An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna
Department of Education and Skills

Curriculum Evaluation

History

REPORT

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<tr>
<th>Ainm na scoile / School name</th>
<th>Templetuohy National School</th>
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<tr>
<td>Seoladh na scoile / School address</td>
<td>Templetuohy</td>
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<td>Thurles</td>
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<td>County Tipperary</td>
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<td>Uimhir rolla / Roll number</td>
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Date of inspection: 14-11-2017
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 History 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.
Curriculum Evaluation

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Date of inspection</th>
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| Inspection activities undertaken | • Observation of teaching and learning  
• Examination of pupils’ work  
• Interaction with pupils  
• Feedback to principal |

SCHOOL CONTEXT
Templetuohy National School is a co-educational school situated in Templetuohy, County Tipperary. The school operates under the patronage of the Catholic Archdiocese of Cashel and Emly. The staff consists of three mainstream teachers and three special education teachers. At the time of the evaluation, there were fifty-five pupils enrolled.

SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

FINDINGS
• The quality of pupils’ learning in History is good, overall; pupils’ knowledge of their local History requires further development.
• Pupils engage in very high-quality learner experiences in History.
• Teachers’ practice in the teaching of History is highly commendable.
• A wide range of assessment strategies, including pupil-led assessment, is used to determine and improve pupils’ learning in History.
• Whole-school planning for History provides very effective guidelines for teaching and learning in the subject.

RECOMMENDATIONS
• To further develop pupils’ knowledge of their local History, the whole-school local history plan should be implemented more effectively at classroom level; to support this process, the use of local historical trails should be enhanced.

DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. THE QUALITY OF PUPILS’ LEARNING
The overall quality of pupils’ learning in History is good. Pupils were observed in all lessons to be engaged enthusiastically in their learning. Pupils in the focus-group interview stated that learning in History is fun in their school. The learning outcomes from the lessons observed were of a high quality, overall. Pupils could apply their learning in the subject confidently across a wide range of curricular strands and concepts.

In their interactions with the inspector, pupils demonstrated a very good understanding of the concept of time and chronology in relation to History. Pupils had a good knowledge of story and could recall confidently a range of myths and legends. In middle and senior classes, pupils could apply the skill of cause and effect very successfully across concepts in History. Pupils’ copies and project work provided evidence of their engagement with a broad and balanced range of concepts in the subject. Commendably, many of these concepts were explored at a cross-curricular level. To build on this good practice, a stronger emphasis should be placed on pupils exploring the local
history strand of the curriculum. This process should be guided by the high-quality, whole-school local History plan which has been devised to support this development. It is praiseworthy that, in senior classes, pupils could synthesise their learning in History effectively through oral discussion and concept mapping.

2. SUPPORTING PUPILS’ LEARNING: LEARNER EXPERIENCES AND TEACHERS’ PRACTICE
The quality of the learner experiences in History is very good, overall. In the focus-group interview, pupils outlined that they enjoy their learning through engaging in a wide range of experiences, including historical games, quizzes, interviews, fun worksheets and the use of information and communications technology (ICT). In the lessons observed, pupils were supported in engaging as historians both independently and collaboratively through the exploration of artefacts, primary and secondary evidence sources and through challenging teacher-designed tasks. It is praiseworthy that pupils are also supported in developing the discrete vocabulary of historical concepts.

Pupils’ learning in History is displayed attractively in classrooms and at a whole-school level. The wider school environment is also used to promote an appreciation of the subject through murals, historical displays and through a museum for local historical artefacts. Pupils in the focus-group interview highlighted the strong links between the school and the local historical society as a reason for their enjoyment of the subject. Local historians visit the school occasionally to share their expertise with the pupils. These links with the local community should be further extended through the use of local historical trails. In a few settings, pupils were supported in developing empathy with historical characters through the use of role play. This highly effective practice should be further developed at whole-school level.

The quality of the teaching of History is very good, overall. Teachers plan very effectively for high-quality learning outcomes for pupils across most curricular strands for the subject. Learning objectives for lessons were clear and most teachers shared the learning intentions with the pupils. Teachers support pupils’ engagement in History through a wide range of approaches, including talk and discussion, use of oral evidence, surveys, collaborative group work, investigation and problem-solving activities. Historical timelines are displayed in the majority of settings. It is highly commendable that, to maximise pupils’ learning in the subject, teachers differentiate the learning in History through oral questioning and teacher-designed tasks.

Pupils’ learning in History is evaluated effectively through a wide range of assessment strategies. These include teacher questioning, teacher-designed tasks and tests, curriculum portfolios, end-of-term summative assessments and through the use of photographic evidence. The use of pupil-designed quizzes to support pupils in assessing their own learning in the subject is highly commendable. To further build on this good practice, teachers should assess pupils learning across a wider range of curricular strands. The development of assessment checklists and rubrics for project work would support pupils more effectively in middle and senior classes in reflecting on their learning in History.

3. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF SCHOOL PLANNING, INCLUDING SSE, IN PROGRESSING PUPILS’ LEARNING
The overall quality of whole-school planning for History is very good. The principal uses her expertise in History to lead the subject very effectively in the school. The whole-school plan for History was recently reviewed on a collaborative basis. This plan provides very effective guidance to teaching staff on the implementation of all curricular strands. Teachers have planned collaboratively to provide breadth and balance across curricular concepts and to avoid overlap. A
good emphasis is also placed on the teaching of historical skills. Commendably, the whole-school plan in History is linked very effectively with the guided reading initiative in literacy.

It is noteworthy that strong links have been established between local historical documents and the majority of the curricular strands in the whole-school plan for History. It is praiseworthy also that, to guide teachers’ individual planning, a high-quality, whole-school local history plan has been devised. Teachers should engage more effectively in the use of this plan to guide their individual planning and practice at classroom level.

4. CHILD PROTECTION

The following aspects of the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools were checked during the evaluation:

1. Teachers’ access to a copy of the school’s child protection policy
2. The prominent display of the name of Designated Liaison Person near the main entrance

The school was fully compliant with both aspects.
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 of Templetuohy National School welcomes the many positive findings contained in this curriculum evaluation report. We are pleased that the inspection report has affirmed the high quality of pupil learning experiences, while also recognising that the children are very confident in their ability to work as historians. The Board of Management recognises that the report is a true reflection of the high quality of teaching and learning in our 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 Board recognises that while the quality of assessment is very good and that teachers use very effective assessment strategies, the teaching staff will now endeavour to develop and extend the range of assessment being used in the classrooms by developing checklists and rubrics for their project work. The teachers are also in the process of developing local school trails to support the learning of the highly complimented local history plan.
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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<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Example of descriptive terms</th>
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<tr>
<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 <strong>outstanding</strong> 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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