

An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna
Department of Education and Skills

Curriculum Evaluation
Mathematics

REPORT

Ainm na scoile / School name	St Patricks Girls Ns
Seoladh na scoile / School address	Cambridge Road Dublin 4
Uimhir rolla / Roll number	15253N

Date of inspection: 16-11-2018



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

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(s) evaluated learning and teaching in [Subject] 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 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.

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

Curriculum Evaluation

Date of inspection	16-11-2018
Inspection activities undertaken <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Discussion with principal and teachers• Review of relevant documents• Pupil focus-group interview	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Observation of teaching and learning• Examination of pupils' work• Interaction with pupils• Feedback to principal and teachers

SCHOOL CONTEXT

St. Patrick's National is an urban primary school under the patronage of the Catholic Archbishop of Dublin. It caters for 174 girls in 8 mainstream classes from junior infants to sixth class. The school participates in Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools (DEIS), the action plan of the Department of Education and Skills for education inclusion.

SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

FINDINGS

- The overall quality of pupils' learning achievements in Mathematics is very good.
- Very high quality learning experiences are provided for pupils and they demonstrate very high levels of participation and enjoyment in Mathematics.
- Leadership is highly commended for creating a culture of collaboration and creativity in teaching and learning with a continuous focus on improvement in Mathematics.
- The overall quality of teaching is of a very high standard.
- Teachers support pupils in Mathematics very effectively and assessment data is used to ensure that programmes of learning are differentiated to support and challenge pupils.
- While school planning, including school self-evaluation (SSE) and DEIS planning, is very good, there is scope to further refine target-setting for improvement in Mathematics.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- The school should refine its approach to setting targets for improvement in Mathematics with a stronger focus on learner outcomes.

DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. THE QUALITY OF PUPILS' LEARNING

The overall quality of pupils' learning achievements in Mathematics is very good. During lessons observed, pupils demonstrated very high levels of participation and enjoyment in Mathematics. Pupils work well independently and are provided with opportunities to work collaboratively. Most pupils show very good conceptual understanding and procedural fluency. They understand and use appropriate mathematical language and are able to communicate their understanding and ideas with their teachers and their peers. During the focus group discussion with pupils, conducted as part of the evaluation, almost all pupils spoke positively about Mathematics. They highlighted certain parts of lessons that they particularly enjoy, including talking about their ideas, group work, playing games and succeeding on tasks that are challenging.

2. SUPPORTING PUPILS' LEARNING: LEARNER EXPERIENCES AND TEACHERS' PRACTICE

Pupils are provided with opportunities to engage in a very good range of learning experiences. The school proactively engages with organisations within the community to promote Mathematics, to facilitate pupils in developing skills and attitudes for lifelong learning and to enhance their learning experiences. Mathematical visual displays are a feature in all learning settings and pupils have access to and utilise carefully selected resources including manipulatives, games, trails and information and communications technology (ICT). Of particular note are the exemplary mathematical supports throughout the recreational areas of the school.

The overall quality of teaching is of a very high standard. Teachers are commended for creating secure and respectful learning environments for pupils, where all suggestions are valued and pupils are motivated to engage in challenging tasks. Mathematical language is explicitly taught and displayed in all settings. Where exemplary practice was observed, it included clear learning outcomes, a variety of methodologies to promote pupil-led discussions, co-operative tasks and activity-based learning. During such lessons teachers checked on pupils' understanding, challenged pupils to justify their answers and differentiated teaching appropriately.

Pupils who need additional supports receive skilled and focused assistance through very effective differentiation in support and mainstream settings. Initiatives to improve numeracy include Ready, Set, Go Maths, explicit teaching of problem-solving strategies and Maths Recovery. The home-school-community liaison teacher plays a vital role in co-ordinating a very effective partnership between home and school. Classes and resource packs are provided for parents and guardians which enables them to promote learning at home and to facilitate pupils' learning during Mathematics and Science events throughout the year.

Teachers use assessment data very effectively to inform their practice and to ensure that programmes of learning are differentiated to support and challenge pupils. Standardised test results are analysed at whole-school level and this analysis is used in planning for school improvement. Further consideration should be given to interpreting the data to establish trends and patterns in pupil attainment over a period of time, this information would be valuable in setting more specific targets in the school's DEIS plan.

3. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF SCHOOL PLANNING, INCLUDING SSE, IN PROGRESSING PUPILS' LEARNING

Whole-school planning for Mathematics, including school self-evaluation (SSE) and DEIS planning is very good. The whole-school plan provides clear guidance to teachers on delivering the programmes in Mathematics to all classes. Curriculum leadership is highly commended for creating a culture of collaboration and creativity in teaching and learning with a continuous focus on improvement in Mathematics. The school has been very successful in implementing a range of interventions, differentiated programmes and embedding key strategies to improve numeracy throughout the school. Further consideration should be given to refining the school's approach to setting targets for improvement with a stronger focus on learner outcomes and ensuring that all targets are specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and time-bound.

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 welcomes the findings of the inspection report and, in particular, its affirmation of the quality of teaching and learning experiences observed in the school.

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 school will address the recommendation to refine its approach to setting targets for improvement, with a stronger focus on learner outcomes, as part of its review of Mathematics within the S.S.E. process.

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	Example of descriptive terms
Very Good	Very good 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.	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
Good	Good 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
Satisfactory	Satisfactory 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
Fair	Fair 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
Weak	Weak 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;