

aAn Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna
Department of Education and Skills

Whole School Evaluation
Management, Leadership and Learning

REPORT

Ainm na scoile / School name	Ballindaggin N S
Seoladh na scoile / School address	Ballindaggin Enniscorthy Co. Wexford
Uimhir rolla / Roll number	15962T

Date of inspection: 17-10-2018



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

WHAT IS 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 inspector(s) 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' well-being
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.

CHILD PROTECTION

During the inspection visit, the following checks in relation to the school's child protection procedures were conducted:

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.
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, Wellbeing).
8. Child protection records are maintained in a secure location.

The school met the requirements in relation to each of the checks above.

Whole-School Evaluation – Management, Leadership and Learning

Dates of inspection	17-10-2018
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	<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

Ballindaggin National School, is a rural, mainstream, co-educational primary school under the patronage of the Catholic Bishop of Ferns. The attendance of almost all 162 pupils enrolled in the school is very good.

SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

FINDINGS

- The quality of leadership and management is very good; the principal and board of management have a clear understanding of their roles in developing teaching and learning in the school.
- Overall the quality of teaching is good with some exemplary practice observed; there is potential to further differentiate programmes of learning in Mathematics as part of support for pupils' with additional needs.
- There is a variety of assessment practices in use across the school.
- The learning achievements of pupils are of a good quality overall; there is scope to develop pupils writing skills further.
- The quality of pupils' well-being is very good and a holistic and caring atmosphere is created at the school.
- The quality of school self-evaluation (SSE) is good and agreed actions are having a positive impact on pupils' learning.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- The school should further develop its use of genre writing approaches in Irish and English to consolidate pupils' learning across the curriculum.
- A consistent whole school approach to assessment should be developed which features the regular collection, analysis and tracking of pupils' progress and the use of this data to inform differentiated programme planning, particularly in relation to support for pupils with additional needs in Mathematics.

DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. THE QUALITY OF PUPILS' LEARNING

- The learning achievements of pupils are of a good quality overall. Pupils engage in the range of learning activities provided with high levels of interest and enthusiasm. Co-operative and productive learning environments exist in classes. Almost all parents who completed the questionnaires reported that their child is doing well in school.
- The level of pupil achievement in numeracy is high. Effective use is made of concrete resources and maths games to support pupils' understanding of new concepts. Praiseworthy work is underway in relation to developing pupils' problem-solving skills, which have been prioritised as an area for improvement.
- Pupils read with very good levels of fluency and comprehension in both English and in Irish. The overt attention paid to developing the pupils' presentation and spelling skills is praised.
- Overall, the quality of pupil achievement in English literacy is good. Pupils experience writing in a range of genres when writing in English only. The school should further develop its use of genre writing approaches across the curriculum to provide increased opportunities to embed these skills and consolidate pupils' learning.
- Léiríonn na daltaí suim sa Ghaeilge. In ainneoin sin, cé go gcuirtear béim ar fhoclóir agus ar fheidhmeanna teanga oiriúnacha, labhraíonn agus scríobhann cuid de na daltaí le heaspa muiníne agus líofachta. Ar mhaithe lena ngnóthachtáil a uasmhéadú, moltar scileanna scríbhneoireachta neamhspleácha na ndaltaí a fhorbairt go céimniúil ar bhonn uile scoile.
Pupils display an interest in Irish. However, while vocabulary and suitable language functions are emphasised, some pupils speak and write with a lack of confidence and fluency. To enhance their achievement levels, the incremental development of pupils' independent writing skills on a whole-school basis, is recommended.
- Pupils' abilities and interests are nurtured successfully in Social, Environmental and Scientific Education. There is a strong emphasis on participation in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) activities. The schoolwide approach to promoting the pupils' physical fitness through the Active School Flag initiative is commended.
- Pupils engage in a range of suitable musical experiences and the school's plan to enhance the Arts curriculum by prioritising pupils' musical instrumental and choral performance is welcomed.

2. THE QUALITY OF TEACHING

- Overall, the quality of teaching in the school is good with some exemplary practice observed. Lessons are well structured and a wide range of engaging methodologies and resources is used to foster collaborative and active learning. Where teaching is highly effective the purpose of lessons and new learning content is explained clearly and reinforced regularly. Very high expectations regarding pupil achievement levels are successfully communicated. The good use of problem-solving approaches to learning across the curriculum, with opportunities for pupils to construct meaning and rules, direct their own learning and purposefully practice their new learning is praised. Such very good practice is worthy of further extension.
- Classroom environments are attractive and well maintained and in some classes they feature samples of pupils' individual learning. This should be a feature of all learning settings. In the parent questionnaires, almost all parents agree that teaching is good in the school.
- *Aistear: the Early Childhood Curriculum Framework* is implemented effectively in infant and junior classes to support the promotion of the pupils' social, language and communication skills.

