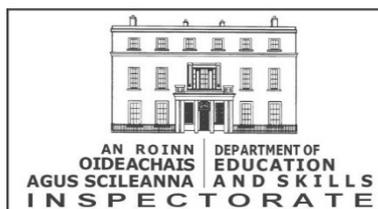


An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna
Department of Education and Skills

Whole School Evaluation
Management, Leadership and Learning
REPORT

St Hugh's NS,
Dowra, Co. Leitrim
Uimhir rolla: 18181G

Date of inspection: 4 June 2014



Whole-School Evaluation – Management, Leadership and Learning Report

Introduction

A Whole-School Evaluation – Management, Leadership and Learning (WSE - MLL) was undertaken in St Hugh's NS in June, 2014. 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, and the response of the board will be found in the appendix of this report.

St Hugh's NS is a co-educational school which operates under the patronage of the Roman Catholic Bishop of Kilmore. The school has two mainstream class teachers. The school also has a learning-support teacher and a resource teacher, both of whom are shared with other schools in the area. Enrolment levels are stable and attendance levels are very good. At present there are 46 pupils enrolled in the school.

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

- The board of management and principal work conscientiously to provide highly effective leadership to the school.
- Pupils are managed very well in the school. Effective classroom management strategies are used to promote good discipline.
- The overall quality of teaching in the school is very good.
- Excellent use is made of information and communication technology (ICT) as a tool for teaching and learning.
- Overall learning achievements of pupils are commendable throughout the school.
- Assessment practices are very good in the school.
- The quality of teaching provided for pupils with special educational needs is very high.
- Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress in line with the learning targets set for them.
- The quality of communication between home and school is very good and parents are provided with detailed reports of their children's progress.

The following **main recommendations** are made:

- Approaches to long-term and short-term planning should be reviewed at a whole-school level.
- B'fhiú úsáid sa bhreis a bhaint as sleachta léitheoireachta de dheardh na n-oidí, samplaí maithe atá in úsáid cheana, chun an t-ábhar léitheoireachta sa Ghaeilge a leathnú. *More use should be made of reading passages designed by the teachers, good examples of which are already in use, to extend the range of reading material in Irish.*

Findings

1. The learning achievements of pupils

- Overall learning achievements of pupils are very good throughout the school. Pupils engage with enthusiasm in lessons and they complete assigned learning tasks successfully in most cases. High quality samples of their work in a wide range of curriculum areas are displayed to very good effect.
- Learning outcomes in numeracy and literacy range from good to very good. Pupils use a variety of stimulating resources in a purposeful manner to enable them to complete learning tasks successfully. They make very good use of ICT to present their project work in a range of curriculum areas.

- Pupils are progressing well in their learning. Assessment practices are very good in the school. The results of standardised tests and of formative assessment instruments indicate that pupils are performing well in English reading and Mathematics. The use of pupil self-assessment encourages pupils to seek continual improvement in their work across the curriculum. Pupils' self-assessment folders contain many fine examples of their best efforts in several subject areas. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress in line with the learning targets set for them.
- Déanann formhór de na daltaí dul chun cinn cuí sa Ghaeilge. Glacann siad páirt go toilteanach sna gníomhaíochtaí foghlama agus sna cluichí teanga a eagraítear, agus léiríonn siad caighdeán maith labhartha ar an iomlán. Is féidir leo scríobh go neamhspleách ar théamaí éagsúla agus tá cuid den scríbhneoireacht phearsanta ar ardchaighdeán. Léann na daltaí le muinín agus le tuiscint. B'fhiú úsáid sa bhreis a bhaint as sleachta léitheoireachta de dhearadh na n-oidí, samplaí maithe atá in úsáid cheana, chun an t-ábhar léitheoireachta a leathnú. *Most pupils progress appropriately in Irish. They participate willingly in the learning activities and language games that are organised for them, and in general they display a good standard of spoken Irish. They are able to write independently on various topics and some of the personal writing is of a very high standard. More use should be made of reading passages designed by the teachers, good examples of which are already in use, to extend the range of reading material.*

2. Quality of teaching

- The overall quality of teaching in the school is commendable. Work is differentiated suitably for pupils in the mainstream classes. Teachers use a range of teaching approaches to ensure that all pupils are challenged appropriately in their learning. Teachers prepare an extensive range of high quality teaching resources and these are used very effectively to enable pupils to engage actively in lessons. The quality of written planning ranges from good to very good. However, in order to ensure greater linkage with the curriculum documents, it is recommended that approaches to long-term and short-term planning be reviewed at a whole-school level. Lessons are presented using a stimulating range of resources and appropriate emphasis is placed on facilitating collaborative learning. Excellent use is made of information and communication technology (ICT) as a tool for teaching and learning.
- The quality of teaching provided for pupils with special educational needs is very high. In both the learning support and resource teaching settings, teachers' practice is guided by thorough planning. Specific learning targets are set for pupils based on their identified learning needs. Teachers reflect carefully on the effectiveness of planned interventions and they adjust the teaching programme as appropriate. The level of detail provided in individual pupil profiles and the quality of assessment are very good.

3. Support for pupils' well-being

- Pupils are managed very well in the school. Effective classroom management strategies are used to promote good discipline. On a questionnaire administered to pupils during the evaluation, all pupils reported that they had learned about different types of bullying in school. Almost all said that they felt safe in their class and in the playground.
- The quality of communication between home and school is very good and parents are provided with detailed reports of their children's progress. In response to a questionnaire issued to parents prior to the evaluation, almost all agreed that school reports give a good picture of how their children are doing in school and are satisfied with the arrangements for parent-teacher meetings.
- Management and staff work together very effectively to ensure that the school provides a welcoming and inclusive learning environment. All pupils have full access to resources and to the range of learning activities provided in the school.

- Individual education plans are prepared collaboratively and are used to ensure that pupils with special educational needs are provided with supports designed to meet their identified learning needs and to facilitate their inclusion in learning activities.
- 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 of management provides highly effective leadership to the school. It is properly constituted, meets frequently and reports regularly to parents on the work of the school. The board ensures that the school buildings and grounds are maintained to a high standard and also provides a highly commendable range of resources to support teaching and learning.
- The principal works conscientiously to ensure that the school operates efficiently. He fosters a strong spirit of collaboration among teachers. His commitment to the efficient operation of the school and his clear focus on enhancing teaching and learning are highly commendable.

5. School Self-evaluation

- The school evaluates and reports on the learning of its pupils and the quality of pupils' learning experiences and of teaching in a very effective manner. The school has engaged very successfully in the school self-evaluation process and has identified specific targets for the development of literacy.
- The school has commenced on the gathering of information from a variety of sources in order to develop a school improvement plan for numeracy. Evidence from a variety of sources is analysed in order to guide the self-evaluation process. Board members, staff and parents contribute to the development of the school improvement plan.
- The school implements its school improvement plan very effectively. Specific strategies are implemented in mainstream classes and in support settings in order to address the areas for development which have been identified in the school self-evaluation report.

Conclusion

The school's capacity to develop further is very good.

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 St. Hugh's N.S. welcomes the Whole School Evaluation Report of June 4th 2014.

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 recommendations cited in the report will be implemented as part of the school's continuous improvement process.