



An Roinn Oideachais
Department of Education

Whole School Evaluation: Management, Leadership and Learning Report

REPORT

Ainm na scoile/School name	Kilmurry NS
Seoladh na scoile/School address	Lisardagh Co. Cork
Uimhir rolla/Roll number	17972J
Dáta na cigireachta/ Date of evaluation	04-05-2023
Dáta eisiúna na tuairisce/ Date of issue of report	05/10/2023

What is a whole-school evaluation – management, leadership and learning?

Whole-School Evaluation – Management, Leadership and Learning reports on the quality of teaching and learning and on the quality of management and leadership in a school. It affirms good practice and makes recommendations, where appropriate, to aid the further development of educational provision in the school.

How to read this report

During this inspection, the inspectors evaluated and reported under the following headings or areas of enquiry:

1. The quality of pupils' learning
2. The quality of teaching
3. The quality of support for pupils' wellbeing
4. The quality of leadership and management
5. The quality of school self-evaluation

Inspectors describe the quality of each of these areas using the Inspectorate's quality continuum which is shown on the final page of this report. The quality continuum provides examples of the language used by inspectors when evaluating and describing the quality of the school's provision in each area.

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.

Actions of the school to safeguard children and prevent and tackle bullying

During the inspection visit, the following checks in relation to the school's child protection and anti-bullying procedures were conducted:	
<i>Child Protection</i>	<i>Anti-bullying</i>
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The name of the DLP and the Child Safeguarding Statement are prominently displayed near the main entrance to the school.2. The Child Safeguarding Statement has been ratified by the board and includes an annual review and a risk assessment.3. All teachers visited reported that they have read the Child Safeguarding Statement and that they are aware of their responsibilities as mandated persons.4. The Child Safeguarding Statement meets the requirements of the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017.5. The records of the last three board of management meetings record a child protection oversight report that meet the requirements of the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary schools 2017.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The school has developed an anti-bullying policy that meets the requirements of the <i>Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (2013)</i> and this policy is reviewed annually.2. The board of management minutes record that the principal provides a report to the board at least once a term on the overall number of bullying cases reported (by means of the bullying recording template provided in the <i>Procedures</i>) since the previous report to the board.3. The school's anti-bullying policy is published on its website and/or is readily accessible to board of management members, teachers, parents and pupils.4. The school has appropriate initiatives in place to promote a positive and inclusive school culture and environment.5. All teachers visited report that they have read the school's policy on anti-bullying

<ol style="list-style-type: none">6. The board of management has ensured that arrangements are in place to provide information to all school personnel on the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools, 2017.7. School planning documentation indicates that the school is making full provision for the relevant aspects of the curriculum (SPHE, Stay Safe, RSE).8. Child protection records are maintained in a secure location.	<p>and that they are aware of their roles and responsibilities in preventing and tackling bullying.</p>
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The school met the requirements in relation to each of the checks above.

Whole-school evaluation – management, leadership and learning

Date of inspection	02-05-2023 - 04-05-2023
Inspection activities undertaken <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Meetings with principal and in-school leadership team• Meeting with representatives of the board of management• Meeting with parent representatives• Meeting with teachers• Review of relevant documents• Pupil focus group	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Analysis of parent, pupil and teacher questionnaires• Observation of teaching and learning• Examination of pupils' work• Interaction with pupils• Feedback to principal, deputy principal and teachers, and to parent and board of management representatives

School context

Kilmurry National School is a rural co-educational primary school under the patronage of the Catholic Bishop of Cork and Ross. At the time of the evaluation, the school had a staffing of an administrative principal, six mainstream teachers, three special education teachers (SETs) and three teachers who cater for the needs of pupils who attend classes for pupils with autism. There were 160 pupils enrolled in the school at the time of the evaluation.

Summary of main findings and recommendations:

Findings

- The quality of learning was very good with pupils demonstrating very positive learning dispositions.
- A broad range of stimulating learning experiences was provided for pupils.
- The overall quality of teaching was very good; teachers facilitated interesting and engaging lessons with affirming feedback frequently provided.
- Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) benefited significantly from the high quality provision.
- The overall quality of leadership was very good with pupils' wellbeing being central to the schools ethos.

Recommendations

- Ba chóir béim sa bhreis a chur ar Gaeilge neamhfhoirmiúil agus deiseanna a sholáthar do dhaltáí an teanga a usáid i rith an lae; moltar níos mó deiseanna scríbhneoireachta a chruthú do dhaltáí i ngach rang. *Increased emphasis should be placed on informal Irish and opportunities created for pupils to use the language throughout the day: more writing opportunities should be created for pupils in all classes.*
- Leadership should discontinue the practice of deploying a special education teacher (SET) to deliver an aspect of the curriculum to a mainstream class and ensure that support is targeted towards pupils identified with SEN and those with the greatest level of need.

