An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna
Department of Education and Skills

Curriculum Evaluation
English

**REPORT**

<table>
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<th>School name</th>
<th>S N Coill An Iarainn</th>
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| School address    | Kilanerin
                  | Gorey
                  | Co Wexford         |
| Roll number       | 17858L               |

**Date of inspection: 04-12-2018**
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 English 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 on the findings and recommendations of the report; the board chose to accept the report without response.

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.
SCHOOL CONTEXT
S N Coill An Iarainn is a vertical, co-educational primary school in the village of Kilanerin, Gorey, Co Wexford. It operates under the patronage of the Roman Catholic Bishop of Ferns. At the time of the evaluation, 172 pupils were enrolled in the school and there were six mainstream teachers and four support teachers, one of which is based in the school.

SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

FINDINGS
- The overall quality of pupils’ learning is good and pupils present as motivated and engaged learners who persist in their learning.
- While the overall quality of teaching is satisfactory, highly effective practice was also observed and there is an over-reliance on text-book style activities.
- Learning experiences for pupils in English are satisfactory, a wide range of learning experiences are provided for pupils and there is a need to further differentiate these experiences for pupils.
- The quality of planning, including school self-evaluation (SSE) is satisfactory, the school plan needs to be revised in order to provide more practical guidance to teachers.
- Warm and positive relationships between pupils and teachers were noted with some very valuable playful interactions also in evidence.

RECOMMENDATIONS
- The school should agree and establish differentiated team-teaching approaches to literacy at each class level and their impact on learning should be systematically monitored and reviewed.
- Teachers should plan and provide skills-based lessons where pupils are given opportunities to purposefully practice and apply their new learning in authentic contexts.
- The school plan should be reviewed in order to delineate whole-school approaches to oral language, reading and writing referencing expected outcomes at each class level.

DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. THE QUALITY OF PUPILS’ LEARNING

The overall quality of pupils’ learning in English is good. In almost all settings pupils present as enthusiastic, motivated and engaged learners. Pupils’ attainment is generally good. During the focus group, conducted as part of the evaluation, almost all pupils indicated that they enjoy English and rank it as one of their favourite subjects.
In oral language, pupils’ vocabulary is well developed. In some classes, pupils exhibit high levels of competence in speaking, while in other settings, pupils have difficulties in maintaining conversations on general topics and in asking relevant questions. Commendably, pupils perform dramas for the community and publish a poetry booklet annually. During the focus group, pupils discussed their interest in reciting and exploring poetry, however, during classroom observations pupils could recite a very limited number of poems. Details of poems to be learned at each class level should be identified, agreed and added to the English school plan and the school should develop a whole-school approach to the development of oral language skills and identify benchmarks for pupil attainment for each class level.

In writing, pupils generally have good handwriting and presentation skills. Pupils demonstrate well developed grammatical and spelling skills and pupils in the early years demonstrate a good understanding of phonics. Pupils know the structure and purpose of a number of writing genres. During the focus group, pupils expressed a keen interest in writing stories and identified it as an area they would like more frequent experience in. It is advised that teachers plan and provide pupils with regular opportunities to apply their grammatical, spelling and phonics skills to independent and collaborative writing experiences.

In reading, pupils read a range of texts, including picture books, class readers and novels. In most settings, pupils were observed reading the same text, irrespective of their ability or interest. In classroom observations, some pupils struggled with comprehension and fluency and others were not sufficiently challenged by the text. The school should prioritise the provision of a differentiated reading programme at each class level to ensure that all pupils are reading at their instructional level and applying their literacy skills to their reading.

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

The quality of learner experiences is satisfactory. Warm positive relationships between pupils and teachers were observed in almost all settings with some very valuable playful interactions also noted. Learning environments are print rich with samples of pupils’ work on display. During the evaluation, pupils were observed persisting in their learning and working effectively on a wide range of independent and collaborative tasks. However, the tasks provided to pupils were not adequately differentiated to reflect the range of abilities in classes. The school currently uses some of its provision for pupils with special educational needs (SEN) to pre-teach work to be completed by the pupils in their mainstream class. This practice should be discontinued and a needs based model, focusing on the needs of the pupil should be established. While there is some in-class support provided there is considerable variance in the frequency and nature of support provided to each class. It is recommended that teachers should agree and establish differentiated team-teaching approaches to literacy at each class level and their impact on learning should be systematically monitored and reviewed.

The overall quality of teacher practice is satisfactory, highly effective practice was also observed. Teachers have very good classroom management and teachers were planned and prepared. Teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge and effectively link previous learning to new learning. Where practice is highly effective teachers have very good pedagogical knowledge and pupils are encouraged to construct their own rules and learning through guided discovery methods. These highly praised practices are worthy of further extension throughout the school. In other settings, it was evident that there is an over-reliance on text-book style activities, with literacy skills being taught in isolation.
This is impacting on the quality of pupils’ learning as some pupils find it difficult to apply this learning effectively when working independently. It is recommended that teachers plan and provide pupils with regular opportunities to purposefully practice and apply their literacy skills to independent and collaborative learning experiences.

The overall quality of assessment is good. The results of standardised tests are used to inform teaching and learning. Pupils’ written work is regularly monitored and in some highly effective classes, formative feedback is given to pupils in their copybooks and pupils are encouraged to re-draft and edit their own work. A wide range of assessment tools including work samples, checklists, pupil portfolios and teacher observation are collected to track pupils’ progress and it is evident that teachers know the pupils’ in their care very well. In order to develop assessment practices further, teachers should include a clear learning intention for lessons in their individual planning which should be shared with pupils at the outset of the lesson and used to track pupils’ progress at the end of the lesson. Learning intentions should be differentiated, when necessary, in order to respond to the range of needs within classes.

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

The quality of school planning including SSE in progressing pupils’ learning is satisfactory. During a previous cycle of SSE the school identified genre writing as an area of focus. While there is evidence of genre writing in all classes, there is considerable variance in its application. In order to increase the impact of SSE on teaching and learning, the school should regularly monitor and evaluate its approach to writing genre in order to ensure its consistent implementation across the school. Future cycles of SSE should prioritise the skill development of teachers and the facilitation of a whole-school shared understanding of collective approaches prior to implementation.

The school has a contextualised school plan for English and it contains some meaningful information on how English should be taught. The school plan should be reviewed in order to delineate whole-school approaches to oral language, reading and writing referencing expected outcomes at each class level. In order to ensure that pupils are achieving these learning outcomes, assessment for and of learning in English should also be addressed in the 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.

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<th>Level</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Example of descriptive terms</th>
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<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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<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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<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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<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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