

An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna
Department of Education and Skills

Whole School Evaluation
Management, Leadership and Learning

REPORT

Ainm na scoile / School name	Presentation Primary School
Seoladh na scoile / School address	George's Hill Halston Street Dublin 7
Uimhir rolla / Roll number	05933G

Date of inspection: 12-02-2020



An Roinn Oideachais
agus Scileanna
Department of
Education and Skills

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

CHILD PROTECTION

During the inspection visit, the following checks in relation to the school's child protection procedures were conducted:

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.
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.

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

Whole-School Evaluation – Management, Leadership and Learning

Dates of inspection	12-02-2020
Inspection activities undertaken	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Analysis of parent, pupil and teacher 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

Presentation Primary George's Hill is located in Dublin 7 and caters for boys from infants to first class and for girls from infants to sixth class. The school operates under the patronage of the Catholic Archbishop of Dublin and participates in Band 1 of Delivering Equality of Opportunity to Schools (DEIS), the action plan of the Department of Education and Skills for educational inclusion. At the time of the evaluation, 134 pupils were enrolled in the school. Overall, attendance rates are good and the school is actively addressing further improvements. The school has experienced significant turnover of staff in recent years. Current staffing includes an administrative principal, eight mainstream class teachers, four teachers for pupils with special educational needs (SEN) and access to a home-school-community liaison (HSCL) co-ordinator who is shared with another school.

SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

FINDINGS

- The overall quality of pupils' learning is good; they demonstrate commendable learning dispositions, high levels of engagement and learning outcomes are improving for pupils.
- The quality of teaching is good overall; aspects of practice observed ranged from fair to highly commendable.
- While aspects of provision for pupils with SEN are effective, there is inconsistency in the implementation of the continuum of support in mainstream and support settings and in a few instances, the multiplicity of supports provided for pupils impacts adversely on the cohesiveness of their learning experiences.
- Support for pupils' wellbeing is very good; the whole-school approach to behaviour management is impacting positively on pupils' capacity to engage in learning and is also enriching their personal wellbeing.
- The overall quality of leadership and management is good and suitable structures have been recently established that contribute to the smooth running of the school and purposeful leadership of learning; the distributed model of leadership is in the early stages of development and opportunities remain for whole-school engagement in progressing learning.
- The quality of school self-evaluation is good and the school has used Continued Professional Development (CPD) purposefully to support improvement initiatives.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- The coordination of provision for pupils with SEN should be reviewed to ensure more cohesive learning experiences for pupils.

- To optimise support for pupils with SEN, teachers should now extend the very good practices pertaining to the continuum of support noted in a few settings to all mainstream and support settings.
- Greater emphasis should now be placed on the delineation of leadership roles and responsibilities with a view to extending the observed examples of highly effective practices on a whole-school basis.

DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. THE QUALITY OF PUPILS' LEARNING

- The overall quality of pupils' learning is good; they demonstrate commendable learning dispositions, high levels of engagement and learning outcomes are improving for pupils. They recite poems, rhymes and sing songs with enthusiasm. In the questionnaire responses most pupils reported that they enjoy their lessons.
- Pupils recall and make connections in their learning confidently and communicate competently. In English, Irish and Mathematics, pupils' vocabulary is developed very well. While many opportunities are provided for pupils to use new vocabulary in context during English and Mathematics lessons, greater scope exists for pupils to practise their use of vocabulary in context during Irish lessons. Commendably, pupils were observed reading with suitable expression and fluency. Samples of pupils' writing indicate that they write well in a range of genres and for a variety of reasons. There is potential across the school for pupils to transfer skills acquired in English to ensure they can orally present and independently record new learning across other areas of the curriculum. Pupils are enabled to set and achieve meaningful personal goals as a result of their engagement in the support programme for social and emotional needs.
- Pupils enjoy a wide variety of valuable learning experiences and have regular opportunities to be active in their learning. Ample opportunities in many settings to use digital technologies are provided for pupils. During the evaluation, effective use of resources, games and project work, particularly in Social, Environmental and Scientific Education, were noted which supported and celebrated pupils' learning. Pupils in infant classes have regular opportunities to engage in play-based, integrated and thematic learning. Very effective language experience displays were observed in a majority of settings.
- Opportunities for pupils to work collaboratively with other pupils were observed in most settings. Where pupil learning was noted to be very good, pupils were facilitated to work collaboratively in open-ended, skills-based, investigative learning activities that allowed them to use language purposefully and deepen their comprehension. This practice resulted in very successful learning outcomes and should be extended to all settings and used by teachers to plan for language-rich learning across the curriculum.
- The analysis of the questionnaire data submitted by parents indicates almost all parents are happy with the school and all parents agreed or strongly agreed that their child enjoys school.