Detailed findings and recommendations

1. The quality of pupils' learning

- The quality of learning was very good. Pupils demonstrated very positive learning dispositions and high levels of engagement. They were motivated to learn through having a clear sense of attainable and challenging learning objectives which were shared with pupils at the outset of almost all lessons.
- Pupils have made very good progress in Mathematics. In lessons observed, pupils had a very good knowledge of operations, number facts and mathematical language. When questioned they could apply their knowledge of relevant mathematical processes to real-life situations. Some pupils in senior classes have enjoyed success in a national competition which tested computational and problem-solving skills.
- The overall quality of pupils' learning in literacy was highly commendable. Novels were used very effectively, and pupils read fluently and were confident in articulating their views. They were encouraged to be critical thinkers when reading and responding to literacy tasks. High quality samples of pupils' written work were on display in classrooms and in pupils' copybooks.
- A broad range of stimulating learning experiences was provided for pupils. The school's outdoor environment has been developed as a resource to support learning in Science and Geography. Senior pupils designed maths trails to enhance outdoor learning experiences for junior pupils.
- Pupils demonstrated an avid interest and enthusiasm for science, technology engineering, art and mathematics (STEAM). This aspect of learning has been incrementally developed to a very high standard throughout the school. Junior pupils ably recounted achievements designing mazes and 3D constructions, while pupils in senior classes provided a comprehensive account of their work in coding and robotics. Pupils' learning has also been enhanced by participation in a range of national initiatives. A strong emphasis has been placed on environmental awareness throughout the school.
- Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) benefited significantly from the high quality provision. Teachers worked collaboratively to ensure that a range of models were in place to support their learning. Support files and regular reviews indicated that pupils were making very good progress, and notable practice was observed in classes for pupils with autism. The highly effective practice of integration and reverse integration was a strong feature of teachers' practice.
- Pupils who participated in the focus group were enthusiastic in describing their learning across a range of curricular areas. They described learning through the creative arts which included such activities as tie-dyeing and experimenting with marbling. They welcomed the opportunity to have their voices heard through the recently established students' council.
- *Sna ranganna inar breathnaíodh múineadh na Gaeilge, chothaigh na múinteoirí meon dearfach i leith na Gaeilge sa seomra ranga. É sin ráite, bheadh sé tábhachtach go gcloisfeadh na daltaí níos mó Gaeilge neamhfhoirmiúil i gcaitheamh an lae agus go mbeadh deis acu an teanga a d'fhoghlaim siad a úsáid eatarthu féin. Moltar chomh maith níos mó deiseanna saor-scríbhneoireachta a sholáthar do dhaltaí i ngach rang, ó abairtí simplí go píosaí scríbhneoireachta i seánraí éagsúla. In classes where the teaching of Irish was observed, teachers fostered a positive disposition towards Irish among the pupils. That said, it is important that pupils hear Irish informally throughout the school day and that they are given the opportunity to use the language they have learned among themselves. It is recommended also that pupils' writing is developed in all classes, from simple sentences to writing in different genres.*

2. The quality of teaching

- Overall, the quality of teaching was very good. Teachers facilitated interesting and engaging lessons across almost all curricular areas observed. They frequently participated in a broad range of continuing professional development (CPD). Commendably, teachers shared their highly effective practices which they have incorporated in to their teaching, with the aim of embedding these throughout the school.
- Teachers' preparation was of a very high standard. They used a broad range of methodologies to optimise pupil attention and engagement. These included whole-class teaching, pair work, and group work, use of concrete resources, discovery-based learning, project work, games and ICT. In the parent questionnaires distributed as part of the evaluation, the majority of parents agreed that teaching was good in the school.
- The overall quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs (SEN) was highly commendable. Competent teachers collaborated under the strong leadership of the SEN co-ordinator to provide high quality learning experiences for pupils. While the majority of support was provided on a withdrawal basis, the team has successfully supported in-class interventions in literacy and numeracy. Teachers planning and preparation in SEN settings is of a high quality with pupils learning outcomes assessed and reviewed on a regular basis.
- Non-compliance with Special Education Circular 13/2017 was observed during the evaluation. The school is deploying its special education teacher (SET) to teach an aspect of the curriculum to a mainstream class. This practice should be discontinued to ensure that additional SEN teaching supports are used in their entirety to support pupils with the greatest need.
- The overall quality of assessment was good with some very good practices observed. All teachers maintained assessment records on pupils' progress. Pupils' work was well monitored in copybooks, with affirming feedback frequently provided. Highly effective examples of assessment practices were noted in some settings, including the use of peer and self-assessment, maintenance of progress records in literacy and numeracy and records relating to skills development across a range of curricular areas. These practices should be extended to all settings.

3. The quality of support for pupils' wellbeing

- Support for pupils' wellbeing was very good. Wellbeing was central to the ethos of the school, and school leaders and teachers have established a secure and healthy learning environment. Commendably, a buddy system has been established where senior pupils mentor new junior infants. Responses to pupil surveys indicated that most pupils felt safe and cared for in school.
- Teachers have implemented a range of programmes to support pupil wellbeing. The school promoted inclusion, and evidence of this was noted in the participation of all pupils in a range of co-curricular and extra-curricular activities. Parents who responded to the parental survey and representatives of the parents association who met with inspectors during the evaluation indicated high levels of satisfaction with the quality of communication between the school and home.

