and learning in literacy, numeracy, Irish and SPHE.
- Staff have received CPD in creating School Improvement Targets that are measurable and time bound.
- SPHE is prioritised as the fourth area for review under SSE during the school year 2016/17.
- Greater use of concrete materials during mathematic lessons will be prioritised with a measurable and time bound target in the next three year Numeracy SIP due to commence in September 2016.
- The principal and deputy principal have agreed to undertake a whole school review of SEN and assessment, with the goal of creating in consultation with all stakeholders, up to date whole school policies in each. It is planned to have an up to date whole school policy on SEN by summer 2016. It is planned to have an up to date whole school policy on assessment by December 2016 to support the use of assessment in differentiating teaching and learning for pupils, thereby informing differentiated learning objectives (linked to curriculum objectives) in teachers' short-term planning. This policy will allow the whole school to (i) closely match reading materials to pupils' abilities and (ii) ensure that individual learning needs are appropriately addressed.
- A BOM plan for the cyclical review of all whole school policies (organisational, curricular and pastoral) will be in place for September 2016. This cyclical review will (i) ensure that all whole school policies are contextualised to Scoil Bhríde and (ii) provide effective guidance to teachers' practice.

