

An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna
Department of Education and Skills

Curriculum Evaluation
English

REPORT

Ainm na scoile / School name	Riverview Educate Together National School
Seoladh na scoile / School address	Limekiln Road Greenhills Dublin 12
Uimhir rolla / Roll number	20494Q

Date of inspection: 15-01-2020



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agus Scileanna**
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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 inspectors 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 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.

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

Riverview Educate Together National School is a developing school located in Greenhills, Dublin 12. The school operates under the patronage of Educate Together. There are 119 pupils enrolled from junior infants to second class. School staffing includes five mainstream class teachers, one of whom is the principal teacher. The school also has two special education teachers one of whom is shared with another school. The school is in the process of appointing an assistant principal post in accordance with Circular 0044/2019.

SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

FINDINGS

- The quality of pupils' learning in English is good overall; pupils' attainment levels in reading are very good; scope exists to develop pupils' skills in writing and aspects of oral language.
- The teaching in English is of a very good quality overall; teachers are very effective in structuring and pacing focused lessons which are interesting for pupils.
- The quality of assessment is good overall, scope exists to use the data gathered to set targets for in-class interventions and for pupils with identified learning needs.
- The experiences provided to support pupils' learning in English are of a very high quality.
- The management of resources is of a good standard and all pupils have access to a wide variety of high-quality graded reading material; the use of teaching hours allocated to the school should be maximised.
- Whole-school planning for English is under review; further development is required to ensure consistent learning outcomes in all settings in writing and oral language.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- The whole-school plan for English should be reviewed to include an agreed programme of work in all strands of the Primary Language Curriculum; the in-school management team should ensure that this programme is implemented and monitored systematically across all settings.
- Assessment data should be used to draft specific, measurable targets for all in-class interventions and for pupils with identified learning needs.
- The school should ensure that all allocated teaching hours are used to maximise teaching time for pupils.

DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. THE QUALITY OF PUPILS' LEARNING

The quality of pupils' learning in English is good overall. Pupils read competently and with a sense of enjoyment and confidence, including pupils with special education needs. Pupils are motivated to read and demonstrate high levels of interest in reading. Evidence from the pupil focus-group interview and from classroom observations indicates that pupils read a wide variety of texts and are given regular opportunities to read material of their choice. Pupils display a good knowledge of reading conventions and good levels of comprehension. Phonemic and phonological awareness skills, together with a knowledge of sight words are developed effectively in the infant classes. Pupils also display very good knowledge of books they have read; all pupils read texts at instructional level. Pupils demonstrate good expressive language and are able to use coherent sentences with correct word order and sentence structure. They are confident communicators and use a wide vocabulary. In some settings, pupils were able to recite poems and rhymes with confidence. A strong emphasis is also placed, by teachers, on facilitating pupils to apply their oral language skills in other curriculum areas through projects, presentation work and oral language games. Some pupils experience difficulty with engagement and active listening. Further development is required of pupils' engagement and active-listening skills. Consideration should be given to planning for agreed learning outcomes in each aspect of oral language for all pupils.

Learning outcomes in writing are very good for some pupils. Where learning outcomes are very good, pupils have well developed handwriting skills, appropriate for their class level and are given regular opportunities to engage in purposeful, interesting writing tasks in a variety of genre. A whole-school approach to cursive writing is in place and an agreed range of writing genre is in the whole-school plan. The school should ensure that all pupils are provided with regular opportunities to engage in purposeful writing tasks and that all agreed approaches to the teaching of writing should be implemented and monitored consistently in all settings.

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

The quality of pupils' learner experiences and teachers' practice is very good. Classrooms present as print-rich, affirming and stimulating learning environments for pupils and most curriculum displays have a strong language dimension. Inviting, well-resourced class libraries were evident in all settings. All pupils have access to a wide variety of reading material and read at an instructional level; their progress is effectively monitored by all teachers. Furthermore, teachers are very effective in structuring and pacing focused lessons. A range of worthwhile approaches to the teaching of English is successfully implemented. These approaches include *Aistear: the Early Childhood Curriculum Framework*, a thematic and integrated approach to literacy development, station teaching and regular opportunities to present to others in the classroom and at whole-school events. Pupils are also provided with regular opportunities to work in pairs and small groups. Most pupils participate with interest and enthusiasm. The school should ensure that pupil engagement and listening skills are developed systematically in all settings.

The overall quality of assessment is good. All teachers use learning outcome-based checklists and teacher-designed tests. All teachers retain appropriate assessment records and there are examples of very good quality records of teachers' observations. A range of diagnostic assessment approaches is used for pupils with SEN. While pupil activity is recorded, further use should be made of all assessment data to draft specific, measurable targets for all in-class interventions and for pupils with

identified learning needs in order to monitor pupil learning. Maximum use should also be made of all allocated teaching hours to ensure consistent learning outcomes in all settings.

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

The quality of school planning in progressing pupils' learning in English is good overall. Teachers work collaboratively to provide a range of interesting learning activities inside and outside the classroom. All teachers prepare short-term and long-term plans for English. Where teacher planning was very effective, teachers identified specific activities and learning outcomes to progress pupil learning each fortnight. The whole-school plan for English is under review. The school should ensure that the plan includes agreed learning outcomes in oral language, reading and writing for all class settings. This programme of work for oral language reading and writing should be implemented and monitored systematically in all settings to bring about consistent learning outcomes for all pupils.

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;

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 would like to express its appreciation for the thorough evaluation of the teaching of English at Riverview ETNS. The feedback provided was very useful in terms of providing an overview of the school's strengths in the teaching of English and also highlighting the opportunities for growth. Significant time and resources have been invested in the teaching, and we are satisfied that the children's learning reflected this investment. Our plan to address the recommendations is outlined below.

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

1. Staff have begun a review of our curriculum plan for English. This will be ratified by the Board of Management in the coming months. The delivery of this plan will be monitored in the Cuntais Míosúla.
2. In-class interventions will be informed by measures of the children's progress observed and assessed by teachers. Planning for resource teaching will include explicit reference to assessment. Targets will be set using assessment data, and these targets will be concrete, measurable and monitored regularly.
3. The two half hours per day, in the principal's timetable which had been left clear for administration and urgent daily matters, will now be scheduled for in-class support.