2. THE QUALITY OF TEACHING

- The quality of teaching is good overall; aspects of practice observed ranged from fair to highly commendable. Teachers create a positive learning atmosphere which is characterised by mutual respect and positive affirmation. Where the quality of teachers' practice was very good, lessons were closely aligned to pupils' varying needs and there were high expectations for pupils' learning together with the effective pacing of lessons, opportunities for pupils to collaborate and the consolidation of pupils' understanding; these qualities should characterise all lessons. Where the quality of teaching was less effective, teaching

approaches did not fully meet the learning needs of all pupils, there was an over-emphasis on teacher-directed tasks and the learning objective of the lesson was unclear; these weaknesses should be addressed by school leadership to ensure a consistency in teaching practices across the school.

- All teachers demonstrated very successful classroom management skills and pupil behaviour was very good during the evaluation. Highly respectful interactions were observed across the school.
- While aspects of provision for pupils with SEN are effective, there is inconsistency in the implementation of the continuum of support in mainstream and support settings and in a few instances, the multiplicity of supports provided for pupils impacts adversely on the cohesiveness of their learning experiences.
- In a minority of settings the targets of the support plans are specific, measurable and time-bound and this good practice should be extended to all support plans. To ensure maximum support for pupils with SEN, teachers should now extend the very good practices pertaining to the continuum of support noted in a minority of settings to all mainstream and support settings. Teachers use both in-class and withdrawal models of support and the school is commended for engaging in Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for the introduction of in-class support for English and Mathematics in all classes. Aspects of in-class support are clearly defined, including the effective use of evidence-based interventions such as Literacy Lift Off and Ready Set Go Maths. To improve the overall quality of in-class support for English and Mathematics, procedures should be established to ensure a greater range of in-class approaches based on the prioritised needs and learning styles of pupils; this will enable teachers to devise stimulating and differentiated learning opportunities for all pupils. The provision of opportunities to further challenge cohorts of pupils is also advised. The skilful deployment of approaches to also support the holistic development of the pupils with the greatest level of need including skills, attitudes, personal and social needs and to enable these pupils to engage in learning is highly commendable.
- The overall quality of assessment is good; assessment information is used well to inform models of in-class support. Where very good practice was observed, the underlying purpose of support and approaches to support clearly aligned with pupils' priority needs and learning experiences; this was not, however, evident in all settings. All models of support interventions should be reviewed to ensure that the underlying purpose and approaches clearly align with pupils' priority needs and learning experiences. Pupils' written work is carefully monitored with good examples of formative feedback noted in a majority of settings.
- A culture of collaboration exists among staff and this has resulted in the successful implementation of improvement initiatives. Teachers engage in ongoing professional development and are encouraged to use their training purposefully to enhance practice in school on an individual and whole-school basis. Further collaborative planning is necessary in the devising and progression of school support plans for cohorts of pupils.

3. THE QUALITY OF SUPPORT FOR PUPILS' WELLBEING

- Support for pupils' wellbeing is very good; the whole school approach to behaviour management is impacting positively on pupils' capacity to engage in learning and personal wellbeing. Responses to pupil questionnaires indicate that the majority of pupils feel safe in their class and that almost all pupils like school.
- Effective examples of fostering social and emotional wellbeing were observed with examples of particularly commendable practice also in evidence.

