An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna
Department of Education and Skills

Curriculum Evaluation
Geography

REPORT

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<tr>
<th>Ainm na scoile / School name</th>
<th>Scoil Chorp Chríost</th>
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<tr>
<td>Seoladh na scoile / School address</td>
<td>Knockanure</td>
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<td>Moyvane</td>
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<td>Co Kerry</td>
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<td>Uimhir rolla / Roll number</td>
<td>10775S</td>
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Date of inspection: 25-04-2018
WHAT IS A CURRICULUM EVALUATION?
Curriculum Evaluations report on the quality of teaching and learning in specific subjects of the Primary School Curriculum (1999). 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 evaluated learning and teaching in Geography under the following headings:
1. Quality of pupils’ learning
2. Supporting pupils’ learning through learner experiences and teachers’ practice
3. The effectiveness of school planning, including SSE, in progressing pupils’ learning

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.

The school met the requirements in relation to each of the checks above.
Schoil Chorp Chríost, Knockanure is a mainstream co-educational school under the patronage of the Catholic Bishop of Kerry. The school has a staff of four mainstream teachers and a special educational needs teacher. At the time of the evaluation, there were 82 pupils enrolled.

SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

FINDINGS
- Pupils’ overall attainment in Geography is of a very high standard and their geographic knowledge and skills are developed incrementally as they progress through the school.
- Very high quality learning experiences are provided for the pupils; further exploration of the immediate school environment and locality would enhance pupils’ skills development.
- The quality of teaching observed was very good and care is taken to ensure that pupils of varying abilities are suitably supported in their learning.
- The quality of teachers’ collective practice is highly praised; professional, collaborative review of teaching and learning practices has contributed significantly to the very high quality learning outcomes of the pupils.
- School planning and school self-evaluation processes are of a high standard and are effectively utilised to progress pupils’ learning.

RECOMMENDATIONS
- Increased opportunities for pupils to develop their geographical investigation skills should be provided through the investigation and exploration of the immediate school environment and locality.

DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. THE QUALITY OF PUPILS’ LEARNING
Pupils’ overall attainment in Geography is of a very high standard and their geographic knowledge and skills are developed incrementally as they progress through the school. Pupils have undertaken a number of high quality research projects and they display a very good ability to use information and communications technology to develop their research and information retrieval skills. They demonstrate an admirable ability to recall their learning using appropriate language and geographical terminology. Pupils have developed appropriate attitudes and dispositions set out in the curriculum for their class level and they see Geography as relevant to their lives. They understand the essential character of different places, from their home and locality to a range of human and natural environments in county, national and international contexts. The quality of their written work is highly commendable. They record their learning through the use of maps, plans, diagrams, descriptions and models and they apply their geographical learning with confidence to
other areas of the curriculum. Their active participation in the Green Schools Programme has impacted very positively on their awareness of environmental issues and their responsibility and role in conserving the Earth’s natural resources. Appropriate focus is placed on skills and concept development and as a result, the pupils have a very good sense of place and space, use maps and globes very effectively and many of their geographical investigation skills are successfully developed.

2. SUPPORTING PUPILS’ LEARNING: LEARNER EXPERIENCES AND TEACHERS’ PRACTICE
Very high quality learning experiences are provided for the pupils. Learning settings are safe and stimulating and attractive visual displays in the classrooms support and celebrate pupils’ work. The teaching-learning environment is characterised by enjoyment, ownership of, and engagement in learning and mutual respect between the teacher and pupils. In the course of a focus-group interview, pupils spoke eloquently and highly of the wide range of learning activities they had engaged in and of the enjoyment they derive from their lessons. The provision of increased opportunities for pupils to develop their geographical investigation skills through the investigation and exploration of the immediate school environment and locality is advised.

Very good teaching was observed in the course of the evaluation. Teachers have high, but realistic expectations of pupils. Learners of varying abilities are suitably supported to engage in activities and their efforts and achievements are affirmed. Lesson content is relevant to the pupils’ interests, environment and life experiences. Intended learning outcomes are clearly stated, supportive resources are effectively used and teaching is both focused and stimulating. Teachers prepare very well for their lessons and a very wide range of approaches and methodologies is suitably employed to motivate and engage pupils in active learning activities.

Assessment approaches employed are highly commended. Teacher designed tests, quizzes, project work, portfolios and pupils’ written work are successfully used to track and record pupil progress. Pupil self-assessment strategies are promoted in some classes and this practice is highly praised.

The quality of teachers’ collective practice is highly commended. During staff meetings, teachers plan collaboratively and engage in professional dialogue to ensure that pupils are provided with high quality learning experiences. The professional, collaborative review of teaching and learning practices has contributed significantly to the high quality learning outcomes of the pupils.

3. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF SCHOOL PLANNING, INCLUDING SSE, IN PROGRESSING PUPILS’ LEARNING
School planning and school self-evaluation processes are effectively utilised to progress pupils’ learning. The whole-school Geography plan reflects the school context and provides useful guidance to teachers in the drafting of long and short-term plans.

The school’s previous engagement in improvement initiatives has impacted positively on pupil learning outcomes and experiences. The principal successfully promotes a culture of collaborative practice which focuses on ensuring very high quality provision for pupils and a culture of continuous improvement.
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.

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<th>Level</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<td>Very Good</td>
<td><strong>Very good</strong> 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.</td>
<td>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</td>
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<td>Good</td>
<td><strong>Good</strong> 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.</td>
<td>Good; good quality; valuable; effective practice; competent; useful; commendable; good standard; some areas for improvement</td>
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<td>Satisfactory</td>
<td><strong>Satisfactory</strong> 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.</td>
<td>Satisfactory; adequate; appropriate provision although some possibilities for improvement exist; acceptable level of quality; improvement needed in some areas</td>
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<td>Fair</td>
<td><strong>Fair</strong> 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.</td>
<td>Fair; evident weaknesses that are impacting on pupils’ learning; less than satisfactory; experiencing difficulty; must improve in specified areas; action required to improve</td>
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<td>Weak</td>
<td><strong>Weak</strong> 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.</td>
<td>Weak; unsatisfactory; insufficient; ineffective; poor; requiring significant change, development or improvement; experiencing significant difficulties;</td>
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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 Chorp Chríost Knockanure would like to acknowledge receipt of the Curriculum Evaluation in Geography. We welcome the findings regarding the high quality of teaching and learning in our school and take great pride in the fact that pupils overall attainment in Geography is of a very high standard.

It is very encouraging to hear that the teaching - learning environment is characterised by enjoyment and positive engagement in learning and mutual respect between the teachers and pupils. This is a very positive endorsement of our school motto "Ní Neart Go Cur Le Chéile".

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 findings and recommendations have been noted and will be used to further enhance the teaching and learning opportunities in this school.

We intend to increase our use of our immediate and local school environment.

We have just initiated the process of developing a school garden.