

An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna
Department of Education and Skills

Curriculum Evaluation
Mathematics

REPORT

Ainm na scoile / School name	Boyle Parochial National School
Seoladh na scoile / School address	Boyle Co. Roscommon
Uimhir rolla / Roll number	17329H

Date of inspection: 26-11-2019



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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(s) 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	26-11-2019
Inspection activities undertaken	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Observation of teaching and learning• Examination of pupils' work• Interaction with pupils• Feedback to principal and teachers
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Discussion with principal and teachers• Review of relevant documents• Pupil focus-group interview	

SCHOOL CONTEXT

Boyle Parochial National School is co-educational and caters for pupils from junior infants to sixth class. It is located in the town of Boyle and operates under the patronage of the Church of Ireland Bishop of Kilmore, Elphin and Ardagh. The teaching staff comprises two mainstream class teachers, including the teaching principal, and one special education teacher (SET). There are twenty-six pupils enrolled, of whom more than half are learning English as an additional language (EAL). The overall attendance of pupils is very good.

SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

FINDINGS

- The overall quality of pupils' learning in Mathematics is very good, and the pupils present as highly motivated.
- Highly effective learner experiences are provided.
- The quality of teaching in the lessons observed was very good.
- Assessment is very good; further opportunities to record and share key learning should be explored.
- Relevant whole-school planning and school self-evaluation (SSE) are good; the school plan does not include details of the mathematical language to be taught.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- As the majority of pupils are learning English as an additional language, they should be enabled to record key terminology, facts and concepts in a learning journal to share with parents/guardians.
- The whole-school plan should be amended to provide details of the mathematical language to be taught at each class level in each strand unit of the curriculum.

DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. THE QUALITY OF PUPILS' LEARNING

The overall quality of pupils' learning in Mathematics is very good. They appear motivated and engage enthusiastically in learning tasks and activities. They can recall number facts and understand and use mathematical language correctly when describing their learning. They employ appropriate strategies to solve problems and can explain and justify their solutions. They demonstrate confidently the application of their knowledge to problem solving in areas such as capacity, weight and money. Their understanding of the concepts in the strand *Shape and Space* is very good. Pupils' ability to make meaningful connections with learning in other strands of the curriculum is highly commendable.

Overall, pupils record and present their work neatly in copies and worksheets. Their use of a rough-work column is commendable practice and supports them in solving problems in a sequential manner. Pupils in focus-group discussion displayed very good understanding of the application of Mathematics in everyday life and its relevance to various careers.

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

Highly effective learner experiences are provided for pupils in Mathematics. They have access to relevant mathematical resources, including manipulatives and information and communications technology (ICT). The classroom environments are stimulating and well resourced, providing for the development of mathematical skills and the celebration of pupils' work. Pupils are actively encouraged and motivated to engage independently and collaboratively with mathematical materials and games. In all of the lessons observed, pupils had opportunities to work collaboratively. They used resources, activities and games very effectively and skilfully to consolidate their learning. Their use of ICT to record their learning provided a basis for meaningful discussion at the conclusion of the lesson.

The overall quality of the teaching observed was very good. Teachers give good example in the correct use of mathematical language. Care is taken to build on pupils' previously acquired knowledge. In the lessons observed, teachers' questioning was very good and elicited appropriate responses from pupils. Teachers displayed very good classroom management skills. Lessons were very well structured and stimulating. A range of methodologies was used and learning activities were differentiated very effectively to cater for the range of pupil abilities in the multi-grade setting. Highly respectful interactions were evident among the pupils and between the teachers and pupils in all classrooms.

There is a commendable emphasis on oral mathematics and on the learning of number facts in the school. There is regular revision of topics covered and a particular focus on developing other strands alongside *Number* to ensure breadth and balance in the programme delivered. Pupils are challenged appropriately in accordance with their abilities and interests. Their mathematical skills are integrated and consolidated effectively through cross-curricular activities, most notably *Aistear: the Early Childhood Curriculum Framework*.

Although no pupils receive supplementary teaching in Mathematics at present, consideration should be given to the SET working in the classroom on occasion to support the class teacher in assessing pupils' learning. Overall, assessment is very good in the school. Pupils are tested frequently throughout the year and teachers use this assessment data to re-group pupils and plan accordingly. Senior pupils engage in self-assessment at times, which develops their independence as learners. Teachers monitor pupils' progress in copies and workbooks regularly. The system of recording and tracking pupils' individual progress is clear, useful and easy to interpret and share. As the majority of pupils are learning English as an additional language, pupils should be enabled to record key terminology, facts and concepts in a learning journal that they can share with parents/guardians.

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

The overall quality of school planning, including school self-evaluation, in progressing pupils' learning is good. Teachers work collaboratively and share good practices. The school plan for Mathematics provides useful guidance for teaching and learning. It is recommended that the plan be amended to include details of the mathematical language to be taught at each class level in each strand unit of the curriculum. The school improvement plan for digital learning sets out a plan to further develop the use of digital technologies across all areas of the curriculum, including Mathematics.

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 Boyle Parochial National School welcomes the affirmation of the high quality of teaching and learning in the school. The Board would particularly like to acknowledge the observation of highly respectful interactions among pupils and between teachers and pupils in the school. The Board also acknowledges the observation of highly effective learner experiences in Mathematics, including learning activities which are differentiated very effectively to cater for the range of pupil abilities in the multi-grade setting.

Part B Follow-up actions planned or undertaken since the completion of the inspection activity to implement the findings and recommendations of the inspection.

Boyle Parochial School aims to continue to deliver the high quality of teaching and learning which is evident in the school, with particular emphasis on creating links between school and home to support pupils learning English as an additional language and including mathematical language in the whole-school plan.

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;