Curriculum Evaluation
Drama

REPORT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aínm na scoile / School name</th>
<th>Scoil N Moling-Glynn</th>
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<tr>
<td>Seoladh na scoile / School address</td>
<td>St Mullins Kilkenny</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uimhir rolla / Roll number</td>
<td>17330P</td>
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Date of inspection: 05-12-2017
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 Drama 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

Date of inspection  05-12-2017

<table>
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<th>Inspection activities undertaken</th>
<th>Observation of teaching and learning</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Discussion with principal and teachers</td>
<td>• Examination of pupils’ work</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Review of relevant documents</td>
<td>• Interaction with pupils</td>
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<td>• Pupil focus-group interview</td>
<td>• Feedback to principal and teachers</td>
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SCHOOL CONTEXT

Scoil N Moling-Glynn is a co-educational, primary school under the patronage of the Roman Catholic Bishop of Kildare and Leighlin. It is situated close to the rural village of St Mullins on the Carlow, Kilkenny border. The staff comprises three mainstream class teachers and one teacher who supports pupils with additional educational needs. At the time of the evaluation 54 pupils were enrolled in the school.

SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

FINDINGS

• The quality of outcomes for learners in Drama is good, and pupils participate in learning with enthusiasm, motivation and interest.

• Pupils demonstrate very good facility as makers of Drama; they enter and engage within the fictional context with praiseworthy levels of confidence.

• The overall quality of teaching observed was good, with some very good practice evident; pupils experience Drama in a supportive, encouraging and safe way and commendable use is made of play-based learning, story and free improvisation as gateways to dramatic exploration.

• There were some good examples of assessment for learning through reflection on the Drama that had taken place, and this aspect of provision is worthy of further development.

• The lessons observed were well structured and drew on a very good range of strategies and approaches; the majority of lessons were standalone and did not maximise opportunities for continuity, progression and the deepening of pupils’ learning.

• Whole-school and individual teacher planning is of a high quality, although, there is an absence of specific detail in terms of content and learning experiences for the various class levels.

RECOMMENDATIONS

• In order to deepen pupils’ learning in Drama, learning experiences and topics should be provided in a more sustained way across a number of lessons, and greater use should be made of assessment for learning strategies.

• As the whole-school plan is revised, specific content and learning experiences in Drama at the various class levels should be included.

DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. THE QUALITY OF PUPILS’ LEARNING

The quality of learner outcomes in Drama is good. It is evident that pupils enjoy Drama. They participate in learning with enthusiasm and interest and display high levels of motivation. Pupils
demonstrate very good facility as makers of Drama and exhibit both confidence and co-operation. They engage effectively with the elements of drama and move into the fictional context with belief. Most pupils enter into role with ease and demonstrate good capacity to take on varying roles and some exhibit deepening characterisation. They willingly and confidently explore the imaginary worlds that they create, displaying understanding of place and time. Many take risks comfortably and cope well with problems and tensions within the drama. For some pupils the ability to engage in role for longer periods of time or to enter more deeply into character is more challenging. The provision of opportunities for all pupils to engage with roles and characters over a more sustained period of time, as well as activities that challenge pupils to reflect on and deepen their characters are advised. Pupils in senior classes demonstrate good improvisational skills and many cope well with the natural and comedic genres. Some pupils are inclined to default towards comedy for safety, and explicit focus on improvisation within a particular genre is suggested.

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

The overall quality of the learning experiences provided for pupils is good. Pupils receive regular access to drama lessons and the time allocated is in line with the time provision suggested in the Primary School Curriculum (1999). They experience learning in Drama in a positive, supportive, encouraging and safe way. As well as their engagement with Drama in the curriculum, pupils also experience an extra-curricular programme every second year, resulting in a stage performance.

The overall quality of teaching observed was good, with some very good practices evident. Commendable use was made of play-based learning in the infant classes, story in the middle classes and free improvisation in the senior classes as gateways to dramatic exploration. The lessons observed were well structured and organised and drew on a very good range of strategies and approaches, including mime, visualisation, freeze framing, teaching in role, hot seating, paired role play, group improvisation and structured reflection. The majority of the lessons observed were standalone and were not part of a series of lesson, and therefore did not maximise opportunities for continuity and progression. In order to deepen pupils’ learning, content and topics should be explored in a more sustained way across a number of lessons. While teachers integrate some of the learning in Drama effectively with other subject areas, this practice should be further extended to include the exploration of the fictional contexts provided by class novels, as well as sustained dramatic engagement with topics in History and SPHE.

There were some good examples of assessment through the provision of purposeful opportunities to reflect on the Drama, and through the completion of some checklists. The area of assessment is worthy of further development and opportunities to develop assessment for learning strategies in Drama should be explored.

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

Whole-school and individual teacher planning is of a high quality. All teachers presented very good long and short-term planning in Drama that were focused on pupils’ learning experiences and outcomes. The school reported that it is not currently engaging in the SSE process due to a directive from the teachers’ trade union, and up to the point of the commencement of the directive had not identified Drama as a priority area for self-evaluation. The whole-school plan for Drama was recently reviewed. It sets out the requirements of the Drama curriculum and makes useful suggestions for teachers on drama strategies and approaches for the various class levels. The plan also has a number of useful appendices which act as a menu of activities. Specific content for the class levels however
has not been outlined. As the plan is reviewed and updated, the identification of units of work, learning experiences and definite content to guide pupils’ learning is recommended. The school should also consider investing in some resources for teachers to support the development of learning experiences that result in sustained engagement across a series of lessons.

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 and staff of Scoil Moling-Glynn welcome the positive affirmation of the CEM inspection report. We are pleased that the good quality of teaching and learning was noted and that well-structured and organised lessons which drew on a very good range of strategies and approaches were observed. We were also pleased that it was evident that pupils enjoyed drama and that they participated in learning with enthusiasm, motivation and interest.

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 staff and Board of Management of Scoil Moling-Glynn acknowledge the findings contained in this report. The teaching staff will endeavour to ensure that learning experiences and topics will be provided in a sustained way across a number of lessons. When the whole-school plan for drama is revised, specific content and learning experiences at the various class levels will be included.
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>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Very Good</strong></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><strong>Good</strong></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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<tr>
<td><strong>Satisfactory</strong></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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<tr>
<td><strong>Fair</strong></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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<tr>
<td><strong>Weak</strong></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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