



An Roinn Oideachais
agus Óige
Department of Education
and Youth

Evaluation of learning and planning for improvement - DEIS

REPORT

Ainm na scoile/School name	Scoil Bhríde Primary School
Seoladh na scoile/School address	Killane Edenderry Co. Offaly
Uimhir rolla/Roll number	20267F
Dáta na cigireachta/ Date of evaluation	28/11/2025
Dáta eisiúna na tuairisce/Date of issue of report	05/02/2026

Introduction to the evaluation

The DEIS Programme

The Department of Education and Youth provides a wide range of supports to all schools to promote the inclusion of all children and young people. The Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools (DEIS) programme supplements these universal supports by providing additional resources to identified schools to further assist them reduce barriers that prevent children and young people reaching their potential. The overall aim of the DEIS programme is to ensure improved learning outcomes for children and young people in schools prioritised for additional supports.

The DEIS Action Plan for Improvement

All schools in the DEIS programme are required to have a *DEIS Action Plan for Improvement* and to use the school self-evaluation process to inform the development of the plan. The school's DEIS Action Plan for Improvement is its school improvement plan.

The DEIS Action Plan for Improvement should support improvement in the outcomes and experiences of children and young people. The plan should contain targets and actions under main themes: literacy, numeracy, attendance, retention, transitions, partnership with parents and others, and examination attainment.¹

For each of the above themes, the DEIS Action Plan for Improvement should clearly identify children and young people prioritised for additional support, targets for improvement and agreed actions that will achieve the desired outcomes. The school should regularly monitor the implementation of the agreed actions to ensure that they are leading to improved outcomes and experiences for children and young people.

Evaluating the use of the DEIS action planning process

Each year the Inspectorate evaluates the quality of learning and action planning for improvement in a sample of schools in the DEIS programme. The evaluation focuses on:

- The quality of the learning outcomes and experiences of children and young people in the school.
- The quality of the school's action-planning process in two specific themes of the DEIS programme.

¹ Examination attainment refers to post-primary schools only. There are also three additional themes *Wellbeing, Leadership and Continuing Professional Development*. Actions and interventions for these additional themes should be integrated across the other main themes.

Evaluation findings

This is a report following an evaluation conducted in Scoil Bhríde Primary School on 28/11/2025. The specific themes evaluated were attendance and literacy. The Inspectorate selected the attendance theme and the school selected literacy as the second theme for the evaluation.

Actions of the school to safeguard children and prevent and tackle bullying

During the inspection visit, the following checks in relation to the school's child protection and anti-bullying procedures were conducted:	
<i>Child Protection</i>	<i>Bí Cineálta</i>
<div>1. The name of the DLP and the Child Safeguarding Statement (CSS) are prominently displayed near the main door of the school / in the reception area. <i>Following the school's adoption of the updated procedures 2025, it is also required to display a student-friendly version incorporating the name of the DLP beside the CSS.</i></div> <div>2. The school's child safeguarding statement has been ratified by the board and includes an annual review and a risk assessment.</div> <div>3. All teachers visited were aware of who to go to if they had a child protection concern.</div>	<div>1. The school has developed an anti-bullying policy using Appendix A of <i>Bí Cineálta</i>, <i>it is reviewed annually (or earlier if required) and includes a student/pupil friendly version that is displayed where students/pupils and the school community can see it.</i></div> <div>2. The school's anti-bullying policy is published on its website and/or is readily accessible to board of management members, staff, parents and students/pupils.</div> <div>3. The board of management minutes record that the principal provides an update to the board at each ordinary board meeting that meets the requirements of <i>Bí Cineálta</i></div>

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

Context

Scoil Bhríde is a co-educational primary school located in Killane, Edenderry, Co. Offaly. It is under the patronage of the Catholic Bishop of Kildare and Leighlin. Staffing comprised of an administrative principal and deputy principal, twenty-one mainstream class teachers, six special class teachers and thirteen special education teachers, one of whom was shared with another school. It had a home-school-community liaison (HSCL) coordinator and participated in the School Completion Programme (SCP). At the time of the evaluation, there were 480 pupils enrolled in the school.

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.

Learning outcomes and experiences

The quality of learning outcomes and experiences was very good.

