

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

**Whole School Evaluation**  
**REPORT**

**Lyrecrompane N.S.,**  
**Duagh,**  
**Co. Kerry**  
**Uimhir rolla: 14998M**

**Date of inspection: 02 March 2011**



## 1. Introduction

Lyrecrompane N.S. is a Catholic, mainstream, co-educational school situated in the townland of Lyrecrompane in the parish of Duagh. The school is designated as serving in an area of disadvantage and is part of the *School Support Programme (SSP); Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools (DEIS)* rural initiative. The school has a staffing of two mainstream teachers and a resource teacher for pupils with special educational needs. A learning support teacher, who is based in a nearby school, works in this school for eight hours a week. The school has a current enrolment of twenty-nine pupils and this number is declining annually due to demographic trends in this area. Pupil attendance is of a very high standard. 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.

## 2. Summary of Findings and Recommendations for Further Development

The following are the **main strengths** of the work of the school:

- The school and its pupils benefit from the support of an effective board of management and a dedicated and professional staff.
- The school premises and accommodation are maintained to a very high standard and a wide range of resources are utilised in an efficient manner to support learning and teaching.
- The school plays a pivotal role in the community and is very well supported by parents and the wider community.
- The overall quality of teaching, learning and pupil achievement is of a good standard.
- The school is praised for the manner in which it successfully integrates pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities into daily school life.

The following **main recommendations** are made:

- It is recommended that the in-school management team place an increased emphasis on developing curriculum leadership roles. These roles could focus on whole-school initiatives which have the explicit purpose of improving pupil attainment.
- It is recommended that information on pupil achievement would inform the identification of priorities for development and that the success of the development plan would be evaluated in relation to its impact on improving the quality of pupils' experiences and standards of attainment.
- It is recommended that current practice in relation to the assessment and recording of pupil progress be reviewed and evaluated.
- It is recommended that *Special Education Circular 02/05* and the Department's *Learning-Support Guidelines* be reflected in the whole-school policy for provision for pupils with learning difficulties.

### **3. Quality of School Management**

- The board of management provides good leadership to the school. Meetings are convened regularly and comprehensive minutes of these meetings are recorded. The school building and its grounds provide a safe, suitable and attractive setting for the pupils and the staff. The school is very well resourced with a wide range of supportive materials and resources. It is recommended that the board publish an annual report on its work. The board should identify and support the staff in the implementation strategies which focus on school improvement initiatives.
- The principal is highly effective in leading and managing the school. She has established exemplary working relations with staff, the board and the parents. A wide range of appropriate duties have been assigned to the deputy principal and these are discharged in a professional manner. It is recommended that the in-school management team place an increased emphasis on developing curriculum leadership roles. This would facilitate greater focus on whole-school initiatives which would have the explicit purpose of improving pupil attainment.
- The school has established very good relationships and communications with the school community. High levels of parental involvement in the work of the school are encouraged. A very active and supportive parents' association contributes significantly to the work of the school. Responses to questionnaires issued to parents during the evaluation indicate very high levels of satisfaction with the school.
- The management of pupils in this school is very good. During the evaluation period, the pupils presented as well mannered, confident and co-operative. Pupils are facilitated to participate in wide range of co-curricular and extracurricular activities. Pupils' responses to questionnaires issued during the evaluation indicate that they enjoy their learning and their lessons.

### **4. Quality of School Planning and School Self-evaluation**

- The school is praised for the drafting and ratification of a wide range of comprehensive organisational policies. High quality curriculum plans have also been devised for each subject area. It is recommended that a means of communicating these documents to the wider school community be identified and that parents are given opportunities to input into the drafting and reviewing of future policies. A development plan is drafted annually. It is recommended that information on pupil achievement should now inform the selection of priorities for future development. It is further recommended that the success of the development plan be evaluated in relation to its impact on improving the quality of pupils' experiences and standards of attainment.
- Teachers make appropriate planning and preparation for their work. Long and short-term plans are prepared and monthly progress records are maintained. It is recommended that the school review the manner in which it plans for the implementation of a broad and balanced curriculum within a multi-class setting, specifically in the areas of literacy and numeracy.
- School authorities provided evidence that, in compliance with Primary Circular 0061/2006, the board of management has formally adopted the Department's *Child Protection Guidelines for Primary Schools*. Evidence was provided to show that these child protection procedures have been brought to the attention of management, school staff and parents; that a copy of the procedures has been provided to all staff (including all new staff); and that management has ensured that all staff are familiar with the

procedures to be followed. A designated liaison person (DLP) and a deputy DLP have been appointed in line with the requirements of the guidelines.

