An Roinn Oideachais agus Óige
Department of Education and Youth

Whole School Evaluation: Management, Leadership and Learning

REPORT

Ainm na scoile/School name	Scoil Náisiúnta Shean Bhoth
Seoladh na scoile/School address	Rosbercon New Ross
Uimhir rolla/Roll number	17471K
Dáta na cigireachta/ Date of evaluation	14/05/2026
Dáta eisiúna na tuairisce/Date of issue of report	18/09/2026

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.

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.

How to read this report

During this inspection, the inspector 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.

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>Bí Cineálta</td></tr>
<tr><td>1. The name of the DLP and the child safeguarding statement (CSS) are prominently displayed near the main door of the school / in the reception area. Following the school's adoption of the updated procedures 2025, it is also required to display a student-friendly version incorporating the name of the DLP beside the CSS.
2. The school's child safeguarding statement has been ratified by the board and includes an annual review and a risk assessment.
3. All teachers visited were aware of who to go to if they had a child protection concern.
4. The school's child safeguarding statement meets the requirements of the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2023 or the updated procedures 2025.
5. The minutes of the last three board of management meetings contain a child</td><td>1. The school has developed an anti-bullying policy using Appendix A of Bí Cineálta, it is reviewed annually (or earlier if required) and includes a student/pupil friendly version that is displayed where students/pupils and the school community can see it.
2. The school's anti-bullying policy is published on its website and/or is readily accessible to board of management members, staff, parents and pupils/students.
3. The board of management minutes record that the principal provides an update to the board at each ordinary board meeting that meets the requirements of Bí Cineálta.
4. The school has appropriate initiatives in place to promote a positive and inclusive school culture and environment.
5. All staff visited report that they have read the school's Bí Cineálta policy and that they are aware of their roles and</td></tr>
</table>

protection oversight report in line with the requirements of the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary schools 2023 or the updated procedures 2025. 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 2023 or the updated procedures 2025. 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	responsibilities in preventing and addressing bullying behaviour.

The school met the requirements in relation to each of the checks above. Whole-school evaluation – management, leadership and learning

Whole-school evaluation – management, leadership and learning

Dates of inspection	12/05/2026 – 14/05/2026
Inspection activities undertaken • Meetings with principal and in-school leadership team • Meeting with representatives of the board of management • Meeting with parent representatives • Meetings 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 teacher, and to parent and board of management representatives

School context

Scoil Náisiúnta Shean Bhoth is a rural co-educational primary school in the parish of Rosbercon. It operates under the patronage of the Catholic Bishop of Ossory. At the time of the evaluation, there were thirty-four pupils enrolled in the school. The teaching staff comprised two mainstream teachers, of whom one was the principal, and a part-time special education teacher who was shared with another school.

Summary of main findings and recommendations:

Findings

- The overall quality of pupils' learning was good, with some very good learning outcomes also observed. They applied themselves conscientiously and purposefully to their learning activities and were commended for their handwriting and presentation skills.
- The overall quality of teaching was very good. Teachers presented well-structured, well-paced, and well-resourced lessons that made effective provision for the multi-grade setting.
- The quality of support for pupils' wellbeing was very good. Staff cultivated a welcoming and inclusive environment and organised monthly initiatives to promote pupils' wellbeing.
- The quality of leadership and management was very good.
- The quality of school self-evaluation (SSE) was very good. The school culture was characterised by reflection and a strong commitment to improvement.

Recommendations

- To better contextualise pupils' learning and further develop their enquiry-based skills, teachers should extend their provision for open-ended investigations and enable pupils to apply new concepts to their everyday lives, including in the outdoor environment.
- Teachers should develop their use of assessment information to inform the next steps in pupils' learning, and to help ensure that pupils with the greatest level of need are provided the greatest level of support.
- To further enhance the quality of pupils' creative writing in English and Irish, teachers should extend their provision for emergent writing and enable pupils to revise their drafts in response to formative feedback.