- Approaches to assessment vary across the school. A more consistent whole school approach to the use of assessment is advised. Greater use should be made of assessment information including the regular collection and analysis of baseline data to track and monitor pupils' progress and guide more focused differentiated teaching approaches in all learning settings. The school does not currently have an assessment policy but it has created an action plan for its development.
- The school uses a variety of individual, small group, whole-class and in-class structures to support pupils with additional learning needs in literacy, numeracy and social and motor skills development. Teaching in withdrawal settings is delivered in a warm and engaging manner. Teachers work collaboratively to support the pupils in their care and share practice.
- Team-teaching approaches are being developed in the school with pupils currently receiving instruction in Mathematics and literacy through team teaching. In the literacy lessons observed, reading stations were focused and pupils achieved the intended learning outcomes. Further refinement of intended learning outcomes for other stations is needed. As part of a whole-school approach to provision for special education needs, more careful planning for in-class support particularly in relation to Mathematics teaching, with a clearer emphasis on differentiated learning and desired learning outcomes is advised.

3. THE QUALITY OF SUPPORT FOR PUPILS' WELL-BEING

- The quality of support for pupils' well-being is very good. An inclusive atmosphere prevails in the school and an orderly, welcoming school climate has been created. Pupils' holistic development is nurtured successfully through the many initiatives the school participates in to address pupils' interests and talents. In the questionnaires almost all parents responded that the school helps their child's social and personal development and that their child feels safe and well looked after in the school.
- Pupils are provided with some opportunities to participate in age-appropriate decision making through their engagement in the Active Flag and Green Flag initiatives. This type of activity is worthy of further development.
- The board and staff report very good assistance from the parents' association and parents strongly endorse the work of the school. In their questionnaire responses almost all parents indicate that there is a good atmosphere and that they feel welcome in the school.

4. THE QUALITY OF LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

- The quality of leadership and management in the school is very good. The board of management meets regularly and works effectively to support and develop the school. The chairperson is a frequent visitor to the school, offering support and guidance as required. The issuing of an agreed report after board meetings is commended. An increased provision for parental input into pertinent policy formation is advised.
- The principal manages and leads the school very effectively. He promotes a culture of teamwork and positive relationships across the school community. He purposefully encourages and supports innovation in teaching and learning and facilitates the implementation of new teaching approaches to progress pupil learning. Commendably, he has ensured that significant progress has been made in advancing the whole-school planning process, including the development of a school policy to support its engagement with initial teacher education school placement programmes.
- The principal is supported by a conscientious and hardworking staff and recently appointed In-school management team. The team meets regularly and their roles and responsibilities reflect the current priorities of the school.

5. THE QUALITY OF SCHOOL SELF-EVALUATION

- School self-evaluation (SSE) is of a good quality and agreed actions are having a positive impact on pupils' learning. The school has devised school improvement plans for English literacy and Gaeilge. It will be important to ensure that in all cases targets, actions and monitoring mechanisms are sufficiently clear and delineated in order to focus more specifically on improving pupil learning outcomes. Further involvement of the stakeholders in the SSE process is also advised.

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 of quality the school's provision of each area.

Level	Description	Example of descriptive terms
Very Good	Very good 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 impact on the overall quality of provision. For some schools in this category the quality of what is evaluated is outstanding 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	Good applies where the strengths in the areas evaluated clearly outweigh the areas in need of improvement. The areas requiring improvement impact on 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 very good standard.	Good; good quality; valuable; effective practice; competent; useful; commendable; good standard; some areas for improvement
Satisfactory	Satisfactory 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	Fair 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	Weak 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

Part A Observations on the content of the inspection report

The Board of Management and staff of Ballindaggin NS welcome the findings outlined in the WSE - MLL Report. The Board is pleased that the positive relationships that exist between the school, the parents and the pupils was reflected in the parents and pupils' surveys and was commended in the report. We are extremely pleased that the dedication, commitment and hard-work of our teachers and parents association are affirmed in this report along with the hard - work and effective leadership of our principal. We particularly welcome the report's acknowledgement of the high levels of pupil achievement in numeracy, reading fluency, comprehension, presentation/handwriting skills and spelling.

The Board of Management appreciates the recognition of their work in supporting and overseeing the development of the school. We are delighted that the welcoming inclusive atmosphere of our school is recognised and that the emphasis on pupils' well-being is noted and praised in the report.

Part B Follow-up actions planned or undertaken since the completion of the inspection activity to implement the findings and recommendations of the inspection.

The report gives the Board of Management the confidence that the work of the school is being carried out to a high standard and gives us a clear direction for the future.

The Board of Management and staff acknowledge and accept the findings and the recommendations made within the report. Work has already begun on the implementation of these recommendations.

Greater emphasis is being placed on using the writing genres across the curriculum particularly in Irish and SESE. The PDST is providing the school with sustained support in the area of writing genres and linking the genres to oral language. Teachers are collaboratively reviewing the whole school English curriculum plan to include the above. Staff will participate in CPD within this area depending on availability.

The principal, In - school management team, staff and Board will continue to implement the action plan for assessment with a view to having a whole school plan and approach fully in place for September 2019. All staff are attending CPD in the area of assessment and using ICT to enhance assessment.