

An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna
Department of Education and Skills

Evaluation of Provision for Pupils with
Special Educational Needs

REPORT

Ainm na scoile / School name	Scoil Mhuire National School
Seoladh na scoile / School address	Ardeevin Williamstown County Galway
Uimhir rolla / Roll number	17980I

Date of inspection: 31-05-2018



**An Roinn Oideachais
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.

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.

Evaluation of Provision for Pupils with Special Educational Needs

Date of inspection	31-05-2018
Inspection activities undertaken <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Discussion with principal and teachers• Meeting with SEN team• Meeting with SNA• Review of relevant documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Analysis of parent questionnaires• Observation of teaching and learning• Examination of pupils' work• Interaction with pupils• Pupil group discussion• Feedback to principal and teachers

SCHOOL CONTEXT

Scoil Mhuire National School, Ardeevin, is a rural co-educational primary school located four kilometres north of Glenamaddy, Co. Galway. The school operates under the patronage of the Catholic Archbishop of Tuam. The school has two mainstream class teachers. There is one special education teacher (SET) based in the school. A part-time SET teacher is shared with another school in the locality. Currently, there are thirty-four pupils enrolled in the school.

SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

FINDINGS

- The overall quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs (SEN) is very good; pupils engage very well with their lessons.
- Learning experiences provided to pupils are positive and affirming.
- The quality of teaching for pupils with SEN is very good; a wide variety of teaching approaches is employed to foster inclusive practices.
- Support is provided for pupils with SEN using a combination of withdrawal and in-class teaching methodologies; however, there is scope to incorporate more in-class supports.
- The quality of the management and use of resources is very good.
- The school has engaged very effectively with the National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS) *Continuum of Support* to identify and target learning needs; progress is recorded carefully through the use of exemplary pupil support files.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- To further support differentiation and collaborative learning activities in literacy and numeracy, the school should allocate more time to the provision of in-class support in both mainstream class settings.

DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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

The overall quality of learning for pupils with SEN is very good. Throughout the school, pupils engaged very well with their lessons and they enjoyed positive and affirming learning experiences. Assessment records, photographs and written work provided evidence that pupils are progressing

well in relation to their personal targets, including those in areas of literacy, numeracy and social development.

Pupils' reading skills are developing in line with their ability. Considerable investment has been made by the school's board of management in the acquisition of a range of graded reading material in English. A whole-school approach to writing has been adopted. Pupils' work in a variety of genres is presented through handwritten tasks and through the use of information and communications technology (ICT).

In the focus-group discussion, pupils spoke very positively about their learning and the supports provided for them.

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

The quality of teaching for pupils with SEN is very good. Highly respectful interactions were evident in all learning settings. The teachers create educationally-stimulating environments. Lessons are well-structured and paced with clear explanation of lessons tasks. A wide variety of teaching approaches is employed in classrooms and support settings to foster inclusive practices. This includes links to prior learning, talk and discussion, the use of collaborative and active learning methodologies. Teachers use a range of visual and concrete resources, including the outdoor classroom, to ensure that lessons are interesting for pupils. Highly effective practice was observed in the use of ICT.

Support is provided for pupils with SEN using a combination of withdrawal and in-class teaching methodologies. During the evaluation, the pupils were observed to be enjoying and participating beneficially in a collaborative team-teaching lesson in Drama and *Aistear: the Early Childhood Curriculum Framework*. However, in order to further support differentiation and collaborative learning activities in literacy and numeracy, consideration should be given to allocating more time to the provision of in-class support in both mainstream class settings. Learning activities provided to pupils in the support setting are aligned with their identified priority learning needs and are appropriately challenging. Planning for pupils with SEN is of a very good quality and specific targets have been set. There is regular and systematic monitoring of achievement and progress towards targets. It is highly praiseworthy that pupils are involved in setting and monitoring their own targets.

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

The quality of the management and use of resources is very good. The enrolment practice of the school demonstrates a commitment to the admission of pupils with SEN.

The school has engaged very effectively with the National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS) *Continuum of Support* to identify and target learning needs. Pupils' learning and progress are recorded carefully through the use of exemplary pupil support files. The school makes very good use of assessments to screen for possible learning difficulties. There is clear evidence of diagnostic assessment, tracking and progression for pupils with SEN. Pupils' progress in whole-school assessment tests are also maintained and tracked very effectively.

The special-needs assistant (SNA) plays a significant role in meeting the care needs of pupils, in supporting inclusion and in enabling pupils to access a wide range of curricular experiences. The teachers are committed to engaging in continuing professional development (CPD) opportunities.

Very good levels of co-operation have been established with the local secondary school, support services and agencies, including the Visiting Teacher Service. In addition, very good links are maintained with parents of pupils with SEN. Responding to the Inspectorate questionnaire, all

parents of pupils with SEN reported satisfaction with the school's provision for their children in literacy, numeracy and inclusion.

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.

- The board acknowledges the findings of the report and the positive observations of the inspection.
- The board accepts the recommendation and understands it will further enhance SEN provision in the school.
- The following actions are being undertaken to address the recommendation in this report.
 - SET: As part of the SET timetable, in-class support is now taking place in both the junior and senior class settings for numeracy and literacy.

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
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;