Strengths

- Pupils demonstrated very high levels of engagement and enjoyment in lessons and school activities. Teachers created positive supportive learning environments and experiences that enhanced pupils' learning and strengthened their sense of belonging within the school community. Positive teacher-pupil relationships fostered a safe and supportive environment. Teachers communicated high expectations for pupils' learning and behaviour. Active learning methodologies contributed to positive learning experiences and the successful attainment of learner outcomes.
- The promotion of pupil wellbeing was at the core of the school's vision and was supported by strong leadership and high-quality teaching and learning. School staff demonstrated a very good understanding of the strengths and challenges within the school community. School leadership teams across a range of areas demonstrated a commitment to identifying and providing targeted supports to prioritised pupils. Teacher professional learning completed by teachers supported and enhanced the implementation of programmes of learning and initiatives.
- Parents reported that teachers knew their children very well and that school staff provided valuable support and assistance to pupils and their families. Whole school approaches to learning resulted in comprehensive and tailored approaches to teaching and the promotion of wellbeing which ensured that all pupils were supported to achieve their potential. Parents recognised that their children learned through play. They reported that school staff provided a very high level of care and taught children to deal with their emotions, be responsible and learn life skills. Pupils reported that they felt safe in school and indicated that there was a trusted adult in the school that they could go to if they had an issue or a problem.

Areas for action

- DEIS priorities in literacy and numeracy should maintain a consistent focus on teaching and learning. They should be reflected more clearly in teachers' preparation and teaching and in the school environment. The school community, including pupils and parents, should have a shared understanding of key priorities in the DEIS action plan across all themes.

Attendance

The quality of the school's action-planning process to improve attendance was very good.

Strengths

- School leadership has very successfully achieved improvements in overall attendance and in attendance for prioritised pupils. High expectations for attendance were communicated through assemblies, newsletters, school information screens and at parent-teacher meetings. School teachers and leaders greeted pupils on arrival, reinforcing that school is a welcoming, safe environment. A significant number of pupils attended breakfast club on a daily basis. Initiatives such as the breakfast club and homework club encouraged good attendance and intrinsically motivated pupils to attend school.
- All teachers were trained in nurture approaches as a preventive measure to support school attendance and wellbeing. The school embedded a strong culture of nurture in practice through its sunshine start initiative and the use of the nurture room to provide targeted supports. Pupils participated in a range of activities which focused on easing their transition into the school day. This resulted in significant improvements in attendance for prioritised pupils. Parents reported that school staff had a very good understanding of why pupils might find school attendance a challenge. School leaders demonstrated a deep understanding of family needs and worked collaboratively and creatively to remove barriers to attendance. Individualised supports were in place for reluctant school attenders and their families with evidence of considerable success.
- An attendance team comprising of school leaders, teachers, special education teachers and special class teachers has been recently established. Class teachers had ready access to attendance data at each tier and demonstrated a very good understanding of attendance patterns of their class. Late arrivals and early leavers were recorded and attendance and punctuality were documented on pupils' report cards. Regular monitoring ensured timely interventions and supports for pupils at risk of poor attendance. Strengths-based approaches communicated that every day is a new school day, fostering resilience and positive engagement. Attendance updates were provided at every Board of Management meeting.

Areas for action

- School leaders should consider developing a whole-school approach to starting each day by supporting emotional regulation and pupils' readiness to learn.
- The principal and HSCL met regularly to review school attendance. Existing practices to monitor attendance should be strengthened and shared in writing with teachers to ensure the consistent implementation of agreed whole-school approaches to monitor attendance. Class teachers should report on emerging patterns on attendance in their class formally on a regular basis.

Literacy

The quality of the school's action-planning process to improve literacy was very good.

Strengths

- Teaching approaches to support literacy learning included the prioritising of early intervention and team-teaching approaches to provide universal and targeted supports. Teachers identified pupils' strengths and needs and used evidence informed programmes to support literacy and numeracy learning and the development of social, emotional, communication and life skills.
- Very effective collaborative practices between mainstream class teachers and special education teachers ensured that pupils with the greatest needs received targeted support. They established flexible, differentiated learning groups which enabled all pupils to experience success. Integrated approaches to developing literacy skills used evidence-based interventions to develop reading skills, vocabulary and word study skills. These approaches were implemented consistently and impacted very positively on pupils' ability to read. Ongoing assessments developed a culture of improvement in teaching and learning and ensured that all pupils worked and made progress in literacy. As pupils moved through

the school there was evidence of a significant reduction of the withdrawal of pupils for targeted support.

