An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna  
Department of Education and Skills

Curriculum Evaluation  
Mathematics

REPORT

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<tr>
<th>Ainm na scoile / School name</th>
<th>Edenmore National School</th>
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<tr>
<td>Seoladh na scoile / School address</td>
<td>Emyvale</td>
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<td>County Monaghan</td>
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<td>Uimhir rolla / Roll number</td>
<td>20337A</td>
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Date of inspection: 01-05-2019
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 inspectors 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 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 did not meet the requirements in relation to 1 and 2 above and therefore was not fully compliant with the checks undertaken. However, the school has subsequently furnished evidence of compliance with these requirements.
Curriculum Evaluation

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<th>Date of inspection</th>
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<td>Inspection activities undertaken</td>
<td>Observation of teaching and learning</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discussion with principal and teachers</td>
<td>Examination of pupils’ work</td>
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<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
Edenmore National School is a rural co-educational school which is under the patronage of the Roman Catholic Bishop of Clogher. The school caters for pupils from junior infants to sixth class and includes one special class for pupils with autistic spectrum disorders. At the time of the evaluation, there were 149 pupils enrolled. The school has six mainstream teachers and four special education teachers which includes one shared post.

SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

FINDINGS
- The overall quality of pupils’ learning in Mathematics is good; pupils’ computational and problem solving strategies are well developed.
- The overall quality of pupils’ learning experiences in Mathematics is good; pupils are provided with engaging opportunities to participate in collaborative learning.
- The overall quality of teaching is good; it is purposeful and based on learning objectives.
- Overall, the quality of assessment is satisfactory; assessment data is not consistently used to inform differentiated learning experiences.
- The quality of support for pupils with special educational needs (SEN) is very good overall; some aspects of the Continuum of Support require refinement in terms of target setting.
- The quality of whole-school planning for Mathematics is satisfactory; it does not guide teachers’ individual planning for skills and content for each class level.

RECOMMENDATIONS
- Assessment data relating to the specific strands of the Mathematics curriculum should be analysed to inform planning for individual teacher planning for differentiated learning activities, content and skills for pupils of all abilities.
- Further consideration should be given to interpreting the assessment data to set specific targets for all pupils as part of planning for the Continuum of Support.
DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. THE QUALITY OF PUPILS’ LEARNING
The overall quality of pupils’ learning in Mathematics is good. Pupils enjoy Mathematics and are motivated to learn. In the lessons observed, pupils demonstrate a very good knowledge and understanding of the concepts of the Mathematics curriculum. Pupils can recall terminology, facts and definitions. They can use computational procedures and a variety of strategies very well to solve problems, justify and explain their answers and methods. Pupils use appropriate estimation strategies to a very good standard. They work independently on tasks and demonstrate a good ability to collaborate with others in their mathematics learning.

The overall attainment of the pupils is at a high standard in accordance with the learning outcomes of the Primary School Curriculum. Standardised test results indicate that pupils are progressing well in Mathematics.

Pupils in the focus group discussion unanimously spoke of their enthusiasm and appreciation for Mathematics. They spoke positively about their desire to be constantly challenged in their learning. Pupils enjoy opportunities to learn Mathematics through games and using active methodologies. They demonstrated an appreciation of the use of Mathematics in other areas of the curriculum.

2. SUPPORTING PUPILS’ LEARNING: LEARNER EXPERIENCES AND TEACHERS’ PRACTICE
The overall quality of pupils’ learning experiences in Mathematics is good. Very high levels of interest and participation during lessons in Mathematics were observed. Pupils are provided with engaging opportunities to participate in collaborative learning. Purposeful pupil engagement with tasks was observed where pupils were assigned roles within learning groups. Pupils were enabled to articulate their mathematical thinking with confidence in an environment which values and encourages pupil voice. Pupils have access to and evidently utilise relevant mathematics resources including manipulatives. They are afforded opportunities to develop their mathematical thinking through peer collaboration and whole-class discussion.

Overall teaching is of a good quality with some very good teaching observed in a few classrooms. During the evaluation, teachers were observed facilitating gainful, active and progressive learning in the strands of Numbers, Shape and space and Measures. All teachers demonstrate highly effective classroom management skills. It is evident that classroom practices are having a positive impact on pupils’ learning. There is very effective use of questioning to elicit, affirm and extend appropriate responses from the pupils. Lessons observed during the evaluation were well structured and a suitable range of methodologies was employed. Teachers emphasised learning objectives and the specific language of Mathematics during lessons.

The overall quality of assessment is satisfactory. Screening and standardised test are administered annually and the results are collated. All teachers have assessment files and are collecting valuable data on pupils’ progress. There is scope to develop the approaches used to ascertain pupils’ individual learning needs across the skills in the Mathematics curriculum. Data relating to the specific strands should be analysed to inform planning for differentiation. This will provide a specific focus for all interventions including team teaching.

The quality of provision for pupils with SEN is very good. Commendable steps have been taken in implementing team teaching approaches in all classrooms. Teachers prepare worthwhile and engaging activities during team teaching. There is need however to review and develop collaborative planning approaches in the ongoing development of this worthwhile provision. Concerted efforts to
implement the Continuum at school support and school support plus levels were noted while classroom support plans are in the early stages of development. Where excellent practice was observed, comprehensive evidence based profiles were aligned with specific and measurable targets. This exemplary practice should be broadened across the school at each level of support. SEN provision should be reviewed to ensure that pupils with special educational needs receiving supplementary support in Mathematics have meaningful opportunities to participate in successful learning experiences in the classroom context on a more consistent basis.

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

The overall quality of school planning for Mathematics is satisfactory with some elements for development. The school has currently prioritised oral language as part of the school self-evaluation (SSE) process. This process would be enhanced by the inclusion of mathematical vocabulary for each class level within the whole-school plan for Mathematics. During the next cycle of review, the school should consider skills development within the Mathematics curriculum. The whole school plan for Mathematics should provide clear guidance and support for teachers in delivering pupil-centred curriculum led learning experiences, therefore reducing the reliance on activities from work books.
Appendix

SCHOOL RESPONSE TO THE REPORT

Submitted by the Board of Management
Part A: Observations on the content of the inspection report

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

Following the recommendations of the report, we have agreed to undertake the following actions:

- An application will be made to the PDST for support in developing the Continuum of Support for the whole school, especially in terms of target setting for individual pupils and management of classroom support files by mainstream teachers.
- Teachers will undertake a more robust use of evidence gathering for pupil profiling to set specific targets for pupils who are being differentiated for.
- The school will administer the MALT assessment on pupils showing significant difficulty with the maths curriculum as highlighted by results of standardised testing in June.
- All teachers will attend CPD in the area of team/station teaching as we aim to further develop this area of teaching within the school. We aim for less withdrawal and more inclusion in the classroom setting for pupils on school support and school support plus.
- The whole school maths plan will be redrafted in order to include more guidance for teachers’ individual planning for skills and content along with the inclusion of mathematical vocabulary for each class level.
- During the next cycle review of SSE for 2019/20, a greater emphasis will be placed on mathematical language. Skill development within mathematics will be considered when the SSE process begins again in September 2020.
- The principal will be attending a Child Protection and Safeguarding seminar for principals in the coming weeks.
- Time will be allocated for class teachers and SEN teachers to collaborate on a more regular basis to plan for team/station teaching and discuss pupil progress and areas for development.
**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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<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 <strong>very good</strong> 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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