



S N Tulach Aluinn

Tullyallen  
Drogheda  
Co Louth

17726R

**SCHOOL RESPONSE**  
**RESPOND WITHIN TEN SCHOOL DAYS**

To: Anne Nolan, Principal

Cc: Fr SeanDooley, Chairperson BoM

Archbishop Eamon Martin, School Patron

Date: 16-12-2016

A chara,

Please find attached the report of a recent inspection undertaken in your school. This copy of the report is being sent to the principal, to the chairperson of the board of management and to the school's patron or trustees (or the chief executive of the education and training board) in line with the provisions contained in *Guidelines for the Publication of School Inspection Reports* (Revised 2015) and *Education Act 1998 (Publication of Inspection Reports on Schools and Centres for Education) Regulations 2015*.

The provisions contained in the revised documents above came into effect from 01 September 2015. Your attention is drawn in particular to Chapter 3 of the *Guidelines*, where new timeframes for publication are set out. These allow **ten school days for the return of the School Response Form** (attached).

**Distribution of the report**

Section 3 of the *Guidelines* provides that the chairperson of the board of management or a person authorised by him/her will provide a copy of the report to all teachers affected by the inspection and to the members of the board of management, (see Section 3.3 of the *Guidelines*). This should be done immediately.

**School response**

Section 3.4 of the *Guidelines* outlines how the board of management may respond to the report. The school's response should be submitted on an *Inspection Report School Response Form* and returned by email or post to the address below **within TEN school days of the date of this letter.**<sup>1</sup>

When responding, the board may choose **one** of the following options:

- **OPTION A:** The board may accept the report without comment. In this case, the chairperson of the board simply completes Sections 1, 2 and 4 of the *Inspection Report School Response Form* and return it by email or post to the address below.

- **OPTION B:** The board may wish to respond formally to the report. In this case, the chairperson should complete all sections of the *Inspection Report School Response Form* and return it by email or post to the address below.

Guidance on writing a school response is contained in Section 3.2 of the *Guidelines*. The school response is an opportunity for the school to comment on the **contents** of the report and to highlight the **follow-up actions** which it proposes to take (or has already taken) following the inspection. Please note that comments on the inspection **process or reference to the Inspector** should not be included in the school response. The total length of the school response should not exceed **500 words**.

**In the case of Option A or Option B the *Inspection Report School Response Form* should be returned by the chairperson of the board by email or post to the address below within TEN (10) school days of the date of issue of this letter.** In schools operating under the auspices of an Education and Training Board the School Response Form must be completed in consultation with the chief executive of the ETB.

- **OPTION C:** The board may be dissatisfied with the report and/or the inspection and may seek a review of the inspection under *Procedure for Review of Inspections on Schools and Teachers under Section 13 (9) of the Education Act 1998* (revised 2015). In this case, the chairperson should request a review by writing to the Chief Inspector, Department of Education and Skills, Marlborough Street, Dublin 1. **The request for a review must be received by the Chief Inspector within ten school days of the date of issue of this letter.** A copy of the *Procedure for Review* is available on the website of the Department.

#### No reply

If no correspondence is received in respect of a School Response and if a request for a review under the *Procedure for Review of Inspections on Schools and Teachers* has not been received within ten school days of the date of issue of this letter, it will be assumed that the board of management does not wish to make a response and the report will then be prepared for publication.

#### Publication of the report

Following receipt of the *School Response Form* the Inspectorate will prepare the school inspection report for publication. Normally, a copy of the School Response will be included in the published version of the report. If for any reason the Department opts not to publish the School Response, it will inform the board of management of this decision and the reason for it.

**Forms should be emailed to: [reports\\_inspectorate@education.gov.ie](mailto:reports_inspectorate@education.gov.ie) or posted to:**

**Bernadette Flannery  
Inspectorate Secretariat  
Department of Education and Skills  
Units 3-6 Beulah Buildings, Finisklin Road  
Sligo  
F91 D7VC  
Telephone: 076 110 8697**

<sup>1</sup> The completed *Inspection Report School Response Form* should be returned by 16-01-2016

## Inspection Report School Response Form

School details	S N Tulach Aluinn  Tullyallen Drogheda Co Louth  17726R
Inspection details	WSEMLLP conducted on 20-10-2016
Date of issue of inspection report	16-12-2016
For office use	Inspection Number: 3455

*Please choose option A, or B, or C*

OPTION A	<b>The board accepts the report as the final inspection report available for publication and does not wish to respond formally to the report</b>	
OPTION B	<b>The board accepts the report as the final inspection report available for publication and wishes to respond formally to the report. The Board agrees that the response submitted will be included as an appendix to the published report. The board's response is submitted below.</b>	
OPTION C	<b>The board does not accept the report as the final inspection report and is making a request for a review of the inspection under the <i>Procedure for Review of Inspections on Schools and Teachers under Section 13(9) of the Education Act, 1998</i>. The board will submit/has submitted a written request for a review to the Office of the Chief Inspector.</b>	

### **School response: Part A**

*Please comment on the content of the inspection report (approximately 100-150 words)*

**School response: Part B**

*Please indicate the actions that the school has taken or plans to take to address each of the recommendations in the report (approximately 350 -400 words)*

**Signature**

<b>Chairperson, Board of Management</b>	<i>Print name:</i>
	<i>Signature:</i>
	<i>Date:</i>

This form must be signed by the chairperson of the board of management of the school. In the case of a school operating under the auspices of an Education and Training Board, the form must be completed by the chairperson of the board of management in consultation with the Chief Executive (or nominated officer) of the Education and Training Board.