Detailed findings and recommendations

1. The quality of pupils' learning

- The overall quality of pupils' learning was good, with some very good learning outcomes also observed. Pupils presented as motivated and enthusiastic learners who applied themselves conscientiously and purposefully to their learning activities. Attractive displays throughout the school celebrated pupils' learning experiences and achievements across a broad range of curriculum areas. During the focus group, pupils shared that they enjoyed project work, learning collaboratively and using resources during their lessons. They also observed that they would like to learn outdoors more often.
- Pupils demonstrated the ability to work independently, and to collaborate effectively in pairs and small groups. They listened attentively, and most contributed confidently to class discussions. Pupils were able to recall key facts related to their prior learning. While some made links between their learning and everyday life, overall they were less secure in applying their knowledge and skills in a range of different contexts.
- In English, most pupils expressed themselves confidently, with some demonstrating an ability to use a broad and expressive range of vocabulary. In the infant classes, pupils recited rhymes and poems enthusiastically. They also applied their growing knowledge of phonics to both reading and functional writing. To enhance their ability to express themselves creatively in writing, there was scope to extend provision for the emergent writing process. Pupils in the more senior classes read a range of texts fluently and with good comprehension. They engaged confidently in functional writing activities and were enabled to write in a variety of genres. To further progress the quality of their published writing, teachers were encouraged to extend their provision for the revision stage of the writing process, enabling pupils to revise their drafts in response to formative feedback. The quality of pupils' handwriting and presentation skills was commended.
- Léirigh na daltaí dearcthaí an-dearfacha i leith na Gaeilge agus bhí stór focal leathan acu. Bhain daltaí sinsearacha úsáid éifeachtach as bailiúchán frásaí tuairisciúla agus chuir siad struchtúir ghramadaí i bhfeidhm go cuí. Cé gur fhreagair na daltaí ceisteanna go muiníneach, bhí scóip ann úsáid na gcur chuige spraíúil a leathnú chun tacú leo an teanga a chur i bhfeidhm thar raon níos leithne comhthéacsanna. Chuir na daltaí tascanna scríbhneoireachta feidhmiúla i gcrích go muiníneach agus bhainfidís tairbhe as deiseanna breise chun iad féin a chur in iúl go cruthaitheach sa scríbhneoireacht. *Pupils demonstrated very positive dispositions towards Irish. They possessed a broad vocabulary, with senior pupils drawing effectively on a bank of descriptive phrases and applying grammatical structures appropriately. While pupils answered questions confidently, there was scope to extend the use of playful pedagogies to support them in applying the language across a wider range of contexts. Pupils completed functional written tasks confidently and would benefit from increased opportunities to express themselves creatively in written form.*
- In numeracy, most pupils demonstrated very good understanding of number and associated mathematical concepts. They applied written computational procedures competently to solve word problems and explained the strategies that they had used. While all pupils who participated in the Inspectorate survey reported that the school helped them to be good at mathematics, a significant minority indicated that they did not enjoy this curricular area. To support them, teachers were encouraged to make greater provision for open-ended investigations and the practical application of mathematics to pupils' everyday lives, including in the outdoor environment.
- Across the wider curriculum, pupils engaged productively in project-based learning, for example in History and Geography. They participated in demonstrations and in some investigative activities in Science. To further develop pupils' enquiry-based skills, teachers were encouraged to extend their use of the local environment to contextualise learning and to provide rich learning experiences for pupils. In Social Personal and Health Education, pupils shared their ideas and opinions confidently, and their

responses were reflective and considered. In the Visual Arts, pupils produced aesthetically pleasing pieces in a range of media.