4. The quality of leadership and management

- The overall quality of leadership was very good. The board of management was committed to the on-going development of the school and discharged its duties very effectively. They ensured school resources for teaching and learning were in place and that policies were ratified and implemented to ensure the safety and wellbeing of pupils.
- The leadership provided by the principal was highly commendable. She was ably supported by a highly effective in-school management team. Distributed leadership practices were in place and teachers were empowered and supported to lead aspects of school development.
- The school regularly provides placements for student teachers. Such engagement in initial teacher education programmes is welcomed and is included among the standards of the Teaching Council's Code of Professional Conduct for Teachers as it can provide valuable professional benefits for teachers, student teachers, pupils and teacher education institution.

5. The quality of school self-evaluation

- School self-evaluation (SSE) was of a good quality. The six-step process of SSE has been established and embedded in the school and the principal and teachers have successfully implemented an improvement plan for literacy and numeracy.
- The staff have identified wellbeing as the next area for development and the in-school leadership team has begun to create an improvement plan. There has been consultation with pupils, parents and teachers during this process. A summary of SSE findings and school improvement actions should now be shared with the school community ensuring that targets and improvements are measurable and impact positively on learner outcomes.

The Inspectorate's Quality Continuum

Inspectors describe the quality of provision in the school using the Inspectorate's quality continuum which is shown below. The quality continuum provides examples of the language used by inspectors when evaluating and describing the quality of the school's provision of each area.

Level	Description	Example of descriptive terms
Very Good	<i>Very good</i> applies where the quality of the areas evaluated is of a very high standard. The very few areas for improvement that exist do not significantly affect the overall quality of provision. For some schools in this category the quality of what is evaluated is <i>outstanding</i> and provides an example for other schools of exceptionally high standards of provision.	Very good; of a very high quality; very effective practice; highly commendable; very successful; few areas for improvement; notable; of a very high standard. Excellent; outstanding; exceptionally high standard, with very significant strengths; exemplary
Good	<i>Good</i> applies where the strengths in the areas evaluated clearly outweigh the areas in need of improvement. The areas requiring improvement affect the quality of pupils' learning. The school needs to build on its strengths and take action to address the areas identified as requiring improvement in order to achieve a <i>very good</i> standard.	Good; good quality; valuable; effective practice; competent; useful; commendable; good standard; some areas for improvement
Satisfactory	<i>Satisfactory</i> applies where the quality of provision is adequate. The strengths in what is being evaluated just outweigh the shortcomings. While the shortcomings do not have a significant negative impact they constrain the quality of the learning experiences and should be addressed in order to achieve a better standard.	Satisfactory; adequate; appropriate provision although some possibilities for improvement exist; acceptable level of quality; improvement needed in some areas
Fair	<i>Fair</i> applies where, although there are some strengths in the areas evaluated, deficiencies or shortcomings that outweigh those strengths also exist. The school will have to address certain deficiencies without delay in order to ensure that provision is satisfactory or better.	Fair; evident weaknesses that are impacting on pupils' learning; less than satisfactory; experiencing difficulty; must improve in specified areas; action required to improve
Weak	<i>Weak</i> applies where there are serious deficiencies in the areas evaluated. Immediate and coordinated whole-school action is required to address the areas of concern. In some cases, the intervention of other agencies may be required to support improvements.	Weak; unsatisfactory; insufficient; ineffective; poor; requiring significant change, development or improvement; experiencing significant difficulties;

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 Kilmurry National School would like to acknowledge receipt of our written WSE- MLL report and to thank the inspectorate for their courtesy and professionalism throughout the evaluation.

The Board is extremely pleased with the excellent report and welcomes its affirmations, commendations and recommendations.

The Board are proud of the acknowledgement of the high-quality of support for pupils' well-being and especially our ongoing commitment to the support of our SEN pupils. The Board are delighted that the report reflects our focus on the holistic development of our pupils, including but not limited to STEAM, development of social skills, awareness of environmental challenges, participation in national initiatives etc.

The Board wishes to acknowledge the dedication and commitment by all staff to the maintenance of the very high standard of teaching and learning in our school, including their participation in continuous professional development. The Board commends the staff on the outcomes of this report.

The Board appreciates the recognition of the very good quality of leadership and management in our school and acknowledges their commitment to guiding the school community.

The Board wishes to express its gratitude to the whole school community - parents association, parents and pupils for their integral input into the evaluation.

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 practice of deploying a special education teacher (SET) to deliver an aspect of the curriculum to a mainstream class has been discontinued. We will ensure that Special Education Circular 13/2017 is adhered to correctly going forward.

Tá an fhoireann dírithe ar chaighdeán na Gaeilge a fheabhsú. Tá an fhoireann bainistíochta in-scoile ag Obair le chéile leis an bhfoireann chun plan a dhéanamh. Cuirfear an plan seo i bhfeidhm láithreach agus déanfar athbhreithniú go rialta air. The staff are focused on improving the standard of Irish. The ISM team are working with the staff to put a plan in place. This plan will be put in place immediately and reviewed regularly.