An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna
Department of Education and Skills

Curriculum Evaluation
English

REPORT

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<tr>
<th>Ainm na scoile / School name</th>
<th>Glenmore National School</th>
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<tr>
<td>Seoladh na scoile / School address</td>
<td>Glenmore Via Waterford, Co. Kilkenny</td>
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<tr>
<td>Uimhir rolla / Roll number</td>
<td>18158L</td>
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Date of Evaluation: 26 January 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 English under the following headings:
1. Quality of pupils’ learning
2. Supporting pupils’ learning through learning 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.
INSPCTION ACTIVITIES DURING THIS INSPECTION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of inspection</th>
<th>26-01-2017</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Inspection activities undertaken</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Discussion with principal and teachers</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Review of relevant documents</td>
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<td>- Pupil focus-group interview</td>
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<td>- Observation of teaching and learning</td>
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<td>- Examination of pupils’ work</td>
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<td>- Interaction with pupils</td>
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<td>- Feedback to principal and teachers</td>
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SCHOOL CONTEXT
Glenmore N.S. is a co-educational primary school with a current staffing of seven teachers, two of whom work in support settings.

SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

FINDINGS

- The quality of pupils’ learning in English is commendable and they enjoy their learning experiences across the strands.
- The teachers competently support pupils’ learning by skilfully employing a variety of methodologies and approaches, including purposeful pair and group work.
- There is very good integration and development of literacy skills across the curriculum.
- There is good questioning of pupils but the full range of comprehension strategies are not employed systematically across the school.
- Overall the quality of school planning in English is good.
- The pupils speak with confidence and enthusiasm and engage meaningfully in discussions.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- A school-wide focus on the development of comprehension skills would further enhance learning across the curriculum.

DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. THE QUALITY OF PUPILS’ LEARNING IN SUBJECT

The quality of pupils’ learning in English is commendable. They enjoy their learning experiences across the strands. Discrete oral language lessons are a feature of the work in all classrooms with talk and discussion used as a central cross-curricular teaching methodology. The pupils speak with confidence and enthusiasm and engage meaningfully in discussions.

The majority of pupils read confidently with appropriate fluency. The school has identified the need to provide more differentiated instruction, through the use of graded readers, and it is anticipated that this approach will begin in the next school year. To support this work, the systematic implementation of structured literacy models such as Literacy Lift Off, is advised. The pupils learn a range of poems and rhymes and enjoy reciting them. There is some good use of novels across the
school and this good work could be further extended to ensure a greater balance between the reading programme and the use of novels.

Within English and across the curriculum pupils are afforded a very stimulating and interesting writing experience. The pupils have learned to edit and refine their writing. Pupils have also developed a good command of grammar, syntax, punctuation and spelling. The whole-school approach to development of pupils’ handwriting skills is yielding very positive results, evident in their work in their copies and on display in the classrooms and corridors.

2. SUPPORTING PUPILS’ LEARNING IN SUBJECT: LEARNING EXPERIENCES AND TEACHERS’ PRACTICE

High quality learning experiences are provided for pupils. The teachers skilfully employ a variety of methodologies to support pupils’ learning, including purposeful group and pair work. Technology is used judiciously to enhance the pupils’ engagement in lessons.

There is good breath and balance in the English programme in the school and pupils are provided with a broad and appropriate learning programme. There is very good integration and development of literacy skills across the curriculum. There is good questioning of pupils but a school-wide focus on the development of comprehension strategies would further enhance learning across the curriculum.

The pupils with particular learning needs have access to regular withdrawal sessions with the support teachers, who are affirming and supportive of them. They engage regularly with the pupils’ parents. Further use of diagnostic tests would support the development of more focused learning targets for the pupils.

Teacher observation is used purposefully in assessing the pupils’ progress in English, along with checklists and weekly testing of spelling. Standardised tests are conducted annually. The teachers also provide constructive feedback in pupils’ copies on the quality of their work. The use of a whole school editing code supports pupils’ skills in self-assessment.

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

Overall, the quality of planning for English is good. Teachers prepare long and short-term plans which guide the work in their classrooms. The school plan provides guidance on the delivery of the three strands. To further support this work it is advised that greater guidance be provided to guide whole-school programmes for the teaching of writing genres, phonics and comprehension strategies.

The school has engaged meaningfully in School Self Evaluation (SSE) and the surveying of pupils and parents clearly indicated that the pupils are confident and positive in regard to their learning in English. The school has continued to develop pupils’ skills in writing across the genres and in handwriting. It is also committed to exposing the pupils to a greater variety of print media.
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 warmly welcomes the content of the recent inspection report in English.

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 school is currently reviewing the whole school plan in English and targeting the area of comprehension.
The school will invest in a graded reading scheme from September 2017 to provide more differentiated instruction. This reading scheme will be built upon over the coming years.
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 the school’s provision of each area.

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<thead>
<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 <em>outstanding</em> 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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