An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna

Department of Education and Skills

Whole School Evaluation
Management, Leadership and Learning

REPORT

Moyglass National School
Moyglass, Fethard, Co. Tipperary
Uimhir rolla: 04075E

Date of inspection: 4 February 2015

Whole-School Evaluation – Management, Leadership and Learning Report

Introduction

A Whole-School Evaluation – Management, Leadership and Learning (WSE - MLL) was undertaken in Moyglass National School in February 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 of the school was given an opportunity to comment on the findings and recommendations of the report; the board chose to accept the report without response.

Moyglass National School is a co-educational, vertical primary school under the patronage of the Catholic Archbishop of Cashel and Emly. It has five mainstream class teachers, a learning support teacher, who is based in the school, and a shared resource teacher. There are currently 121 pupils enrolled in the school. Pupils' overall attendance levels are very good.

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

- The overall learning achievements of pupils are high with particular success noted in writing in English.
- The quality of learning outcomes in Science is excellent.
- The teachers are highly committed to their work and the quality of teaching is very good.
- Classrooms are stimulating and print-rich.
- The pupils are very well-behaved, respectful of each other and display a keen interest in all learning activities.
- The parents' association and ancillary staff provide very valuable support to the school.
- The board of management demonstrates praiseworthy commitment to the school and works hard in the interest of the pupils.
- The principal provides effective and conscientious leadership to the school.

The following **main recommendations** are made:

- Pupil self-assessment strategies should be extended throughout the school so as to enable the pupils to reflect upon and to direct their own learning.
- The current arrangement whereby all fifth class pupils are withdrawn for Mathematics should be reviewed and the implementation of in-class, team teaching for Mathematics should be commenced.

Findings

- The overall learning achievements of pupils are very good. They experience a broad and balanced curriculum and display a keen interest in active, collaborative learning activities. Achievement in literacy is of a high standard and most pupils express themselves in a confident, articulate manner, reflective of the school-wide emphasis on the development of their oral language capacity. They read with appropriate fluency and accuracy, demonstrate good ability to discuss their reading and teachers have successfully promoted an interest in reading among them. Most pupils produce writing of a high quality across the genres and achieve excellent outcomes in composition of poetry. To build on existing good practice in writing it is advised that infant pupils be introduced to free writing at the earliest opportunity.

- The implementation of school-wide initiatives to improve comprehension in English and mathematical problem-solving is praised. Learning achievements in Mathematics are commendable and the whole-school emphasis on the development of the pupils' mathematical language is successful. Tá cáilíocht na foghlama sa Ghaeilge go maith

agus tá béim thairbhiúil ar an nGaeilge tríd an scoil. Léiríonn na daltaí tuiscint mhaith ar raon leathan foclóra agus sroichtear caighdeán ard i labhairt na Gaeilge. *The quality of pupils' learning outcomes in Irish is good and there is a productive emphasis on informal Irish throughout the school. The pupils demonstrate good understanding of a broad range of vocabulary* and the standard of spoken Irish is high.

- Noteworthy learning achievements are in evidence in the Visual Arts, in Physical Education and in Music. The quality of learning outcomes in Science, with an emphasis on skills development and scientific investigation is excellent.

- The assessment of pupil learning is very good and a comprehensive analysis is carried out at whole-school and individual class level to inform both planning and provision for learning. It is advised that pupil self-assessment strategies, used to very good effect in some classrooms, be extended to all class levels, so as to encourage the pupils to reflect upon and to direct their own learning.

- Good progress is recorded in relation to the work of the pupils with additional learning needs.

2. **Quality of teaching**

- The quality of teaching is very good. The teachers are highly committed to their work and to enriching their practice through regular engagement in continuous professional development. They demonstrate a heightened awareness of the learning strengths and needs of their pupils and ably adapt their teaching approaches accordingly. Teaching is informed by good quality planning which incorporates differentiated approaches and is based on specific curriculum-based learning objectives.

- Teachers inspire high levels of interest and application in the pupils through the effective use of a variety of teaching methodologies including discussion, teacher modelling and higher order questioning. The quality of the classrooms' environments, stimulating and print-rich, is excellent. All pupils surveyed agreed that their teachers explain things clearly and that teachers talk to them about how to improve their work.

- Lessons in support settings are carefully structured and teachers prepare detailed individual plans to inform their programmes of learning. The pupils participate well in their lessons and they are achieving positive learning outcomes. It is recommended that greater balance be sought between withdrawal and in-class support and that the current arrangement whereby all fifth class pupils are withdrawn for Mathematics be reviewed. The implementation of in-class, team teaching for Mathematics is recommended.

3. **Support for pupils' well-being**

- The quality of support for pupils' well-being is very high. Their interactions with their teachers and with their peers are both positive and respectful. The pupils' creativity across the curriculum is celebrated through excellent displays of their work and their achievements are recognised and applauded at fortnightly assembly Participation in a range of co-curricular activities including the school band, athletics and games provides a particularly positive experience for the pupils. Meaningful inclusion of all pupils is actively promoted in the work of the school.

- Analysis of questionnaires administered to pupils show that almost all pupils have very positive opinions of school life. All families responded to the parent questionnaire and responses indicate that all parents consider that teaching is good in the school and all agree that the school is well run.

- The parents' association works diligently to support school activities through fund-raising and the organisation of a variety of school-related activities. In discussion, the representatives of the parents' association strongly endorsed all aspects of school provision.

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 activities of the board of management are carefully minuted and are illustrative of the professional manner in which the board supports the work of the school. The board is praised highly for its support, in particular its work in relation to the upkeep of the school building, the provision of a range of appropriate classroom resources and its commitment to the ongoing development of the school. It demonstrates praiseworthy commitment to the school and works hard in the interest of the pupils.

- The principal's work in leading and managing the school is of a very high quality. He approaches his work in a professional manner and manages the school in an efficient, capable and strategic way. He and the members of the in-school management team work collaboratively to lead innovation and improvement in teaching and learning. It is a noteworthy feature of practice that all teachers take on responsibility for the co-ordination of individual subject areas along with extra-curricular programmes in sport, in Music and in Science.

5. **School Self-evaluation**

- The school is engaging successfully in school self-evaluation (SSE) of literacy and numeracy, using evidence collated from pupils and parents, analysis of standardised tests as well as on teacher reflections and observations. A range of whole-school improvement initiatives is implemented consistently and these are having a positive impact on classroom practice and on the pupils' learning outcomes.

Conclusion

Given the commitment of school staff to delivering high quality programmes of learning for pupils and their willingness to adopt new teaching approaches and initiatives, the school's capacity to develop further is very good.

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