

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

**Whole School Evaluation
Management, Leadership and Learning**

REPORT

Ainm na scoile / School name	Saint Malachy's Boys' National School
Seoladh na scoile / School address	Edenmore Raheny Dublin 5
Uimhir rolla / Roll number	18968A

Date of Evaluation: 22-09-2016



WHAT IS A WHOLE-SCHOOL EVALUATION: MANAGEMENT, LEADERSHIP AND LEARNING?

Whole-School Evaluations – Management, Leadership and Learning report on the quality of teaching and learning and on the quality of management and leadership in a school. They affirm good practice and make recommendations, where appropriate, to aid the further development of the subject 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. Teaching and learning
2. Support for pupils' wellbeing
3. School leadership and management

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, and the response of the board will be found in the appendix of this report.

Whole-School Evaluation – Management, Leadership and Learning Report

INSPECTION ACTIVITIES DURING THIS INSPECTION

Dates of inspection	22-09-2016
Inspection activities undertaken <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Meeting with principal and deputy principal• 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">• Pupil focus-group interview• Analysis of parent, pupil and teacher questionnaires• Observation of teaching and learning• Examination of pupils' work• Interaction with pupils• Feedback to senior management team and teachers, and to parent and board of management representatives

SCHOOL CONTEXT

Saint Malachy's Boys' National School operates under the patronage of the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Dublin. The school is included in Band 1 of the School Support Programme of Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools (DEIS), the action plan of the Department of Education and Skills for educational inclusion and receives support from the School Completion Programme. There are 202 boys enrolled currently across ten mainstream classes, two special classes for pupils with an autistic spectrum disorder (ASD) and one special class for pupils with a mild general learning disability (MGLD). Attendance rates among the pupils are good. There are seven support teachers on the staff.

SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

FINDINGS

- The learning achievements of pupils in literacy and numeracy are good overall.
- Teaching is of a good standard across all settings.
- Assessment of learning is well embedded; however, more systematic analysis of the data gathered is required and assessment-for-learning practices are not yet established sufficiently in the school.
- Pastoral care provision is very good and the school promotes an inclusive atmosphere.
- Communication within the school community is not consistently effective.
- While leadership and management are good overall, long-term strategic planning to progress the development of the school is needed.
- The school has engaged in the school self-evaluation (SSE) process and identified areas of focus for improvement.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Assessment, based on systematic data analysis, should be further developed to identify measurable outcomes, appropriate to all pupils.
- Strategic planning, to progress the overall development of the school, is required.
- There is scope to improve the channels of communication within the school community and their effectiveness.

DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. THE LEARNING ACHIEVEMENTS OF PUPILS

- Overall, the quality of the learning outcomes of pupils is good. In most instances, pupils actively participate in their learning and they have regular opportunities to work in smaller groups. Greater attention to enhancing learning experiences, particularly among higher-ability pupils, including the independent use of information and communication technology (ICT), would improve learning overall. The school facilitates pupils' involvement in a range of curricular, co-curricular and extra-curricular activities. Most pupils with special educational needs (SEN) are making good progress.
- Overall, the quality of pupils' learning outcomes in literacy is good. Pupils engage effectively in talk and discussion. The listening skills of younger pupils should be further developed. Pupils write well in a variety of genres. All pupils are involved in a range of literacy activities. To progress further, they should have regular access to differentiated reading materials. The school is encouraged to progress its integrated approach to literacy learning.
- The quality of pupils' learning outcomes in numeracy is good. Number operation skills are well developed through the use of manipulatives and mathematics games. Pupils have ample opportunities to engage in mathematical activities in small group settings. More regular promotion of problem-solving challenges and making mathematical connections to real life experiences would be appropriate.
- Ar an iomlán, léiríonn na daltaí dearcadh dearfach i leith fhoghlaim na Gaeilge. Cothaítear scileanna labhartha na ndaltaí go maith. Cé go léann na daltaí le líofacht áirithe, ní mór a gcuid scileanna a fhorbairt, trí úsáid sa bhreis a bhaint as scéim chéimnithe léitheoireachta agus fíorleabhair. Cleachtann siad an scríbhneoireacht fheidhmiúil go rialta. *Overall, pupils demonstrate a positive attitude to learning Irish. Pupils' speaking skills are well developed. While they read with some fluency, pupils' skills should be further developed through the use of a graded reading scheme and real books. They engage regularly in functional writing.*

