An Roinn Oideachais
Department of Education

Whole School Evaluation: Management, Leadership and Learning

Report

REPORT

Ainm na scoile/School name	Scoil Adhamhnáin
Seoladh na scoile/School address	Meetinghouse Street Raphoe County Donegal
Uimhir rolla/Roll number	17828C
Dáta na cigireachta/ Date of evaluation	08-02-2023

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' 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 was given an opportunity to comment in writing on the findings and recommendations of the report; a response was not received from the board.

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

<table>
<tr><td colspan="2">During the inspection visit, the following checks in relation to the school's child protection and anti-bullying procedures were conducted:</td></tr>
<tr><td>Child Protection</td><td>Anti-bullying</td></tr>
<tr><td>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.</td><td>1. The school has developed an anti-bullying policy that meets the requirements of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (2013) 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 Procedures) 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</td></tr>
</table>

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.	and that they are aware of their roles and responsibilities in preventing and tackling bullying.

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

Whole-school evaluation – management, leadership and learning

Date of inspection	08-02-2023
Inspection activities undertaken • 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	• Analysis of parent and pupil 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

Scoil Adhamhnáin is a co-educational rural primary school, situated in Raphoe, under the patronage of the Roman Catholic Bishop of Raphoe. The school participates in Delivering Equality of Opportunity in School (DEIS), the action plan of the Department of Education for educational inclusion. The staff comprised six mainstream class teachers and four special education teachers (SETs). There were 155 pupils enrolled in the school at the time of the evaluation.

Summary of main findings and recommendations:

Findings

- The overall quality of learning was good; pupils were able to demonstrate the knowledge and skills specific to the lessons.
- The overall quality of teaching was good; teachers used a range of resources effectively in their delivery of lessons.
- The overall quality of assessment was satisfactory.
- The quality of support for pupils' well-being was of a good standard; staff implemented a broad range of programmes and activities to support well-being.
- The overall quality of leadership and management was good; the work of the principal and the in-school management team contributed to the efficient day-to-day operation of the school.
- The quality of school self-evaluation (SSE) was good; the school had identified the key actions in terms of generating meaningful improvement in the various themes of the DEIS plan.

Recommendations

- Is gá do mhúinteoirí forbairt a dhéanamh ar stór focal agus ar fhrásaíocht sa Ghaeilge trí dheiseanna cumarsáide sa bhreis a chur ar fáil do na daltaí le linn na gceachtanna. *Teachers should develop vocabulary and phrasing in Irish by providing more communicative opportunities for the pupils during lessons.*
- Teachers should make greater use of the analysis of assessment to support the planning and oversight of interventions in teaching and learning in order to maximise progress for all pupils.
- The board should provide an overview of its work as well as a summary of the School Improvement Plan to parents annually to support purposeful communication between the board and the school community.

Detailed findings and recommendations

1. The quality of pupils' learning

- The overall quality of pupils' learning was good. Pupils displayed a positive disposition towards learning and participated with enthusiasm in their learning tasks. Pupils experienced regular opportunities to be active in their learning during and between lessons.
- The majority of pupils had a very clear understanding of the learning outcomes to be achieved during lessons. *Bhí tuiscint mhaith ag na daltaí ar an iomlán sa Ghaeilge agus bhí siad in ann treoracha simplí a leanúint. Bhí deiseanna teoranta ag na daltaí chun úsáid a bhaint as an teanga lena chéile. Is gá do mhúinteoirí tógáil ar an stór focal agus ar fhrásaíocht na ndaltaí i raon leathan téamaí chun úsáid na teanga i measc na ndaltaí a fhorbairt ar bhonn níos comhsheasmhaí.* In Irish, the pupils had a good understanding overall and were able to follow simple instructions. They had limited opportunities to use the language with each other. Teachers' should build on the pupils' vocabulary and phraseology in a wide range of themes in order to develop the use of the language among pupils on a more consistent basis.
- Pupils had a very good grasp of writing in terms of genres and procedural writing.
- Pupils achieved well in the course of their learning and were able to demonstrate the knowledge, skills and thinking specific to the lessons. For some pupils, the level of challenge provided could be extended further including the facilitation of more enquiry-led learning experiences for more able pupils.
- Pupils engaged well in initiatives such as Active Flag, Green Flag and Amber Flag, which engendered a sense of school community among pupils. Pupils experienced opportunities to develop their imaginative and creative skills through Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) based activities. It would be useful if these skills were developed in other subjects across the curriculum.

