

An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna
Department of Education and Skills

Curriculum Evaluation
Mathematics

REPORT

Ainm na scoile / School name	An Bhreac Chluain B
Seoladh na scoile / School address	Annascaul Tralee Co Kerry
Uimhir rolla / Roll number	162170

Date of inspection: 06-02-2020



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agus Scileanna**
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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 Mathematics 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	06-02-2020
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, deputy principal and teachers

SCHOOL CONTEXT

Scoil Bhreac Chluain is a Catholic, mainstream primary school situated in the village of Annascaul. It has a staffing of four mainstream teachers and two special education teachers (SETs). There are 103 pupils enrolled in the school.

SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

FINDINGS

- The quality of pupils' learning is very good across all strands of the Mathematics curriculum.
- The quality of pupils' learning experiences and teachers' practice is very good.
- Pupils with additional learning needs are very well supported and are making good progress in their learning.
- The school engages in robust assessment practices but there is some scope to use available assessment data to organise increased interventions in the infant classes and to extend the learning of those pupils with exceptional abilities.
- The effectiveness of school planning, including school self-evaluation (SSE), in progressing pupils' learning is of a very high standard.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- The school should use the wide range of assessment data available to inform interventions to a greater extent allowing, where appropriate, for the deployment of SETs to support the learning of those pupils who demonstrate exceptional abilities in Mathematics and to organise increased early intervention initiatives.

DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. THE QUALITY OF PUPILS' LEARNING

- The quality of pupils' learning is very good across all strands of the Mathematics curriculum. Pupils have very positive attitudes towards their learning and were highly engaged, suitably challenged and active participants in lessons observed. Their estimation skills are very well developed and they select appropriate strategies to solve complex problems. They recall mathematical facts quickly and accurately and apply algebraic formulae with confidence. Pupils have been provided with ample opportunities to collect, represent, analyse and skilfully interpret data. They display a commendable ability to communicate their findings clearly and succinctly. Pupils use appropriate mathematical vocabulary to explain their thoughts and reflect on their understanding. Pupils show maturity and a strong sense of ownership for their own learning. There is a willingness to try questions that are more difficult. The majority of pupils

have a solid understanding of their own strengths and they respond positively to suggestions to improve their work. The pupils display a commendable ability to apply mathematics to other areas of learning. Through engagement in cookery lessons, they recall and apply measurements to determine weight, time, capacity and length. In engaging with ordinance survey maps they estimate distance. In representing the rainfall for February they construct bar graphs. The further engagement of pupils in discussions which further develop their abilities to express their thinking and to predict, justify and verify their solutions is advised.

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

- The quality of pupils' learning experiences and teachers' practice is very good. Pupils, in the course of a focus-group interview, spoke of the many ways in which they are facilitated to learn Mathematics and to apply their learning. Maths week, maths trails, cookery lessons, the very effective integration of Mathematics with other subject areas and group and paired work were cited as examples of practice. The school is very well resourced with a wide range of mathematical equipment and pupils recalled the use of trundle wheels, graduated cylinders, calculators and stopwatches as part of lessons. These resources are used purposefully to scaffold and extend pupil learning.
- The quality of teaching is very good with many exemplary lessons observed. Teachers display particularly strong subject knowledge and an enthusiasm for Mathematics. They engaged pupils in a range of challenging activities and selected appropriate materials to support their learning. Teachers are careful to ensure that Mathematics is perceived by learners as being practical and relevant to real life. Clear reference is made to previous learning with introductory activities that revisit previously taught topics. Mental mathematics activities featured in all lessons allowing pupils to apply their number skills. Teachers revise concepts and skills before exploring new material. Great care is taken to progress pupils' conceptual knowledge prior to engaging in representational and abstract formats of Mathematics.
- Pupils with additional learning needs are very well supported through a combination of team, parallel and station teaching approaches and through the withdrawal of groups of pupils for targeted support. Very high quality teaching has ensured that these pupils are making good progress in their learning commensurate with their abilities.
- The school engages in robust assessment practices and each teacher has a clear understanding of the particular learning needs of individual pupils. Data, including results of standardised and diagnostic tests is very effectively used to baseline pupils' current levels of performance, plan interventions and to report on progress. The school is advised to make greater use of this data to inform planned interventions. This should allow for the deployment of support personnel to support the learning of those pupils who demonstrate exceptional abilities in Mathematics and to organise increased early intervention initiatives in the infant classes.

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

- The effectiveness of school planning, including SSE, in progression pupils' learning is very good. Self-evaluation procedures are very well established in the school and collectively teachers are committed to progressing whole-school priorities for improving standards and provision. Staff meetings have a commendable focus on reflecting on and improving curriculum delivery. Previous school improvement plans, addressing the development of pupils' problem-solving skills, have been evaluated and found to have impacted positively on pupil learning outcomes.

- A bespoke whole-school Mathematics plan places very appropriate emphasis on ensuring whole-school approaches to teaching and is highly reflective of the principals of the *Primary School Curriculum*. Teachers' planning and practice indicates that there is a commitment to the effective implementation of agreed approaches and principles.
- Teachers have engaged with a wide range of continuous professional opportunities to support the effective delivery of the Mathematics curriculum. They share their learning and expertise and effectively implement new teaching practise, methodologies and technologies to engage and inspire pupils.

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;

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 welcomes the affirmation of the high quality of teaching and learning observed in our school. The Board notes with satisfaction the many positive comments.

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 Board is committed to continuing to support the staff in sourcing and using more diagnostic tests in Mathematics and in the deployment of the SET team to support children of all abilities in the area of Mathematics