2. The quality of teaching

- The overall quality of teaching was very good. Teachers presented well-structured, well-paced and well-resourced lessons that made effective provision for the multi-grade setting. They were skilled communicators, explaining new concepts well and providing clear instructions. Teachers enabled pupils to engage in independent learning, collaborative tasks, and focused talk and discussion. They made judicious use of digital technologies and resources to enhance both teaching and learning. In some lessons observed, learning was primarily teacher-directed and informed by textbooks, followed by closed tasks and worksheets. In other instances, teachers made purposeful use of playful pedagogies and scaffolded enquiry to enrich pupils' learning experiences; the extension of this good practice was recommended.
- Teachers demonstrated very effective classroom management skills. They provided well-organised, well-resourced and print-rich learning environments. To further enhance the development of the pupils' enquiry skills in mathematics and Social Environmental and Science Education, teachers were encouraged to establish hands-on investigative areas in their classrooms.
- Almost all learning activities took place indoors. There was scope to make greater use of the wealth of historical school photographs and of the local environment to contextualise and enrich pupils' learning.
- All teachers engaged conscientiously in preparation, taking cognisance of the multi-grade setting, and maintained appropriate progress records. In the best instances, their written preparation included explicit intended learning outcomes that supported the incremental development of pupils' knowledge and skills.
- The overall quality of assessment was good. Teachers employed a suitable range of assessment strategies, including samples of pupils' learning, standardised test results, teacher-designed tests, and checklists. They also used questioning effectively to elicit pupils' prior knowledge and understanding. In both mainstream classes and special education settings, there was scope to extend the use of assessment information to better inform the next steps in pupils' learning. Teachers monitored pupils' work diligently and provided motivational feedback. They were encouraged to further develop their use of formative feedback and to extend opportunities for pupils to engage in self-assessment, guided by clearly defined and shared success criteria.
- The quality of support for pupils with identified needs was good. The school employed an appropriate range of interventions, including in-class support and the withdrawal of individuals and groups for targeted support. In the withdrawal settings observed, interactions with pupils were affirming and encouraging. While support plans were in place, there was scope for pupils' learning targets to be aligned more closely with their prioritised learning needs. Overall, there was need to ensure that all interventions were carefully targeted towards pupils with the greatest level of need and that the impact of interventions was monitored.

3. The quality of support for pupils' wellbeing

- The quality of support for pupils' wellbeing was very good. Staff cultivated a welcoming and inclusive environment and interactions between adults and pupils were positive and affirming. In their responses to the Inspectorate survey, all parents agreed that their children were treated fairly and respectfully, and that the school supported their social and personal development.
- To further support pupil wellbeing and collegiality across both classrooms, the teachers organised monthly initiatives such as reading buddies, acts of kindness, and 'secret

friends'. The board also facilitated mindfulness sessions, delivered by an external provider.

- To promote pupil voice, pupils were enabled to contribute to relevant decision-making, for example in relation to the allocation of pitch space during playtimes and the selection of new resources for Physical Education. In response to a request from pupils, the school participated in the Young Entrepreneurs initiative. To build on this good work, teachers were encouraged to enable pupils to engage more fully in democratic processes, for example through the establishment of a student council.
- The school had established positive and purposeful communication systems between the school and home. All parents who responded to the Inspectorate survey agreed that they felt welcome and that there was a good atmosphere in the school. The small school community facilitated regular informal communication, which was complemented by the school website where relevant policies, information, and school news were shared. School events and achievements were also celebrated through social media and the local newspaper, and plans were in place to host an open day.
- The parents' association provided very valuable support to the school. Members liaised closely with the principal and the board to organise fundraising activities that supported designated school initiatives and brought the wider community together in a shared, informal setting.

4. The quality of leadership and management

- The quality of leadership and management was very good. The principal, who had a very clear vision for the school, promoted a positive school climate and attended very effectively to the day-to-day management of the school. She was ably supported by the in-school leadership team member, who undertook a range of curricular, pastoral and administrative responsibilities with great commitment. They collaborated very effectively to progress identified school priorities.
- The board of management was highly supportive of the school. They met regularly and worked effectively with the principal to provide strategic leadership. The board reviewed and ratified school policies systematically. All parents who responded to the parental survey agreed that the school was well run and that their views on school matters were sought regularly. The board also ensured that the school was well resourced and that and its grounds were attractive and well maintained.
- The parents' association provided very valuable support to the school. Members liaised closely with the principal and the board to organise fundraising activities that supported designated school initiatives and brought the wider community together in a shared, informal setting.