**The form must be returned to the Inspectorate Secretariat within ten schools days** of the date of issue of the final report for school response.

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

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

**DRAFT REPORT FOR SCHOOL RESPONSE**

Ainm na scoile / School name	Tullyallen National School
Seoladh na scoile / School address	Tullyallen Drogheda County Louth
Uimhir rolla / Roll number	17726R

**Date of Evaluation: 20-10-2016**

**Date of issue of report: 16-12-2016**



## **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.

## Whole-School Evaluation – Management, Leadership and Learning Report

### INSPECTION ACTIVITIES DURING THIS INSPECTION

Dates of inspection	20-10-2016
Inspection activities undertaken	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Meetings with principal, deputy principal and members of the in-school management 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></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 senior management team and teachers, and to parent and board of management representatives</li></ul>

### SCHOOL CONTEXT

Tullyallen National School is a co-educational primary school under the patronage of the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Armagh. Enrolment has grown significantly in the past decade. Attendance levels among the 465 pupils enrolled are very good. The school has seventeen mainstream teachers. Six support teachers, of whom two are in posts based in other schools, provide support to pupils who have additional learning needs. During the evaluation, inspectors observed teaching and learning in ten mainstream class settings and four support-teaching settings.

### SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

#### FINDINGS

- The quality of the management of pupils is very good.
- Pupils are afforded a wide variety of learning experiences.
- Léirítear dearcadh dearfach i leith na Gaeilge ach tá tuilleadh feabhas de dhíth ar scileanna teanga na ndaltaí ar an iomlán. *A positive attitude towards Irish is in evidence but further improvement of pupils' Irish language skills is needed overall.*
- Pupils' overall attainment levels in Mathematics indicate that they are achieving very well; there remains need for some more differentiation by objective to support lesser achieving pupils.
- Leadership is strongly characterised by care; there is scope for the leadership of curriculum implementation by the in-school management team to develop further.
- Certain organisational and curriculum plans require review to support the continuous development of the school.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

- Further focus on the differentiation of objectives, strategies and resources to meet the needs of the varying ability levels among pupils is needed.
- Ní mór scileanna teanga na ndaltaí a fheabhsú a thuilleadh i nGaeilge ar bhonn scoile-uile. *There is need to develop pupils' Irish language skills further at whole-school level.*
- The duties of the in-school management team should be reviewed to ensure that each member leads the development and the review of curricular areas in line with the school's identified priorities.

### DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 1. THE LEARNING ACHIEVEMENTS OF PUPILS

- Pupils' learning achievements are good overall, with some very good learning experiences and outcomes observed during the evaluation. There are also a few areas for improvement.
- The experiences of pupils at junior infant level in play-based, integrated learning are very good. There is very good implementation of *Aistear: the Early Childhood Curriculum Framework*.
- Pupils' attainment levels on standardised tests of English reading indicate that they are achieving well, with some achieving very well. During the evaluation, a number of other pupils demonstrated some lack of fluency and underdeveloped word-recognition skills. Pupils require further differentiated texts to enable them build reading skills appropriately and incrementally. Pupils' expressive skills are well developed. The implementation of a whole-school approach to the development of penmanship is proving successful. More detail in the whole-school plan for English of the content and skills for each class level in oral language, progression in reading skill development and guidance regarding how to differentiate reading texts would benefit learning.
- Cothaítear dearcadh dearfach i leith na Gaeilge. Is inmholta mar a chuirtear an Ghaeilge chun cinn go neamhfhoirmiúil i saol na scoile. Sna ceachtanna Gaeilge a breathnáodh glac na daltaí páirt fhonnmar iontu, agus bhí an fhoghlaim go maith ina bhformhór. Is gá forbairt a dhéanamh ar chailíocht na gnóthachtála ar bhonn uile-scoile, áfach. Moltar muinín na ndaltaí in úsáid na teanga a chothú agus tabhairt faoi chomhrá leathnaithe chun cleachtadh a dhéanamh ar raon leathan abairtí a chuimsíonn sampla leathan de bhriathra. Baintear feidhm as sleachta sna téacsleabhair den chuid is mó don léitheoireacht. Moltar cur leis na foinsí léitheoireachta. Baineann scóip chun forbartha le heilimintí d'obair scríofa na ndaltaí. Chun é a fheabhsú, ní mór struchtúr na n-abairtí Gaeilge, agus conas iad a leathnú de réir a chéile, a mhúnlú go foirmiúil.