## 5. Quality of Teaching, Learning and Pupil Achievement

- The quality of teaching, learning and pupil achievement is of a good standard. Lessons are well presented and paced and supportive resources are utilised to good effect. Teachers are commended for the selection of lesson content which appeals to the pupils and which is reflective of their interests, life experiences and environment. It is recommended that the identified needs of the pupils and the objectives of the Primary School Curriculum (1999) inform the planning of future programmes of work, specifically in the areas of literacy and numeracy.
- The quality of teaching, learning and pupil achievement in English is, in general, of a good standard. Teachers are praised for the manner in which they develop the oral language skills of the pupils. An increased focus on pupil-pupil talk should be incorporated into the approaches to the teaching of language skills. Pupils read with confidence and accuracy. They apply a range of word attack skills when reading challenging texts. Pupils' written work is neatly presented and regularly monitored and evaluated. It is recommended that pupils are facilitated to experience a wider range of writing genres and reading texts.
- Tá cáilíocht an teagaisc agus na foghlama sa Ghaeilge go maith. Baintear feidhm as modhanna éagsúla chun an t-ábhar a cur in úil go héifeachtach. Aithrisíonn na daltaí rainn agus amhráin go muinteach cumasach. Is léir go bhfuil caighdeán maith bainte amach ag na daltaí i léitheoireacht na Gaeilge agus go bhfuil tuiscint acu ar a bhfuil léite. Múintear scileanna scríbhneoireachta go córasach mar chuid lárnach den chlár teagaisc sa Ghaeilge. Moltar béim a chur ar fhorbairt na scríbhneoireachta chruthaithigh freisin.
- *The quality of teaching and learning in Irish is good. Use is made of a range of methodologies to present content in an effective manner. The pupils recite poetry and sing songs confidently and competently. It is evident that the pupils have attained a good standard in Irish reading and that they understand what they have read. Writing skills are systematically taught as a central part of the Irish programme. It is recommended that an emphasis be placed on the development of creative writing also.*
- Mathematics is taught effectively at all class levels and the standards achieved by the majority of pupils are satisfactory. The language of Mathematics is well explored and developed. Good class discussions enable the pupils to develop an understanding of mathematical concepts. An appropriate emphasis is placed on oral mathematical activities. It is recommended that skills development be systematically addressed at all levels in order to enable the pupils to view Mathematics as practical and relevant to their everyday lives.
- In Drama lessons, opportunities are provided for pupils to create improvised responses to fictional scenarios and real life situations. The pupils' understanding is enriched and their self-esteem and expressive abilities are promoted through their engagement in the organised activities. It is recommended that pupils be provided with increased opportunities to reflect on drama, thus enabling them to explore themes, characters and plots.
- In the area of assessment, teachers administer teacher-designed tests and regularly monitor pupils' written work. Standardised tests in literacy and numeracy are administered annually. Diagnostic tests are effectively utilised to identify the learning

difficulties of pupils' experiencing difficulties. However, approaches to the evaluation and analysis of pupil learning outcomes lack rigour and are not sufficiently systematic. Assessment data generated should be utilised to analyse patterns of performance at different class levels and to chart individual pupils' progress. Such data can also be used to guide teaching for groups of pupils and individuals within the classroom context. It is therefore recommended that current practice in relation to the assessment and recording of pupil progress be reviewed and evaluated.

## **6. Quality of Support for Pupils**

- The school is praised for the manner in which it successfully integrates pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities into daily school life. A significant number of pupils are in receipt of support from the resource teacher and the learning support teacher. Both these teachers are new to this teaching context and are working conscientiously towards building a knowledge and skill set to enable them to provide high quality support to the pupils in their care. Lessons observed were well structured and provided pupils with a range of activities focused on addressing areas in which they are experiencing difficulties.
- However, there is scope for development in relation to the formulation of individual education plans (IEPs) and individual profile and learning programmes (IPLPs), specifically in relation to the identification of specific learning targets for individual pupils, based on pupils' present attainment levels, in consultation with parents. It is recommended that Special Education Circular 02/05 "*Organisation of Teaching Resources for Pupils who need Additional Support in Mainstream Primary Schools*" and the Department's *Learning-Support Guidelines* be reflected in the whole-school policy for provision for pupils with learning difficulties.

# **Appendix**

**SCHOOL RESPONSE TO THE REPORT**

**Submitted by the Board of Management**

### **Area 1 Observations on the content of the inspection report**

On behalf of the school community and Board of Management, we would like to extend a warm thank you to our Inspector for her professionalism, courtesy and personable nature which made the Whole School Evaluation process a worthwhile and informative experience for all concerned.

We are pleased to note that the commitment, enthusiasm and dedication of our parents, pupils, teachers, principal and board members has been recognised and affirmed. The recognition of the high quality of teaching and learning and the very high quality of support for our pupils is heartening and encouraging.

### **Area 2 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, principal and staff are in the process of facilitating the recommendations of the report and will endeavour to implement these as soon as possible. We look forward to further enhancing the standard of education within our school.