



An Roinn Oideachais  
Department of Education

# Whole School Evaluation: Management, Leadership and Learning Report

## REPORT

Ainm na scoile/School name	Carigeen N S
Seoladh na scoile/School address	Carrigeen Co. Kilkenny
Uimhir rolla/Roll number	15340I
Dáta na cigireachta/ Date of evaluation	20-10-2023
Dáta eisiúna na tuairisce/ Date of issue of report	11/12/2023

# 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' 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.

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.

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

During the inspection visit, the following checks in relation to the school's child protection and anti-bullying procedures were conducted:	
<i>Child Protection</i>	<i>Anti-bullying</i>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The name of the DLP and the Child Safeguarding Statement are prominently displayed near the main entrance to the school.</li> <li>2. The Child Safeguarding Statement has been ratified by the board and includes an annual review and a risk assessment.</li> <li>3. All teachers visited reported that they have read the Child Safeguarding Statement and that they are aware of their responsibilities as mandated persons.</li> <li>4. The Child Safeguarding Statement meets the requirements of the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (revised 2023).</li> <li>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 (revised 2023).</li> <li>6. The board of management has ensured that arrangements are in place to provide</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The school has developed an anti-bullying policy that meets the requirements of the <i>Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (2013)</i> and this policy is reviewed annually.</li> <li>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 <i>Procedures</i>) since the previous report to the board.</li> <li>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.</li> <li>4. The school has appropriate initiatives in place to promote a positive and inclusive school culture and environment.</li> <li>5. All teachers visited report that they have read the school's policy on anti-bullying and that they are aware of their roles and</li> </ol>

<p>information to all school personnel on the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools, (revised 2023).</p> <p>7. School planning documentation indicates that the school is making full provision for the relevant aspects of the curriculum (SPHE, Stay Safe, RSE).</p> <p>8. Child protection records are maintained in a secure location.</p>	<p>responsibilities in preventing and tackling bullying.</p>
---	--

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

---

# Whole-school evaluation – management, leadership and learning

<b>Date of inspection</b>	20-10-2023
<b>Inspection activities undertaken</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Meetings with principal and in-school leadership team</li><li>• Meeting with representatives of the board of management</li><li>• Meeting with parent representatives</li><li>• Meeting with teachers</li><li>• Review of relevant documents</li><li>• Pupil focus group</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Analysis of parent, pupil and teacher questionnaires</li><li>• Observation of teaching and learning</li><li>• Examination of pupils' work</li><li>• Interaction with pupils</li><li>• Feedback to principal, deputy principal and teachers, and to parent and board of management representatives</li></ul>

## School context

Carrigeen NS is a co-educational school, located in rural South Kilkenny. It has five class teachers, two special education teachers (SETs), two part-time SETs based in other schools and one special class teacher. There are currently 124 pupils enrolled in the school. It is under the patronage of the Catholic Bishop of Ossory.

## Summary of main findings and recommendations:

### Findings

- The overall quality of pupils' learning outcomes and learning experiences was very good.
- School leaders effectively facilitated the development of pupil voice, pupil participation and pupil leadership.
- High quality teaching was observed during the evaluation; teachers employed a broad range of methodologies to stimulate pupil interest and engagement.
- The quality of support for pupils' wellbeing was very good and there was a welcoming and friendly atmosphere in the school.
- The overall quality of school leadership was very good; the staff, principal and board demonstrated a very strong commitment to ongoing school improvement and development.
- The school staff engaged very positively in the school self-evaluation process.

### Recommendations

- In some instances, the pitch and pace of the lessons were not sufficiently aligned to pupils' strengths and needs. Teachers should further analyse assessment information to guide the selection of tasks and activities, and to accommodate the variance of learners in all classrooms.

# Detailed findings and recommendations

## 1. The quality of pupils' learning

- The overall quality of pupils' learning outcomes and learning experiences was very good. The pupils were highly motivated and demonstrated positive dispositions to learning. Pupils eagerly answered questions and knowledgeably recalled their previous learning. In their responses to the inspectorate questionnaires, most pupils stated that they enjoyed their lessons and learning. During the focus group interview, the pupils described the variety of ways that they learn and reported that they enjoyed relating their learning to their lives. In their responses to the parents' survey, almost all parents agreed that their children enjoy school and that they are doing well at school.
- Teachers had placed a significant emphasis on oral Irish as part of the school's engagement with school self-evaluation. This focus was impacting positively on pupils' standard of Irish and their positive attitude towards the language.
- Pupils demonstrated a notable enthusiasm for reading. They spoke with interest about their school library and the many varied opportunities that they had to engage with different types of texts. They particularly appreciated being able to contribute to the selection of books for the library. The pupils demonstrated a very good incremental understanding of the conventions of the different writing genres. Pupils also displayed high levels of presentation and handwriting in their written work.
- In Mathematics, pupils demonstrated age-appropriate understanding of mathematical concepts and they engaged with creativity in problem-solving activities.
- Pupils accessed a broad and balanced curriculum with a wide range of experiences across the Arts, Social and Environmental Science Education and Physical Education. Pupils' knowledge of their locality was very well developed. They described historical events and geographical features with detail and accuracy. The pupils had also visited local historical sites and local historians had shared their knowledge with them. Pupils in the focus group spoke with enthusiasm about these trails and visits. In the junior classes, teachers prepared playful interactive learning experiences that facilitated meaningful pupil engagement.
- Digital learning was used successfully to enhance pupils' learning across the curriculum. Pupils created texts, sourced and managed information in order to produce personal texts and projects. They spoke positively about their project work, the choices that they had in terms of selecting the topics and in how the project was presented. They also enjoyed presenting the project to their class and on occasion to other classes in the school.
- The board of management, school leaders and staff ensured that the school environment was very well maintained and welcoming to support pupil wellbeing and learning. Corridors and classrooms showcased vibrant displays of pupils' work and achievements. The school's rich outdoor environment, which included a vegetable garden and sensory garden, supported pupils' understanding of biodiversity, which was their current focus as part of the Green School's initiative.

