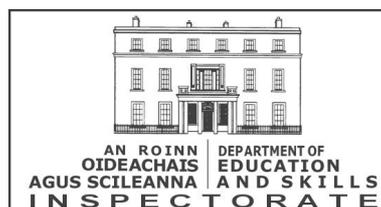


**An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna
Department of Education and Skills**

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

**Ringville Mixed National School,
Ballinlaw, Slieverue,
County Kilkenny
Uimhir rolla: 06621P**

Date of inspection: 28 January 2014



Whole-School Evaluation – Management, Leadership and Learning Report

Introduction

A Whole-School Evaluation – Management, Leadership and Learning (WSE - MLL) was undertaken in Ringville NS in January 2014. 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.

Ringville NS is situated in the rural townland of Ballinlaw in the parish of Slieverue. It is under the patronage of the Catholic Bishop of Ossory. It currently has three class teachers teaching 50 pupils but it will lose a class teacher in the next school year. Pupil attendance is excellent. 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.

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

- There is an open and positive relationship between the board of management, staff, parents and pupils.
- The board and parents are very supportive of the school.
- The teachers are very interested and committed to ensuring that the pupils experience a broad and varied educational experience.
- Teaching in the school is very good with teachers employing a variety of methodologies.
- Pupils are actively and meaningfully engaged in their learning.
- School self-evaluation is being used very purposefully to identify areas for improvement and the school is working at addressing these areas through its school improvement plan.

The following **main recommendations** are made:

- In the review of the curriculum plans, it is advised that such plans include meaningful direction on the mediation of the curriculum at each class level.

Findings

1. The learning achievements of pupils

- The overall learning achievements of the pupils are very good, as is reflected in their performance in the most recent standardised tests.
- There is appropriate emphasis on assessment throughout the school and the pupils engage meaningfully in self and peer-assessment.
- Pupils in all classes are exposed to a wide and varied range of learning experiences that connect with and draw upon the local environment and community.
- The parents report very positively, as indicated in questionnaire returns, on the help the school gives to children with reading and Mathematics.
- The school is currently working towards its first Active School Flag and it has been awarded the Primary Science Award annually since 2006.
- The pupils are highly skilled at working independently and they take responsibility for their own learning.

2. Quality of teaching

- Teaching in the school is very good. Teachers are experienced and talented and demonstrate a keen awareness of the need to differentiate their teaching to accommodate the wide range of abilities in their multi-grade classes.
- Collaborative approaches are employed by all teachers and lessons are well planned structured and delivered. There is an emphasis throughout the school on active

learning and the pupils engage very meaningfully in their learning. This active learning is supported by a broad range of suitable resources.

- Literacy and Numeracy are promoted across the curriculum. There is a laudable emphasis on mathematics language with the pupils compiling mathematics dictionaries. In reading, novels and supplementary readers are used very productively. Appropriate emphasis is placed on the communicative approach in the teaching of Irish.
- Pupils with special educational needs are carefully supported through a mixture of in-class support and withdrawal in small groups.
- Parents express high levels of satisfaction with the quality of teaching and learning in the school. They are also very satisfied with the information they receive regarding their children's progress. It is noteworthy that all parents report that they are happy with the school.
- The quality of teacher planning and preparation is commendable. All teachers provide suitable long-term and short term planning, as well as monthly progress reports to support their teaching.

3. Support for pupils' well-being

- Pupils are very well managed, as a result of the high level of commitment teachers have to the pupils in their care. Pupil responses to the questionnaires administered indicate that almost all pupils are happy at school and consider that this is a good school.
- 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

- Strong partnership, cooperation and respect exist between all the educational partners. The board manages the school effectively and is very supportive of the work of the staff. The school is very much at the heart of the local community.
- The principal provides strong instructional leadership and liaises openly with the members of the school community. She is capably supported by the members of the in-school management team who carry out their duties with commitment and dedication.
- Plans for all areas of the curriculum and a range of organisational policies have been devised collaboratively by the principal and the teaching staff, in consultation with the board of management. A commendable action plan ensures a cyclical approach to policy review. While the curricular plans offer guidance, there is a need for them to offer greater direction to the teachers, as to how to mediate and implement the curriculum, at each class level.
- The school is praised for its long established book rental scheme.
- The ancillary staff makes a significant contribution to the smooth running of the school.

5. School Self-evaluation

- The school has enthusiastically and meaningfully engaged in school self-evaluation (SSE). Numeracy was chosen as the first area for review and the teachers have been successful in identifying improvement priorities, through the analysis of a range of evidence sources. A school improvement plan has been devised which sets clear targets for improvement and outlines the actions which will be undertaken to achieve these targets. It is evident that the teachers are implementing these actions and ongoing monitoring and evaluating of pupils' progress will be undertaken. The school has also commenced the review of literacy.
- The school has also identified the need for the development of its information and communication technology infrastructure.

Conclusion

The school's capacity to engage in school improvement is very good. The school staff display an impressive enthusiasm for innovation and continued professional development.