

An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna
Department of Education and Skills

Curriculum Evaluation
English

REPORT

Ainm na scoile / School name	Scoil Eoin
Seoladh na scoile / School address	Greendale Road Dublin 5
Uimhir rolla / Roll number	19935N

Date of inspection: 15-01-2020



**An Roinn Oideachais
agus Scileanna**
Department of
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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 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 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	15-01-2020
Inspection activities undertaken <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Discussion with principal and teachers• Review of relevant documents• Pupil focus-group interview	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Observation of teaching and learning• Examination of pupils' work• Interaction with pupils• Feedback to principal and teachers

SCHOOL CONTEXT

Scoil Eoin is an urban school located in Kilbarrack, Dublin 5 which caters for boys and girls from junior infants to sixth class. The school operates under the patronage of the Archdiocese of Dublin and participates in Band 1 of Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools (DEIS), the action plan of the Department of Education and Skills for educational inclusion. Staffing includes an administrative principal, seven mainstream class teachers, five teachers for pupils with special educational needs (SEN) and a home-school-community liaison (HSCL) coordinator. 142 pupils are currently enrolled in the school.

SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

FINDINGS

- The overall quality of pupils' learning in English is good; pupils demonstrate enjoyment in reading and are confident in their own reading abilities.
- Pupil learning experiences are of a high quality; pupils presented as motivated learners who engaged positively in their learning.
- The overall quality of the observed teaching in English is of a high standard with examples of very good practice evident in a minority of lessons.
- The quality of assessment is satisfactory; assessment information is not being used consistently to inform teaching and learning in both mainstream and special education settings.
- The quality of school planning is good overall; very effective whole-school planning documentation is in place although implementation of agreed practices is at an early stage.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Effective assessment practices should be extended on a whole-school basis to inform teaching and learning and to ensure that all supplementary teaching is aligned to pupils' prioritised learning needs.
- The examples of very good teaching observed during this evaluation should be extended to all teaching; leadership should support and empower teachers in this endeavour and in the endeavour to further implement whole school plans consistently across the school.

DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. THE QUALITY OF PUPILS' LEARNING

The overall quality of pupils' learning in English is good. During the evaluation, pupils presented as motivated learners who engaged positively in learning activities. Effective whole-school approaches are in place to develop pupils' ability to write in a range of genre. Samples of writing across the school demonstrate good application of a structured framework and include appropriate features of

language. Pupils' application of the writing genre to project work in Social Environmental and Scientific Education (SESE) is highly commendable. Penmanship and presentation skills are of a good standard generally and pupils' engagement with the writing process is effective.

Pupils demonstrate a positive disposition towards reading and generally pupils' confidence and competence to read is good. Guided reading is implemented across the school and pupils in the focus group discussion reported how much they enjoy the opportunity to read regularly and for a variety of audiences during the guided reading sessions. The station teaching approach to reading in the junior classes is at an early stage of implementation and should be reviewed to ensure the prioritised learning needs of pupils inform both content and approaches. A structured phonics programme is implemented effectively in the junior and middle classes; a greater focus on the development of phonological awareness skills will optimise the impact on pupils' learning.

Although all lessons observed included a range of good-quality oral language activities, there is scope to further develop pupils' communication skills for a wider range of purposes. Commendably, pupils' effective use of language has been prioritised as a learning need across the school with teachers introducing *Aistear: The Early Childhood Curriculum Framework*, tiered vocabulary and a whole school language plan to support pupils' language development. Continued implementation, careful monitoring and assessment of the impact of these agreed approaches should inform further development of pupils' oral language skills.

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

The quality of learning experiences provided for pupils is of a high standard. Learning environments are print-rich and celebrate pupils' work. Commendably, the majority of English lessons observed during the evaluation were characterised by collaborative learning in which pupils worked together to discuss and negotiate text. However, in a significant minority of observed lessons, tasks provided to pupils were not adequately differentiated to appropriately challenge cohorts of pupils. In reading, pupils are provided with opportunities to engage with a variety of texts and to engage in worthwhile shared and independent reading. Reading material is being closely aligned with the assessed needs of cohorts of pupils through the use of graded readers to pupils' individual abilities within classes. Parental involvement in reading initiatives across the school is praiseworthy. All teachers demonstrated effective classroom management during the lessons observed and pupils engaged well in their learning.

The overall quality of teaching is good. Lessons observed ranged from satisfactory to very good. Where the quality of teachers' practice was very good, lessons were characterised by appropriately pitched content, the judicious use of resources, effective pacing and the effective consolidation of pupil understanding; these qualities should characterise all lessons. Where the quality of teaching was less effective, teaching approaches did not fully meet the learning needs of all pupils and the learning objective of the lesson was unclear. While all staff demonstrate a commitment to improving provision for pupils; there is a need to ensure leadership empowers all staff to further implement the planned whole-school approach to literacy provision.

The quality of assessment is satisfactory overall with a range of practices noted. Where practice was observed to be very good, a systematic approach to the analysis of oral language, reading and writing skills was used effectively to inform teaching and learning. However, assessment practices are not used consistently to inform teaching and learning in both mainstream and special education settings. While assessment information underpins the organisation of guided reading stations in middle and senior classes, the school should ensure assessment for early intervention in literacy for junior classes is fully informed by assessment information. Further analysis of assessment data, including the use of diagnostic assessments in English, is required in order to identify clear targets and to monitor pupils' learning. An additional emphasis on a broader range of diagnostic testing may be beneficial in this regard. Assessment practices should be extended on a whole-school basis to inform teaching and learning and to ensure that all supplementary teaching is aligned to pupils' prioritised learning needs. Pupils' written work is carefully monitored with very good examples of formative feedback noted in a majority of settings.

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

The quality of school planning, including the school's involvement in the school self-evaluation process for literacy, is good overall. The whole-school English plan provides very clear and valuable guidance for teachers on whole-school approaches to reading, writing and oral language. However, it is evident that implementation of these approaches is at an early stage. In order to fully achieve continuity and progression, leadership should support and empower all staff to further implement whole school plans consistently across the school.

Clear targets and actions for whole-school improvement in literacy have been identified in the DEIS plan. The monitoring and review of targets demonstrate that this process is impacting positively on pupils learning outcomes in English.

Appendix

SCHOOL RESPONSE TO THE REPORT

Submitted by the Board of Management

Part A: Observations on the content of the inspection report

We are pleased to note that the learning experiences that we provide are acknowledged to be at a high quality and that the children are confident in their own literacy abilities.

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

- We confirm immediate engagement with the recommendations of the report in all aspects
- A clear leadership structure has been set in place to ensure and maintain a high quality of teaching, learning and assessment throughout the school.
- The focused reading recovery and literacy interventions are having significant positive results on both pupil attitude and attainment. This is evidenced in standardised tests and reading recovery data and will continue to become more embedded in classroom practice.
- Analysis of data and assessment tools is in progress to enable focused planning to further aid differentiation.

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;