## 2. The quality of teaching

- High quality teaching was observed during the evaluation. Teachers had created inclusive and purposeful learning environments and modelled enthusiasm and enjoyment in learning. They prepared detailed plans that reflected their knowledge of the curriculum. In some instances, the pitch and pace of the lessons were not sufficiently aligned to pupils' strengths and needs. Teachers should further analyse assessment information to guide the selection of tasks and activities, and to accommodate the variance of learners in all classrooms.

- In their responses to the parent questionnaires, almost all parents agreed that the quality of teaching was good in the school.
- Teachers used a range of questioning techniques effectively and they employed a range of methodologies, including whole-class discussion, pair and group work to stimulate pupil interest and engagement.
- Teachers employed a suitable range of strategies to monitor and assess pupils' learning. They monitored pupils' copies and work and provided them with purposeful feedback. Pupils maintained self-assessment learning profiles, which they used to reflect on their learning.
- SEN teachers had developed strong and authentic relationships with pupils and displayed good knowledge of their needs. They adopted a flexible range of models of support and programmes to meet the needs of the pupils. The teachers used assessment information to inform the setting of targets.
- In the lessons observed, pupils from the class for children with autism were successfully included in mainstream classes. Teachers across the school had diligently pursued professional learning to provide the best support to these pupils. The principal reported that this investment in professional growth has had a positive influence on provision throughout the school.

### **3. The quality of support for pupils' wellbeing**

- The quality of support for pupils' wellbeing was very good and there was a welcoming and friendly atmosphere in the school. Relationships between teachers and pupils and among the pupils themselves were very respectful and the school staff demonstrated a commitment to the holistic development of each pupil. The school staff provided a wide range of in school and co-curricular activities, which included a broad variety of sporting and musical activities. In the focus group discussion, the pupils spoke animatedly about their lunchtime leagues, fundraising initiatives and the many activities in which they participated.
- In the pupil survey responses, almost all pupils agreed that the adults in the school treat everyone with respect and that there are clear rules against hurting other people.
- The promotion of pupil voice was a significant strength of the school. School leaders effectively facilitated the development of pupil voice, pupil participation and pupil leadership through their involvement with the well-established student council, the Green School's committee and the Active School's committee.

### **4. The quality of leadership and management**

- The overall quality of leadership and management was very good. The committed board of management ably supported the school. Board members understood their roles and carried them out with competence and expertise. They ensured school resources for teaching and learning were in place and that policies were ratified and implemented to support the safety and wellbeing of the pupils.
- The principal demonstrated a very high level of dedication to the ongoing development of the school. She had upgraded the school's digital resources. This further enhanced the management and organisation of the school, as well as supported provision for teaching and learning. The in-school leadership (ISL) team carried out a range of curricular, pastoral and administrative duties with diligence and competence.
- In interviews with the parents' representatives, parents spoke positively about the facilities in the school and the positive and happy school atmosphere. They reported that they received regular updates on school activities. Parents provided valuable support to the school by organising activities to support school initiatives.

- Commendably, the school had engaged with Initial Teacher Education school placement programmes and regularly provided placement opportunities to teachers.

## **5. The quality of school self-evaluation**

- The school team engaged very positively in the school self-evaluation process. The current focus was on oral Irish, which the parents, teachers and pupils had deemed as a priority. The school staff had developed a school improvement plan, which teachers were implementing with all classes in the school.
- The school's capacity to develop further is very good. The staff, principal and board members demonstrated a very strong commitment to ongoing school improvement.

## 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	<i>Very good</i> 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 <i>outstanding</i> 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	<i>Good</i> 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 <i>very good</i> standard.	Good; good quality; valuable; effective practice; competent; useful; commendable; good standard; some areas for improvement
Satisfactory	<i>Satisfactory</i> 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	<i>Fair</i> 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	<i>Weak</i> 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;