

**An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna  
Department of Education and Skills**

**Evaluation of Provision for Pupils with  
Special Educational Needs**

**REPORT**

<b>Ainm na scoile / School name</b>	Clochar Lughaidh Cailin
<b>Seoladh na scoile / School address</b>	Williams Park Rathmines Dublin 6
<b>Uimhir rolla / Roll number</b>	17210F

**Date of inspection: 19-01-2018**



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agus Scileanna  
Department of  
Education and Skills**

## **WHAT IS AN EVALUATION OF PROVISION FOR PUPILS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS?**

The Evaluation of Provision for Pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN) is a focused evaluation of provision for pupils with special educational needs in mainstream primary schools. As this inspection model places a particular emphasis on the quality of learner outcomes for pupils with special educational needs, most of the time spent in the school by inspectors is given to visits to mainstream classes and support settings.

## **HOW TO READ THIS REPORT**

During this inspection, the inspector evaluated provision for pupils with special educational needs under the following headings or areas of enquiry:

1. The quality of learning of pupils with special educational needs
2. The quality of teaching of pupils with special educational needs
3. The management and use of resources received to support pupils with special educational needs

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.

## Evaluation of Provision for Pupils with Special Educational Needs

<b>Date of inspection</b>	19-01-2018
<b>Inspection activities undertaken</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Discussion with principal and teachers</li><li>• Meeting with SEN team</li><li>• Meeting with SNAs</li><li>• Review of relevant documents</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Analysis of parent questionnaires</li><li>• Observation of teaching and learning</li><li>• Examination of pupils' work</li><li>• Interaction with pupils</li><li>• Pupil group discussion</li><li>• Feedback to principal and teachers</li></ul>

### SCHOOL CONTEXT

St. Louis Senior Primary School, Rathmines, caters for children from second to sixth class. There were 442 pupils enrolled at the school at the time of the evaluation. The school comprises an administrative principal, seventeen class teachers, eight special education teachers, four special needs assistants and a school secretary. The school is under the patronage of the Catholic Archbishop of Dublin.

### SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

#### FINDINGS

- The commitment to inclusion evident in the work of this school is highly commendable.
- School leadership of a very high quality is evident in the management of provision for pupils with special educational needs.
- The quality of teaching and learning of pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- The school makes commendable use of the resources provided for pupils with special educational needs.
- The school has developed a useful planning process for pupils with special educational needs; there is scope however for further development in the setting of targets in pupils' individualised education plans.
- While the collaborative practice of teachers is of a high quality, the timetabling of pupils' support needs to be reviewed in some instances.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

- There is a need to set more specific and incremental learning targets in pupils' individualised education plans.
- The timetabling of pupils' support needs to be reviewed in some instances so that, as far as practicable, each pupil accessing support should receive the support required from one special education teacher.

### DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 1. THE QUALITY OF LEARNING OF PUPILS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

The overall quality of learning of pupils with special educational needs is very good. The school has succeeded in creating a highly supportive and inclusive learning environment for all pupils. In the

group discussion with a sample of pupils with special educational needs, pupils expressed high levels of satisfaction with their involvement in the life of the school. Pupils spoke very positively about their learning experiences and the support they receive both in the classroom and in small group settings. In the classroom and support settings, pupils participate in stimulating learning activities and access information and communication technology (ICT), visual and concrete materials to assist their involvement in learning. In the learning activities observed in mainstream and support classrooms, pupils were suitably engaged, challenged and supported in purposeful learning activities in literacy, numeracy and social skills. Positive and respectful teacher-pupil and pupil-pupil interactions also contribute to a beneficial learning environment. Overall, the pupils' programmes and learning activities are well-suited to their identified needs and they are making substantial progress in relation to their learning needs and targets. While the school has developed a useful planning process for pupils with special educational needs, there is scope for further development in the setting of more specific and incremental targets in pupils' individualised education plans. This can facilitate closer tracking of progress in priority areas of concern. All parents who completed the parent questionnaire indicated that their child feels safe and well looked after in school. Almost all parents felt that their child was fully included in school and classroom life.