2. The quality of teaching

- The overall quality of teaching was good. Teachers created attractive and stimulating learning environments. They consistently modelled enthusiasm and enjoyment in learning and organised classroom environments where pupils were encouraged to participate in their learning. In parental questionnaires, almost all parents agreed that teaching was good in the school.
- Teachers employed a wide range of effective teaching approaches during lessons. They delivered the curriculum with a good balance between individual pupil work, group work and team teaching practices. In the most effective language learning experiences, teachers provided a very effective integrated approach to teaching the subject specific learning terminology.
- Teachers used a good range of resources to support teaching and learning. In the effective practice observed, technology was used successfully to support the delivery of lessons. Teachers should now agree and implement school-wide methodologies in supporting pupils' use of digital learning technologies (DLTs) in developing their knowledge, skills and understanding of the primary school curriculum.
- It was evident that teachers engaged in frequent collaboration to agree learning activities for specific classes for team teaching activities and for pupils with additional needs.
- The overall quality of assessment was satisfactory. Teachers gathered a breadth of assessment information, however there was limited evidence of meaningful analysis in informing teacher preparation and differentiation in a small number of settings. There is a need for teachers to analyse relevant assessment data for the purpose of identifying the next steps in learning and to design appropriately challenging learning experiences

for all learners. Teachers should also provide developmental feedback to pupils on their learning.

3. The quality of support for pupils' well-being

- The quality of support for pupils' wellbeing was good. A positive school climate had been created and interactions among pupils and between pupils and teachers were supportive of pupils. Respectful, caring relationships were promoted and pupils applied knowledge, skills and approaches learned to help them manage situations and build friendships. All parents agreed in the inspectorate surveys administered as part of the evaluation that there was a good atmosphere and they felt welcomed in the school.
- At whole-school level, many aspects of provision made an important contribution to the well-being of pupils. Staff implemented a broad range of programmes and activities to support well-being. They included links with external agencies and participation in many programmes including Friends for Life and the Incredible Years programmes. In questionnaire responses, a small number of pupils indicated uncertainty in relation to who to approach when feeling worried, sad or afraid. This should be further explored by the school.
- The school had effective mechanisms in place to support positive transitions from early years' settings and to post primary.
- During the pupil focus group interview, pupils identified that they were enabled to share their opinions and they felt that this was valued in the school and had a positive effect. As a next step, it would be worthwhile to provide an overview to pupils of the impact generated as a result of their opinions being shared with the school.

4. The quality of leadership and management

- The overall quality of leadership and management was good.
- The work of the principal and the in-school management team contributed to the efficient day-to-day operation of the school. Evidence was provided of regular in-school management (ISM) meetings with a record of discussions relating to the management and oversight of their assigned roles. Going forward, the ISM team should include a focus on teaching and learning in their assigned subjects during meetings and agree actions to bring about improvement. Leadership should also review the current approaches to class allocation to ensure mixed abilities within some classes.
- There was regular, ongoing provision of information to parents using social media platforms, learning applications and the recently established school website.
- The Parents' Association reported that they met regularly and supported the school with community-based initiatives and in creating worthwhile links with local schools. Parents indicated a commitment and enthusiasm in supporting the school with curricular endeavours; this commendable support should be further explored by the school. In questionnaires, all parents agreed that there was a good atmosphere in the school and that the school was well run. Less certainty was indicated regarding the views of parents on school matters. It would be of benefit to seek to establish a more effective channel of dialogue between parents and the school in supporting parents to further strengthen their voice in the school.
- The board was appropriately constituted and recorded minutes indicated that the board met regularly in accordance with *Governance Manual for Primary Schools 2019-2023 (DES, 2019)*. It would be beneficial if the board considered securing training for individual members to support them in fulfilling their role. The board should also provide an overview of the work of the board and a summary of the School Improvement Plan to parents on an annual basis.

- Those in leadership and management roles supported teachers' continuing professional learning (CPD) in a range of areas. They recognised the value of individual and collective contributions and encouraged teachers to support each other with the sharing of new learning.
- The school reported that it regularly provided placements for student teachers. Such engagement in initial teacher education programmes was welcomed and was included among the standards in the Teaching Council's *Code of Professional Conduct for Teachers* as it could provide valuable professional benefits for teachers, student teachers, pupils and the teacher education institution.

5. The quality of school self-evaluation

- The school had engaged purposefully in the school self-evaluation process. Teachers worked collaboratively to identify key actions in terms of generating meaningful improvement in the various themes of the DEIS plan. They have also implemented some worthwhile initiatives. As a next step, the identification of more effective monitoring and review of the progress achieved under the various themes of the DEIS plan should be considered.
- The school had good capacity for improvement due to the collective commitment and enthusiasm of teachers in seeking to generate improved outcomes for all pupils.

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	*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;