

**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>	Boosterstown National School
<b>Seoladh na scoile / School address</b>	Cross Avenue Blackrock Co. Dublin
<b>Uimhir rolla / Roll number</b>	19901T

**Date of Evaluation: 14-06-2017**



## **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

<b>Date of inspection</b>	14-06-2017
<b>Inspection activities undertaken</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Discussion with acting-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

Boosterstown National School is a co-educational school operating under the patronage of the Church of Ireland Archbishop of Dublin. Staff at the school comprises one teaching principal, three mainstream class teachers, one full-time learning support/resource teacher (LSRT), one part-time LSRT, two special needs assistants (SNAs) and a school secretary.

## SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

### FINDINGS

- This is an inclusive school with staff demonstrating high levels of commitment to meeting the needs of all pupils.
- There is very effective leadership and co-ordination of the SEN team and high levels of collaboration among staff members are in evidence.
- The school is successful in securing good learning outcomes for pupils with special educational needs (SEN).
- There is high quality teaching in the school both in mainstream and special settings with some excellent practice observed.
- There is very good communication with parents and links with outside agencies.
- The school's learning support policy does not fully reflect the school's practice in relation to all pupils receiving support teaching and requires review.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

- The school should develop an overall policy on special educational needs (SEN) which is fully reflective of the very good practice and inclusive nature of the work of the school.

## DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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

The school is successful in securing good learning outcomes for pupils with special educational needs (SEN). This is an inclusive school and staff demonstrate a high level of commitment to meeting the needs of all pupils. It is evident from interactions with pupils with SEN that they enjoy their lessons and learning and are highly motivated to learn. Pupils' attendance levels at the school are very good. In support settings pupils are provided with high quality learning activities specifically directed towards meeting their identified learning needs, including needs in social skills, behaviour management, and literacy and numeracy development. Through high levels of collaboration

between support teachers and class teachers there are strong links between pupils' learning in support settings and in mainstream settings. The results from standardised tests indicate pupils are making good progress in accordance with their age and ability. In mainstream settings, pupils with SEN participate purposefully and are well included in lessons. Very effective strategies have been devised to meet the learning needs of pupils with SEN such as structured arrangements to provide one-to-one support when appropriate.

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

There is high quality teaching in the school both in mainstream and special settings with some excellent practice observed. The school makes judicious use of both in-class and withdrawal support individually and in groups. Pupil-pupil and pupil-teacher relationships are positive in all learning settings and learning environments support and encourage pupils' learning. High levels of collaboration between members of the SEN team and class teachers ensures that there is a consistency of approach and a very good awareness of pupils' individual learning needs. Teaching is focused, interactive and pupil-centred. In some cases greater attention to fostering pupils' awareness of each other and to promoting social interaction is advised. Lessons are well-structured and paced with clear explanations of lessons tasks. Teachers' questioning is clear and designed to stimulate appropriate responses from pupils. During the learning activities, teachers provide appropriate support to pupils with SEN and all pupils are meaningfully included in lessons. Pupils are highly engaged and in the focus group discussion pupils spoke positively about their lessons and learning. Planning for pupils with SEN is of a very good quality with clear targets set for pupils with SEN. There is regular and systematic monitoring of achievement and progress towards targets.

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

The school engages meaningfully with external agencies and makes very good use of their expertise to inform specific programmes of support for pupils with SEN. There is an appropriate focus on early identification. Through effective use of early screening and diagnostic testing, interventions and supports are put in place. The continuum of support is very well used in this regard. The school is proactive in engaging with parents and in the questionnaires most parents indicate that they are happy with the opportunities they receive to discuss their child's learning with teachers. Information and communication technology (ICT) is very well used in many learning settings, and in the group discussion with pupils they indicated that they are happy with the amount of time they get to use computers in school. While the current special needs team is highly skilled and experienced in meeting SEN, it will be important to continue to build capacity among other staff members in the education of pupils with SEN.

# **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 acknowledges the recommendation that the school develop an overall policy on Special Educational Needs which is fully reflective of the very good practice and inclusive nature of the work of the school and has initiated the drafting of an overall policy in line with the new model of Special Educational Needs provision as detailed in Circular 0013/2017.

The Board was very pleased to read the positive findings in the Inspectorate report. Whilst the Board of Management has always been cognisant of the high level of professionalism and standard of education provided by the staff of Booterstown National School, including in the area of Special Educational Needs, it was delighted to receive affirmation from the Department of Education and Skills Inspectorate.

### **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 acknowledges the recommendation that the school develop an overall policy on Special Educational Needs which is fully reflective of the very good practice and inclusive nature of the work of the school and has initiated the drafting of an overall policy in line with the new model of Special Educational Needs provision as detailed in Circular 0013/2017.

## 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
<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 <b>very good</b> 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;