*A positive attitude to the Irish language is promoted. It is highly commendable how the use of Irish is promoted incidentally in the life of the school. In the Irish lessons observed, pupils took part actively in them and the quality of learning was good in the majority. There is need to develop the levels of attainment at whole-school level, however. It is recommended that pupils' confidence in the use of the language be developed through focusing on extended conversation to practise constructing a broad range of sentences which include a wide selection of verbs. Extracts from textbooks are most frequently used for reading. Additional resources should be provided for reading. There is scope for development in relation to elements of pupils' writing. There is need to formally model how to structure sentences in the Irish language, and how to extend them in order to improve writing.*

- Overall attainment levels on standardised tests of Mathematics indicate that pupils are achieving very well. During lessons observed, engagement levels ranged between good and very good. There remains need for further differentiation by objective to support the learning needs of lesser achieving pupils.
- Very interesting learning experiences were in evidence in Social, Environmental and Scientific Education (SESE). Well planned, carefully pitched lessons engaged pupils' interest well. Pupils' recall of what they had learnt was very good. Extending whole-school planning to include guidance on teaching and learning local History is recommended.
- Very good creativity is evident in art work. High standards of learning experiences were evident in other aspects of arts education.

## 2. QUALITY OF TEACHING

- The quality of teaching is commendable. Effective use of talk and discussion, appropriate use of visual resources to support explanation and promote engagement, and collaborative learning activities were among the valuable features observed. Further focus on differentiation to meet the needs of the varying ability levels in classes is needed.
- The quality of teaching provided for pupils with additional learning needs is good overall. All engagement observed between the support teachers and their pupils was caring and affirming. Good questioning characterised lessons. In-class interventions are very good. While planning is conducted comprehensively, some targets need to be set in line with pupils' individual needs. Clarification is

now needed in policy and practice to show how support teaching is prioritised and weighted towards pupils with greatest learning need. Explicit criteria regarding how support is to be allocated to pupils who may be regarded as exceptionally able should be outlined in policy documents. This should be premised upon *Exceptionally Able Students – Draft Guidelines for Teachers* (2010) from the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA).

- Almost all parents who completed a questionnaire agreed that they are satisfied with the school and that their child is doing well. Almost all pupils who completed a questionnaire agreed that their teachers explained lesson content clearly and they were satisfied with how their teachers paid attention to their contributions during lessons. Pupils' responses indicate that there is scope for group activities and for work with computers to feature more prominently.
- The quality of assessment has scope to improve overall and become more cohesive in support of teaching and learning. Commendably, teachers maintain records of standardised assessment results, samples of pupils' work and checklists. Differing additional records are maintained. Recording of a consistent, succinct profile of learning is recommended. The further use of assessment-for-learning practices during lessons is also advocated.

### **3. SUPPORT FOR PUPILS' WELL-BEING**

- The quality of the management of pupils is very good. An affirming learning environment has been created. The ongoing observable support for pupils' well-being and care is very commendable.
- Almost all pupils who completed a questionnaire agreed that they feel safe in class, that they like school, and agree that it is a good school. Questionnaire responses indicate that pupil voice could be strengthened; consideration should be given to the establishment of a pupils' council. In their questionnaire responses, all the teachers agreed that the core values of the school are being implemented successfully in its day-to-day life.

### **4. LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

- Overall leadership and management operate in a fully appropriate manner although some possibilities for improvement exist. The principal is very evidently dedicated to the welfare and holistic development of each child in the school and fosters a collaborative and open working relationship among staff. She engages very well with all members of the school community. The principal's work in managing significant change in the life of the school is commendable and effective.
- The members of the in-school management team fulfil their duties with diligence. A review of the duties of the in-school management team is needed; it would be advantageous if each member of the team had responsibility for leading the development of learning and teaching in a specific curricular area aligned to the on-going development of the school. Whole-school curriculum plans, including the whole-school plan for assessment, need now to be reviewed. Teacher questionnaire response data indicate some lack of surety about the effectiveness of in-school management systems. The board of management should consider this data carefully.
- The board of management is properly constituted and meets at appropriate intervals. It acts in a committed and thorough manner to support the school's effective operation. The chairperson of the board of management and of the parents' association reported that relationships within the school community are very good.
- 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 earnestly in the self-evaluation process. Broad goals for action have been articulated in the main. Going forward, more shared reflection leading to developing more measurable targets within an agreed timeframe, which are based on pupils' learning outcomes, would be of benefit. There is need to communicate a summary of the school's improvement report to parents. The school website would be useful for this purpose.

### **Conclusion**

The school's capacity to develop further and engage in school improvement is good.

## 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
<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 <i>very good</i> 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. 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
<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;