

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	SN Caitriona Sinsear
Seoladh na scoile / School address	SN Caitriona Sinsear Renmore Co Galway
Uimhir rolla / Roll number	194681

Date of Evaluation: 06-04-2017



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 the model places a particular emphasis on the quality of learning outcomes for pupils with special educational needs, most of the time inspectors spend in a school during this evaluation is spent in 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:

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

INSPECTION ACTIVITIES DURING THIS INSPECTION

SCHOOL CONTEXT

Scoil Chaitriona Senior is a co-educational primary school that caters for pupils from third to sixth classes in Renmore, Galway. It operates under the patronage of the Catholic Bishop of Galway. The school participates in Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools (DEIS), Urban-Band 2, the action plan of the Department of Education and Skills for educational inclusion. The school benefits from the services of a shared Home-School-Community Liaison (HSCL) teacher.

There are 361 pupils enrolled across fourteen mainstream classes, one special class for pupils with a specific language disorder, one special class for pupils who are deaf and one special class for pupils with a specific learning difficulty (dyslexia). There are seven support teachers on the staff and six special needs assistants (SNAs). The school has an administrative principal.

Date of inspection	06-04-2017
Inspection activities undertaken <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Discussion with principal and teachers• Meeting with SEN team• Meeting with SNAs• 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

SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

FINDINGS

- Pupils' learning is good overall. The oral language proficiency of some pupils could be improved.
- Support teaching of pupils with special educational needs (SEN) is of a high quality. Targets in some individual education plans (IEPs) are not sufficiently specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timed (SMART).
- Very effective in-class models of support have been introduced recently. The further extension of this practice would enhance provision for pupils.
- Provision in some mainstream classrooms is not adequately supportive of pupils with SEN, with insufficient differentiation of content or activities.
- The school manages the resources it receives to support pupils with SEN effectively.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Mainstream class teachers need to take greater responsibility for pupils with SEN and plan for and implement more meaningful differentiation.
- Planning needs to be improved to ensure that the IEP process is more effectively implemented.
- There is a need to further extend in-class support.

DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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

Overall, the quality of learning of pupils with SEN is good. This is an inclusive school with a clear commitment to the admission and inclusion of pupils with SEN. The school has many commendable structures in place, such as teaching sign language to mainstream pupils and increasing staff awareness of deaf culture. Reverse inclusion is managed effectively.

Pupils' oral language skills need to be improved. It is recommended that oral language skills be developed more systematically through the provision of discrete lessons.

In a group discussion with a sample of pupils with SEN, all pupils said that they like school and feel that they are making good progress with their learning. Pupils in support settings engaged very actively with their learning. Tasks set were appropriately challenging for them. In some of the mainstream settings however, there was a lower level of engagement by pupils. More purposeful and appropriately challenging learning activities should be provided.

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

Mainstream class teachers have created attractive, orderly learning environments. There is a need for a reduction in teacher-directed whole class teaching and for more emphasis on collaborative and co-operative activities. Class teachers need to take greater responsibility for the provision of appropriately differentiated activities for all pupils. All teachers are reminded of the need to engage in fortnightly rather than monthly planning.

A whole-school approach to standardised assessment is in place. The school uses a software package to track individual pupil performance. More effective use should be made of the data available.

The school has appointed a special-needs co-ordinator. She has been effective in leading improvement in support settings. There is a need for the clearer identification of SMART targets in IEPs. Assessment data should be used to clearly identify the baseline on which targets are established. There is a need for more careful monitoring of progress towards achieving targets. In response to the questionnaires, almost all parents said that they are consulted about their child's learning plan. To further improve this good practice, copies of IEPs should be given to parents.

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

The overall quality of the management and use of resources is good. Currently, some pupils are supported on a withdrawal basis by more than one teacher. Teachers' caseloads and timetables should be reviewed to address this issue. The practice whereby support teachers use available pupil contact time to engage in preparation should cease.

The school has very effective links with outside agencies to support pupils' social, emotional and academic progress. SNAs provide very valuable support to pupils.

The principal has played a strong role in the development and implementation of policies which ensure that there is ongoing improvement in the educational provision in the school. Many of the teachers have post-graduate SEN qualifications and some are very highly qualified in the field. The

school actively provides training to advance whole-school initiatives and supports teachers in accessing further continuing professional development.

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 and staff of Scoil Chaitriona would like to acknowledge the report and are pleased with the positive findings in the inspection. The board and staff are particularly pleased that the good practice and sincere commitment to all pupils in our school are recognised and affirmed by the inspectorate and entire school community. We are proud to be recognised as a welcoming and inclusive school.

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 school remains fully committed to the ongoing development of the education of all pupils with special educational needs. The school is focusing on the individual educational plans with particular emphasis on refining the specific learning objectives/ targets. In class support will be expanded due to increased teacher allocation.

When we, a senior school, are offered in- service by the Professional Development Service for Teachers (PSDT) in the New Primary Language Curriculum, we can modify our DEIS targets and run whole school initiatives to develop oral language.

The board of management have examined the report and are committed to supporting the staff in their requirements around training and resources and will be reviewing progress in December.

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 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;