An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna
Department of Education and Skills

Curriculum Evaluation
Physical Education

REPORT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aínm na scoile / School name</th>
<th>Scoil Náisiúnta Naomh Ceitheach</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Seoladh na scoile / School address</td>
<td>Runamoat County Roscommon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uimhir rolla / Roll number</td>
<td>16815L</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Date of inspection: 29-11-2018
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(s) evaluated learning and teaching in Physical Education 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  29-11-2018

Inspection activities undertaken
- Discussion with principal and teachers
- Review of relevant documents
- Pupil focus-group interview
- Observation of teaching and learning
- Examination of pupils’ work
- Interaction with pupils
- Feedback to principal and teachers

SCHOOL CONTEXT
Scoll Náisiúnta Naomh Ceitheach is a co-educational primary school located in Ballymacurley, approximately ten kilometres from Roscommon town. It caters for pupils from junior infants to sixth class and is under the patronage of the Catholic Bishop of Elphin. There are two mainstream teachers and one special education teacher (SET) on staff currently. A part-time SET, based in another school, provides additional support to some pupils. At the time of the evaluation, there were thirty-seven pupils enrolled.

SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

FINDINGS
- The overall quality of learning in Physical Education (PE) is commendable; there is a need to develop learning further across certain strands of the curriculum.
- The learner experiences are good; however, the time allocated to tuition by external coaches for some strands of the curriculum is excessive.
- Teaching observed in PE was of a very high standard.
- The quality of assessment is good; there is scope to develop pupils’ self-assessment.
- Whole-school planning guides teaching and learning effectively.

RECOMMENDATIONS
- Class teachers should plan and implement a broad and balanced programme in PE, with a particular emphasis on further developing learning in the strands of Gymnastics, Outdoor and adventure activities, and Games.
- The provision of instruction by external coaches should be revised to ensure that the school provides pupils with appropriate time to develop all strands of the PE curriculum, in accordance with the requirements of the Primary School Curriculum.
- Assessment-for-learning approaches should be developed, including peer-assessment and self-assessment, and using information and communications technology (ICT) where possible.
DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. THE QUALITY OF PUPILS’ LEARNING
The overall quality of learning in PE is good. There is scope to develop pupils’ learning further in Gymnastics, and Outdoor and adventure activities, and to a lesser extent in the Games strand.

Pupils in the focus-group interview reported that they like learning new skills and were able to name the various skills developed. They enjoy being active, are enthusiastic about their learning and appreciate the role of physical activity in maintaining good health. They cited examples of involvement in a wide variety of co-curricular activities and sporting activities outside of school. They participate with success in inter-school competitions in camogie, soccer, hurling and football.

Engagement levels in the lessons observed were high. Pupils were able to name the various muscles and body parts. They demonstrated ability to use their body as a means of expression and communication in the strand of Dance. In Athletics, they demonstrated competence in the skills of running and throwing. They displayed their understanding of the use of space, effort and direction in the performance of their actions.

2. SUPPORTING PUPILS’ LEARNING: LEARNER EXPERIENCES AND TEACHERS’ PRACTICE
Pupils’ learning is supported very positively in the school. Respectful interactions were evident as pupils participated purposefully during lessons. The enjoyment of PE is promoted through participation in movement breaks and fun dance activities during the year. The school provides good learner experiences for pupils through initiatives designed to develop team work and promote increased engagement in physical activity.

A number of external coaches provide additional tuition during the school day and throughout the year in different strands of the curriculum, predominantly Games. While some very good learning opportunities are provided for pupils, the time given to such tuition exceeds the allocated weekly time of one hour for PE for pupils. The board of management should review this practice and ensure that there is balanced allocation of time across the different strands of the PE curriculum throughout the year and that the combined tuition time by teachers and external tutors is in line with the guidelines given in the Primary School Curriculum.

There is good integration of PE across a range of subject areas. In Social, Environmental and Scientific Education (SESE), an outside tutor delivered a course in cycle safety skills. In Music, pupils participated in the Peace Proms and they learned dance moves to accompany the songs. School tours have focused, in the main, on participating in outdoor activities.

Teachers display very good subject knowledge of PE. During the lessons observed, they demonstrated highly effective behaviour management skills and ensured maximum participation for all pupils. They used Irish informally and effectively during warm-up activities. Pair work and group work were used very successfully. Teachers responded very well to the individual needs and group needs of pupils. While the quality of the teaching observed was highly commendable, teachers should plan to teach subject-specific vocabulary to enable the pupils to discuss their learning in PE.

Members of staff have undertaken continuing professional development (CPD) courses and new knowledge and skills are shared among the staff members. Teachers’ work provides evidence of a reflective approach. They provide a balance of both competitive and non-competitive activities for the pupils and foster strong links with sporting clubs within the community. PE equipment is labelled and easily accessible for pupils. There is scope to extend the range of equipment available to support
learning across all the strands of the PE curriculum. Currently, the school does not have adequate resources to teach Gymnastics and games such as tennis and badminton.

There is very good assessment of pupils’ learning using the objectives of the curriculum as reference. Going forward, pupils need to develop self-assessment skills and use ICT, where possible, to support them in this regard. Consideration is being given to facilitating the senior pupils in organising PE equipment and resources in the yard during recreation times for use by the junior pupils. This will further develop the leadership, organisational and co-operative skills of the senior pupils.

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

The school planning process is good and the newly drafted school plan for the subject is commendable. To improve on this work, opportunities for greater breadth and balance of experience should be formulated across the curriculum. A two-year plan would facilitate a more balanced programme of work in a school of this size, facilitating the input by external coaches and providing teachers with the time to implement a varied programme covering all of the strands of the PE curriculum. Teachers have reviewed their fortnightly planning template which includes an additional section for individual teacher reflection; this is valuable practice.

The school has identified PE as an area of focus in SSE. The newly appointed principal and school staff have identified areas in need of improvement, which concur with the findings in this report. They will engage in further evidence gathering with the various school partners before preparing a school improvement plan.

The school has very good capacity for improvement.
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 Scoil Naomh Ceitheach accepts the findings of the Curriculum Evaluation in Physical Education. The Board is pleased to note that the overall quality of learning in Physical Education is commendable, that teaching observed in PE was of a very high standard and that whole school planning guides teaching and learning effectively.

We are pleased that the report is a positive endorsement of the inclusive environment provided in our school; in particular, that pupils’ learning is supported very positively in the school and that teachers responded very well to the individual needs and group needs of pupils. With regard to same, teachers provide a balance of competitive and non-competitive activities for the pupils and foster strong links within the Community. The Board confirms the many good practices in existence in our school and is pleased that these were identified.

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 of Management of Scoil Naomh Ceitheach, in conjunction with the staff, welcomes the recommendations contained in the report and we aim to ensure that such recommendations will be acted upon and addressed during this and subsequent school years.

The staff, in consultation with the Board of Management, will ensure that adequate resources to teach the strand of Gymnastics are purchased and the combined tuition time by teachers and external tutors will be reviewed. The implementations of these recommendations will be prioritised as part of both the Whole School Plan and School Self Evaluation 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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Example of descriptive terms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<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>
</tr>
<tr>
<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 <strong>very good</strong> standard.</td>
<td>Good; good quality; valuable; effective practice; competent; useful; commendable; good standard; some areas for improvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<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>
</tr>
<tr>
<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>
</tr>
<tr>
<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>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>