

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

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

**REPORT**

<b>Ainm na scoile / School name</b>	Baltdaniel National School
<b>Seoladh na scoile / School address</b>	Newtwopothouse Mallow County Cork
<b>Uimhir rolla / Roll number</b>	12447L

**Date of inspection: 06-03-2019**



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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 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.

## **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, Wellbeing).
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

<b>Dates of inspection</b>	04-03-2019 to 06-03-2019
<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 teachers</li><li>• Review of relevant documents</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Analysis of parent and pupil 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

Baltydaniel National School is a rural, co-educational primary school located in Newtwopothouse, six kilometres from Mallow in County Cork. The school is under the patronage of the Catholic Bishop of Cloyne. The staff consists of nine mainstream class teachers, two of whom are job sharing. An additional three teachers support pupils with special educational needs (SEN). The principal of the school is currently on secondment to the Professional Development Service for Teachers and the acting principal was appointed in September, 2018. At the time of the evaluation, there were 209 pupils enrolled in the school. Pupil attendance levels are very good.

### SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

#### FINDINGS

- The quality of pupils' learning is good with pupils' skills, attitudes and knowledge developed effectively across curricular areas.
- The quality of teaching is very good; highly effective instruction, meaningful pupil engagement and the facilitation of active learning methodologies were identified as noteworthy features of practice.
- While the provision of support for pupils with SEN is good generally; in some settings, there is a need to ensure that in-class support is appropriately structured to meet the needs of identified pupils.
- The quality of assessment is good; however, pupil self-assessment was identified as an area for development.
- The quality of leadership and management is very good; further development of mechanisms to consult with and seek feedback from parents merits consideration.
- The quality of school self-evaluation (SSE) is very good and has effected improvement in prioritised areas.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

- The provision of in-class support should be reviewed to ensure that instruction is focused and relevant to the needs of targeted pupils.
- The school is advised to implement a whole-school approach to pupil self-assessment which enables pupils to reflect on their progress as learners.
- The school should consider how to further develop mechanisms which facilitate consultation with and seek feedback back from parents, on relevant aspects of school life.

## DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 1. THE QUALITY OF PUPILS' LEARNING

- The overall quality of pupils' learning is good. Pupils demonstrate high levels of interest and participation in lessons. Their subject specific knowledge, skills and attitudes are developed effectively in accordance with the *Primary School Curriculum*, with some pupils achieving to a very high standard in literacy and numeracy. Commendable emphasis is placed on pupils' skill development in Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics (STEAM). Their learning experiences in these areas are enhanced through engagement with community-based and national projects.
- Attainment in literacy is good. In general, pupils demonstrate a good understanding and use of vocabulary. They use language confidently to describe personal and learning experiences, to question and to justify opinions. They read with good fluency and understanding and are exposed to graded texts, novels and digital texts. Pupils are facilitated to write creatively and a whole-school approach to the development of writing genres has been introduced. However, there is scope to develop this approach further. When addressing each genre, greater emphasis should be placed on the integrated development of language skills and on facilitating pupils to identify, describe and write in that genre independently across curricular areas.
- Ar an iomlán, tá gnóthachtáil na ndaltaí sa Ghaeilge go maith. Tá foclóir agus struchtúir chainte sealbhaithe acu faoi na téamaí teanga. Cé go mbíonn deiseanna cothaithe dóibh an teanga seo a úsáid, is gá na hionchais teanga cumarsáide leagtha do dhaltaí a ardú go córasach tríd an scoil. Léann na daltaí le tuiscint agus leis an líofacht chuí. Ba chóir ámh, an réimse téacs atá ar fáil dóibh a leathnú agus minicíocht na saor scríbhneoireachta agus na scríbhneoireachta cruthaithí a mhéadú. *Overall, pupil attainment in Irish is good. They have acquired vocabulary and sentence structures under the language themes. Although opportunities are created for pupils to use this language, it is necessary to systematically increase the communicative language expectations set for pupils, through the school. Pupils read with appropriate understanding and fluency. However, the range of texts available to them should be broadened and the frequency with which they engage in free and creative writing increased.*
- Attainment in numeracy is good. In many settings, pupils were observed to enjoy their lessons in Mathematics. They used mathematical language appropriately and in general demonstrated good understanding of number and mathematical concepts. Where very good practice was observed, pupils were facilitated to engage in enquiry-based learning and to explain and justify the processes they used to find solutions to problems. This good practice should be extended, particularly when engaging pupils in mental maths activities.
- In general, pupils with special educational needs are making progress commensurate with their ability.
- In questionnaires completed during the evaluation, a majority of pupils responded that they liked school and that they enjoyed their lessons and learning.