5. The quality of school self-evaluation

- The quality of school self-evaluation (SSE) was very good. The school culture was characterised by reflection and a strong commitment to improvement. Teachers were engaging comprehensively with their current focus on Irish, having sought the views of pupils and parents to inform their development plan and associated targets.
- A previous cycle of SSE, which focused on genre writing, had had a positive impact on pupils' learning experiences in English. Teachers worked collaboratively to ensure that agreed actions and approaches arising from a more recent focus on wellbeing were implemented consistently across the school. The board was informed annually of pupils' overall attainment in Mathematics and English.
- The school reported that it would be very pleased to facilitate placement for student teachers. Such engagement in initial teacher education programmes was encouraged.

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	Examples of descriptive terms
Excellent	**Provision that is excellent** is exemplary in meeting the needs of learners. This provision provides an example for other schools and settings of exceptionally high standards of provision.	Excellent; exemplary; outstanding; exceptionally high standard; with very significant strengths
Very good	**Provision that is very good** is very effective in meeting the needs of learners and is of a very high standard. There is potential to build on existing strengths to achieve an excellent standard.	Very good; of a very high quality; very effective practice; highly commendable; very successful
Good	**Provision that is good** is effective in meeting the needs of learners. There is need to build on existing strengths in order to address the aspects to be developed and achieve a very good standard.	Good; of good quality; effective practice; competent; useful; commendable; good standard; strengths outweigh the shortcomings; appropriate provision although some possibilities for improvement exist
Requires improvement to achieve a good standard	**Provision that requires improvement to achieve a good standard** is not sufficiently effective in meeting the needs of learners. There is need to address certain deficiencies without delay in order to ensure that provision is good or better.	Fair; less than effective; less than sufficient; evident weaknesses that are impacting on learning; experiencing difficulty; shortcomings outweigh strengths; must improve in specified areas; action required to improve
Requires significant improvement to achieve a good standard	**Provision that requires significant improvement to achieve a good standard** is not meeting the needs of learners. There is immediate need for significant action to address the areas of concern.	Weak; poor; ineffective; insufficient; unacceptable; experiencing significant difficulties; serious deficiencies in the areas evaluated; requiring significant change, development and improvement to be effective

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 welcomes the findings of the WSEMLL report. The Board is particularly pleased that the quality of teaching, leadership and management, school self-evaluation, and support for pupils' wellbeing were all evaluated as very good. The Board also welcomes the positive recognition of pupils as motivated, enthusiastic learners who work conscientiously and purposefully and who demonstrate strong collaboration, independence and presentation skills.

The Board is encouraged by the acknowledgement of the school's positive and inclusive culture, the strong partnership between staff, pupils, parents and the wider community, and the school's commitment to continuous improvement. The report affirms the effectiveness of the school's leadership, teaching practices, wellbeing initiatives and reflective self-evaluation processes, all of which contribute positively to pupils' learning experiences and outcomes.

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 Board of Management has carefully considered the recommendations contained in the report and is committed to supporting their implementation through the school's ongoing school self-evaluation and improvement planning processes.

Since the inspection, staff are reviewing opportunities to further develop enquiry-based learning across the curriculum, with particular emphasis on open-ended investigations, problem-solving activities and the application of learning in meaningful real-life contexts, including greater use of the outdoor environment and local resources.

The school has also begun reviewing assessment practices to strengthen the use of assessment information in identifying pupils' next steps in learning and in ensuring that support is targeted effectively towards pupils with the greatest level of need.

In addition, teachers are continuing to develop approaches to creative writing in both English and Irish by providing increased opportunities for emergent writing, drafting, editing and revising written work in response to formative feedback.

Progress in these areas will be monitored through the school's established self-evaluation and review procedures.