## **2. THE QUALITY OF TEACHING OF PUPILS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS**

The overall quality of teaching of pupils with special educational needs is very good. The teachers demonstrated very positive classroom management skills and employed a range of effective teaching approaches. In the classrooms observed, teachers have created attractive classroom environments and use a variety of resources, including ICT, to promote pupils' participation and understanding in the learning activities. Effective communication between classroom teachers and special education teachers is evident in relation to the learning needs of individual pupils and the progress they are making. Some very effective differentiated teaching was observed, based on careful planning and collaboration between mainstream and special education teachers. The use of topics and activities which take account of pupils' interests and needs facilitates their active engagement in the learning programme. The work and achievements of pupils are attractively displayed and celebrated across the school. A useful whole-school policy on assessment has been in place for some years and a commendable range of assessment information is maintained by teachers, including standardised tests, screening tests, classroom-based tests and pupil observation information. In reviewing the whole-school policy on assessment, consideration should be given to further strengthening school capacity in the use of assessment for learning and diagnostic assessment approaches. In the parent questionnaire, all parents responded that the work their child is asked to do by the support teacher is matched to his or her ability and that the school was helping their child to progress with reading and writing. While almost all parents indicated that they were aware of their child's learning plan, a small number of parents were not. In the context of its current high level of collaborative practice the school should follow up on this matter.

## **3. THE MANAGEMENT AND USE OF RESOURCES RECEIVED TO SUPPORT PUPILS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS**

School leadership of a very high quality is evident in the school's management of provision for pupils with special educational needs. There is an evident commitment to inclusion in policy and practice and to the provision of high quality support for pupils with special educational needs. A considerable amount of whole-school policy development has been undertaken to support the work of the school in this regard. A culture of inclusion can be observed across the school and the commitment to

inclusive practice evident in the work undertaken in classrooms is highly commendable. Teachers and special-needs assistants work well together and there is very good collaboration in responding to pupils' needs. The school uses the National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS) continuum of support approach to good effect in identifying pupils' needs and in deploying resources to pupils with the highest levels of need. Individualised education plans are put in place and consultation with parents is provided for in this process, along with the advice of external professionals. A good balance is employed as pupils access support in the mainstream class or in the group and individualised support settings. While the collaborative practice of teachers is of a high quality, the timetabling of pupils' support needs to be reviewed in some instances. As far as practicable, each pupil accessing support should receive the support required from one designated special education teacher. The school engages effectively with the support services and agencies, including NEPS, the National Council for Special Education (NCSE) and the Visiting Teacher Service.

#### **4. CHILD PROTECTION**

During the evaluation, the following checks in relation to the school's child protection procedures were conducted:

1. The school principal is aware that revised child protection procedures for primary and post-primary schools came into effect on 11 December 2017 and arrangements are in place to begin the process of implementing these procedures.
2. The name of the designated liaison person for child protection matters was prominently displayed near the main door of the school / in the school's reception area.
3. The school has a Child Protection policy in place.
4. All teachers are aware that they are mandated persons and of their responsibilities in that regard.

The school met the requirements in relation to each of the checks above.

# **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 of St. Louis Senior Primary School wishes to acknowledge the recent SEN inspection report and appreciates the opportunity to respond.

The Board of Management is proud of the findings in the report, as they reflect the ethos and values of our school. Our commitment to creating a highly supportive and inclusive learning environment and the quality of teaching and learning of pupils with special educational needs for all pupils is commendable.

The Board notes that the report highlights the very high quality school leadership, the very positive classroom management skills, the attractive classroom environments and the use of a variety of resources in the management and provision for pupils with special educational needs.

## **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 Board of Management is fully committed to implementing the recommendations as outlined in the report.

### **Specific and Incremental Learning Targets in Individualised Education Plans**

- The school is focusing on how learning targets in Individualised Education Plans can be more specific and incremental.
- Since the inspection, a member of staff has undertaken an NCSE course on assessment and planning for pupils with special educational needs, which had a focus on target setting.
- The SEN team is committed to developing more specific and incremental learning targets and will continue to undertake professional development courses and engage in collaborative discussion.

### **Timetabling of Pupils' Support**

- The school will continue to examine how support is provided for pupils with special educational needs to meet the recommendations regarding timetabling.
- Since the inspection a NEPS psychologist provided a school based seminar on models of in-class support that can be utilised when timetabling for pupils with special educational needs.

## 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 of quality the school's provision of each area.

Level	Description	Example of descriptive terms
<b>Very Good</b>	<b>Very good</b> 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 <b>outstanding</b> 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
<b>Good</b>	<b>Good</b> 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
<b>Satisfactory</b>	<b>Satisfactory</b> 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
<b>Fair</b>	<b>Fair</b> 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
<b>Weak</b>	<b>Weak</b> 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;