### 2. THE QUALITY OF TEACHING

- The overall quality of teaching is very good although practice ranged from very good to satisfactory in the lessons observed.
- In general, teacher planning and preparation is completed to a high standard. Attractive learning environments are maintained to support and consolidate pupils' learning. Teachers' demonstrate very effective classroom management skills. They have high expectations of

pupils' work and behaviour and they communicate these expectations effectively. In a majority of settings, teachers delivered highly effective instruction which elicited meaningful pupil engagement, through the use of active learning methodologies.

- The quality of support for pupils with additional learning needs is good. Individual files are compiled for all pupils in receipt of support. Learning targets are time-bound and progress reports are completed on their attainment. The SEN team provides support by withdrawing pupils and through in-class interventions. In some settings, there is a need to ensure that in-class support is informed by assessment data and that instruction is focused and relevant to the needs of targeted pupils. Cycles of in-class intervention should be for fixed periods of time and their impact assessed.
- The quality of assessment is good generally. A range of assessments is conducted to identify learning needs and to evaluate and monitor pupils' progress. Where very good practice was noted, assessment data was used effectively to differentiate instruction and learning activities. In some settings, learning intentions were shared with pupils and strategies which promoted pupil self-assessment were implemented. In questionnaires conducted during the evaluation however, a significant minority of pupils responded that they did not know if they were making good progress in literacy, numeracy or with their homework. Interactions between inspectors and pupils corroborated the need to further develop strategies which facilitate all pupils to reflect on their progress as learners and develop a sense of ownership and responsibility for their learning. Accordingly, the implementation of a whole-school approach to pupil self-assessment is advised.

### **3. THE QUALITY OF SUPPORT FOR PUPILS' WELL-BEING**

- The quality of support for pupils' well-being is good.
- The school is committed to the holistic development of pupils. The implementation of *Aistear: The Early Childhood Curriculum Framework* in junior classes promotes pupil engagement with play-based methodologies. Programmes which support the development of pupils' social, personal and health education are implemented consistently. This work is further consolidated through the school's participation in Green, Active and Healthy Schools initiatives.
- Relationships and interactions among pupils and between pupils and teachers are positive, respectful and conducive to well-being.
- Displays in classrooms and school corridors and the organisation of the school yard further promote and celebrate pupils' holistic development.
- A student council involves pupil representatives in decision making processes and affords them the opportunity to play an active role in the daily routines of school life.
- Very good relationships have been developed between the school and the broader community, feeder schools and other relevant agencies. Transition programmes are completed with sixth class pupils to prepare them for second level.
- In questionnaires completed during the evaluation, almost all parents stated that the school helps with their child's social and emotional development.

### **4. THE QUALITY OF LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

- The overall quality of leadership and management is very good. The board convenes monthly meetings and plays an active role in policy formation and review. School accounts are certified annually. Regular newsletters are published on the school website to inform the broader community of the work of the school. Curricular and procedural policies are also

published on this site. The school values and supports the work of the parents' association. Almost all parents who responded to questionnaires, stated that the school was well run. However, questionnaire data suggests that the school should consider how to further develop its mechanisms to consult with and seek feedback from parents on relevant aspects of schools life such as homework and parent- teacher meetings. The parents' association are advised to re-affiliate with the National Parents' Council.

- The acting principal is alert and responsive to the changing needs of the school. He continues to implement the mission of the school by promoting high-quality education in a secure and orderly environment. He is supported by the acting deputy principal and assistant principal. The duties of the in-school leadership team were recently reviewed and a report is given to the board on work completed annually.
- The school regularly provides placements for student teachers. Such engagement in initial teacher education programmes is welcome and is included among the standards of the Teaching Council's *Code of Professional Conduct for Teachers* as it can provide valuable professional benefits for teachers, student teachers, pupils and the teacher education institution.

#### **5. THE QUALITY OF SCHOOL SELF-EVALUATION**

- The quality of school self-evaluation (SSE) is very good. Plans have been implemented to effect improvement in Social, Personal and Health Education, literacy and numeracy. SSE reports and action plans are published on the school website. The implementation of plans is monitored and reports are presented to the board and the broader community on progress made.
- The school is commended for the effective use of the SSE process to devise agreed approaches to teacher planning for the implementation of the *Primary Language Curriculum*, which they have extended to middle classes.
- When reviewing SSE processes, the school is encouraged to align actions for improvement with the statements and standards of *Looking at Our School* (Department of Education and Skills, 2016).

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

# **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 Baltydaniel NS acknowledges the very positive findings of the WSE-MLL Report. We feel that it is a good reflection of the commitment and dedication of our very conscientious and hardworking staff and pupils. We are pleased that the high standards of teaching and learning, pupil well-being, leadership and management and school self-evaluation have been recognised and affirmed.

### **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 accepts and acknowledges the recommendations in the report and wishes to state its intention to work together with the principal and staff to review and address them in a timely fashion. The school's stakeholders have already held meetings to discuss structures that will be put in place to work on the recommendations highlighted from the evaluation. The school is committed to ensuring that a high standard of teaching and learning will be provided into the future and that the well-being of pupils and staff will continue to be of utmost importance.