- DEIS action planning successfully focused on promoting an interest in and love for reading. Whole-school actions and initiatives included teacher-led reading sessions, exposure to books, the use of school library, structured discussion of picture books and daily reading opportunities resulted in positive shifts in attitudes to reading both in school and at home. Pupils used digital technology to support their reading comprehension. The recent introduction of an outdoor swap library for pupils and adults promoted an awareness of the importance of reading throughout the school community. Pupils reported that they recognised the importance of reading as a life skill.

Areas for action

- While parents were provided with updates on literacy and attendance initiatives these updates should reflect the targets in the DEIS action plan.
- Mainstream class teachers should document pupils' progress in literacy learning and across the curriculum and support them to take responsibility for improving their work through the provision of constructive oral and written feedback. Pupils should be encouraged to take personal responsibility for improving their work by noting and implementing teachers' feedback.

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 of the school's provision of each area.

Level	Description	Examples of descriptive terms
Excellent	Provision that is excellent is exemplary in meeting the needs of learners. This provision provides an example for other schools and settings of exceptionally high standards of provision.	Excellent; exemplary; outstanding; exceptionally high standard; with very significant strengths
Very good	Provision that is very good is very effective in meeting the needs of learners and is of a very high standard. There is potential to build on existing strengths to achieve an excellent standard.	Very good; of a very high quality; very effective practice; highly commendable; very successful
Good	Provision that is good is effective in meeting the needs of learners. There is need to build on existing strengths in order to address the aspects to be developed and achieve a very good standard.	Good; of good quality; effective practice; competent; useful; commendable; good standard; strengths outweigh the shortcomings; appropriate provision although some possibilities for improvement exist
Requires improvement to achieve a good standard	Provision that requires improvement to achieve a good standard is not sufficiently effective in meeting the needs of learners. There is need to address certain deficiencies without delay in order to ensure that provision is good or better.	Fair; less than effective; less than sufficient; evident weaknesses that are impacting on learning; experiencing difficulty; shortcomings outweigh strengths; must improve in specified areas; action required to improve.
Requires significant improvement to achieve a good standard	Provision that requires significant improvement to achieve a good standard is not meeting the needs of learners. There is immediate need for significant action to address the areas of concern.	Weak; poor; ineffective; insufficient; unacceptable; experiencing significant difficulties; serious deficiencies in the areas evaluated; requiring significant change, development and improvement to be effective

Appendix

SCHOOL RESPONSE TO THE REPORT

Submitted by the Board of Management

Area 1 Observations on the content of the inspection report

The Board of Management of Scoil Bhríde PS welcomes the findings of the recent evaluation. The report affirms the school's strong commitment to fostering a positive, inclusive, and wellbeing-focused learning environment. We are particularly pleased with the recognition of the highly effective approaches to improving attendance, including nurture-based practices, breakfast and homework clubs, and targeted supports for prioritised pupils. The evaluation also highlights the very good quality of literacy provision, noting early intervention, team-teaching, evidence-informed programmes, and collaborative support from special education staff, all of which have had a positive impact on pupils' reading skills and engagement. The quality of teaching and learning is commended, along with meaningful collaboration among staff, parents, and pupils in driving school improvement. The report also recognises the school's nurturing culture, promotion of pupil voice, and strong focus on wellbeing as significant strengths. The Board is committed to sustaining and further enhancing these very good practices to ensure all pupils continue to thrive

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 acknowledges the advised actions regarding the development of a whole-school approach to support pupils' emotional regulation, readiness to learn, and the monitoring of attendance. The Board is pleased to note that the principal and HSCL meet regularly to review attendance and that existing practices are being strengthened. It is welcomed that these procedures will be shared in writing with teachers to ensure consistent implementation across the school.

The Board also acknowledges the importance of regular reporting by class teachers on emerging attendance patterns, and that updates provided to parents will reflect the targets outlined in the DEIS action plan. Furthermore, the Board notes the emphasis on documenting pupils' progress in literacy and across the curriculum and on supporting pupils to take personal responsibility for their learning through constructive oral and written feedback. These initiatives are valued as important steps in fostering pupils' engagement, self-regulation, and active participation in their own learning.