- The school promotes an inclusive culture, welcomes diversity and is proactive in seeking and providing support to pupils and their families. Consideration should be given to the re-introduction of a pupil council and increasing pupil participation in in-school activities. In responses to inspectorate questionnaires, more than half of pupils indicated that they do not know if they have a say in how things are done in the school.
- In response to inspectorate questionnaires, all parents either agree or strongly agree that there is a good atmosphere in the school and almost all parents reported that they are welcome in the school. The home-school-community liaison co-ordinator organises a wide range of courses for parents and is working actively to establish a parents' association.

4. THE QUALITY OF LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

- The overall quality of leadership and management is good and suitable structures have been recently established that contribute to the smooth running of the school and the purposeful leadership of learning; the distributed model of leadership is in the early stages of development and opportunities remain for whole-school engagement in progressing learning. The board of management has a clear understanding of its role and demonstrates strong commitment to further school development.
- The recently appointed principal demonstrates highly effective organisational skills and since her appointment, she has judiciously identified and addressed a number of priorities for school improvement. The deputy principal carries out a range of duties very competently. Together the principal and deputy principal demonstrate a clear understanding of change processes and approach the management of change in a collaborative, flexible and sensitive manner.
- Leaders work to promote a learning culture in the school. Although all leadership roles have been appointed recently, their actions are resulting in very positive changes and very good aspects of leadership were noted. Greater emphasis should now be placed on the delineation of leadership roles and responsibilities with a view to extending the observed examples of highly effective practices on a whole-school basis. The leadership team demonstrates commendable capacity to further enable the leading of learning across the school.
- The school reported that it is open to providing placements for student teachers. Such engagement in initial teacher education programmes is welcome and is included among the Teaching Council's Code of Professional Conduct for Teachers, as it can provide valuable professional benefits for teachers, pupils and the teacher education institute.

5. THE QUALITY OF SCHOOL SELF-EVALUATION

- The quality of school self-evaluation is good. The school has used the DEIS planning process to develop and implement various initiatives in literacy, numeracy, attendance, retention and partnership with parents and others. The school's improvement plans are clear; targets are set and actions are identified. Pupil and parent views are sought as part of the SSE process. The school should ensure that all targets for improvement are specific and linked with strong baseline data. Systems for the regular monitoring of the implementation and effectiveness of new initiatives should be developed to ensure that agreed actions become embedded in classroom and whole-school practice. The school has accessed valuable CPD to support teachers in areas which have been prioritised for development and positive impact on pupils' learning outcomes and learning experiences is noted.

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 WSE/MLL report on Presentation Primary School George's Hill which was carried out in February 2020. We believe it to be an accurate appraisal of our school which reflects positively the hard work, dedication and talent of our school community. The report acknowledges the many strengths of our school and in particular the emphasis placed on student well-being. We value the recognition that the overall quality of teaching and learning is good and we appreciate affirmation of the dedication and commitment of staff, pupils and parents. We are also pleased with the recognition and affirmation of the high quality of leadership and management of the school.

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 is happy to implement the three recommendations made by the Inspectorate, as we believe in and encourage best practice in all areas of school life in order to provide optimum learning experiences for the pupils of Presentation Primary School George's Hill.

A review of the coordination of provision for pupils with SEN to ensure more cohesive learning experiences for pupils was carried out and the necessary improvements were made.

In order to optimise support for pupils with SEN by extending the very good practices pertaining to the continuum of support noted by the Department Inspectorate in a few settings to all mainstream and support settings we will assist our teachers in developing their use of student support files. We have applied for whole-school training from the NCSE (National Council for Special Education) which will help our staff to embed effectively the NEPS 'Continuum of Support'.

The Board of Management welcomes the acknowledgement of the recent changes in the leadership team. The leadership team will continue to align the responsibilities of senior (Principal/Deputy Principal) and middle leadership (post holders) more clearly to the identified needs and priorities of the school, underlining the range of responsibilities for various leadership roles and providing opportunities for teachers to develop their leadership capacity.

Our school staff is positively and professionally engaging with all of the recommendations outlined and the board is confident that this will lead to further enhancements in the quality of provision provided.

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 of 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. 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;