2. QUALITY OF TEACHING

- Overall, teaching is of a good standard. Teachers employ a suitably wide range of methodologies. They facilitate regular group learning experiences. Classroom management, as observed during lessons, is good. In-class support teaching is effective in achieving the identified learning objectives. Some purposeful learning environments are provided. To improve teaching further, activities should incorporate collaborative learning experiences, as appropriate.
- Teaching provided for pupils with SEN in mainstream, special class and withdrawal settings is of a good standard. The use of appropriate teaching methodologies is commended. Support teachers liaise with class teachers effectively. The full implementation of the staged approach, along with a more consistent approach to planning, is advised. Individual and group learning programmes are being developed for pupils currently.
- Teachers' planning is satisfactory. While teachers plan collaboratively across all settings, there is need to identify differentiated learning objectives, to ensure appropriate learning experiences for pupils of all abilities. Monthly progress records are in place.
- Assessment of learning is well embedded across the school's settings. The school gathers a wide range of whole school, class-based and individual pupil data. The systematic analysis of this data,

does not effectively inform specific, differentiated and measurable outcomes appropriate to the needs of all pupils. Assessment for learning practices require further attention as they are not yet established sufficiently.

3. SUPPORT FOR PUPILS' WELL-BEING

- Pastoral care provision is of a very good quality. The school fosters an inclusive culture, with integration of pupils from the special classes, as a feature of its practice. Pupils' engagement with a wide range of initiatives contributes successfully to their overall school experiences. The management of pupils is supported by the effective implementation of a behaviour support programme. The development of a pupil council to strengthen their voice within the school, is encouraged. In their responses to questionnaires, a significant proportion was unsure of how they have a say in how things are done in the school. However, almost all pupils agreed that this is a good school.
- Communication within the school community, while generally effective, is in need of improvement in some areas. The work of the home-school-community liaison coordinator is good. The parents' association is not affiliated to the National Parents' Council. In responses to questionnaires, almost all parents agreed that their child enjoys school. However, a small number reported that the school does not regularly seek their views.

4. LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

- Leadership and management are of a good quality overall, with some areas for improvement. While the board of management operates in an efficient manner, the allocation of specific roles and responsibilities to all board members is advised. More purposeful strategic planning is required to ensure progress in whole-school development, such as communication and the further development of the outdoor environment. An annual report on the work of the board should be provided to parents. In questionnaires, administered at the time of the evaluation, less than half of the teachers reported that there is good communication among the staff of the school.
- The principal works in a dedicated manner to support the holistic development of the pupils. The day-to-day running of the school is managed efficiently. More regular deployment of distributed leadership practices to support the on-going developments in the school would be beneficial. The work of the in-school management team is good. The commitment of this team and the principal to leading instructional learning is commendable. However, it would be of benefit to engage in more strategic planning to implement and progress the school's identified priorities. Other staff members contribute significantly to the implementation of the school's initiatives and after-school 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*.

5. SCHOOL SELF-EVALUATION

- The school has engaged in the SSE process and identified areas of focus for improvement. It is now encouraged to more systematically analyse data to devise and monitor improvement targets based on learner outcomes and experiences, and teachers' practice. A summary of the SSE report

and school improvement plan should be communicated clearly to parents and the school community annually.

CONCLUSION

The school's capacity to improve is good. It has demonstrated an ability to plan a range of actions in order to progress improvement in aspects of school life. To enhance this process, a more strategic approach, identifying specific targets and expected outcomes, is advised.

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 of St. Malachy's B.N.S. is delighted that the report affirms the hard work and dedication to the school displayed by all members of the school team. Taking into account that the W.S.E. took place within the first month of the academic year, the board considers that some areas identified for improvement are typically developing at this time of year.

The board of management wishes to congratulate the entire school team, inclusive of pupils and parents, and expresses its appreciation of all the hard work.

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

Assessment

- Data collected on standardised tests will be used in strategic planning.
- Diagnostic assessment in literacy at the end of each genre to be included in the new literacy plan: roll out in September, 2017.
- Class summary folders have been compiled by the S.E.N team.
- I.E.P. meetings to take place in October annually to accommodate transitional planning.

Communication

- In-school communication has been developed through the use of Aladdin as notice-board for all staff members.
- Communication with parents is being developed through email access by teachers.
- New parents' committee to introduce and identify themselves via newsletter in January 2017.
- Reports circulated to staff prior to staff meetings so that time can be used for collaborative plans and discussions.
- A student council will be re-established.
- Pupils are offered an opportunity to respond to ideas delivered at assembly through class discussions.

Planning

- Using skills-based planning, developing cuntas míosúil as a more user friendly document.
- Working groups have been set up for target areas: numeracy, literacy, S.E.S.E. and S.E.N.
- Five- year plan for development of yard, collaborative planning by parents, pupils and Team Malachy.
- Whole-school plan to progress the overall development of the school is being undertaken.

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 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. Overall, learners have access to a basic level of provision. 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;