

An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna
Department of Education and Skills

Curriculum Evaluation
Visual Arts

REPORT

Ainm na scoile / School name	Cloondaff N S
Seoladh na scoile / School address	Glenhest Newport Co Mayo
Uimhir rolla / Roll number	11834N

Date of Evaluation: 07-03-2017



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 inspector evaluated learning and teaching in Visual Arts under the following headings:

1. Quality of pupils' learning
2. Supporting pupils' learning through learning experiences and teachers' practice
3. The effectiveness of school planning, including SSE, 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.

Curriculum Evaluation

INSPECTION ACTIVITIES DURING THIS INSPECTION

Date of inspection	07-03-2017
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

Clondaff National School is a rural co-educational primary school situated in Glenhest community approximately eight kilometres west of Newport, Co. Mayo. Seventeen pupils are enrolled. The school has two mainstream class teachers and one shared special-education teacher.

SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

FINDINGS

- Overall, the quality of pupils' learning in Visual Arts is very good. They are eager and motivated in their attitudes to Visual Arts and obviously enjoy their learning experiences.
- The quality of teaching in Visual Arts is of a very high standard overall with skilful discussion and questioning, appropriate and active learning methodologies, and integration with other subject areas.
- Linkages with the outdoor environment and consistent use of information and communications technology (ICT) are praiseworthy features of provision.
- Assessment practices are effective. Pupil self-assessment and peer-assessment, clear and useful portfolios and confident evaluation are impacting positively on pupil learning.
- The school has engaged successfully in the school self-evaluation (SSE) process.
- Incorporation of literacy and numeracy concepts in the teaching of Visual Arts is very effective. Extending the use of these approaches through the use of language experience charts across the school would further enhance provision.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Language experience charts should be used further to revise and extend vocabulary and language development.

DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. THE QUALITY OF PUPILS' LEARNING

Overall, the quality of pupils' learning in Visual Arts is very good. The pupils' enjoyment in learning is evident. They are afforded many opportunities in discussion and activities to visualise and express their imagination. Their learning is strongly supported from a variety of starting points that enable them to express their understanding of the world from their experiences, observation and curiosity.

The whole-school focus on oral language and looking and responding to art is impacting positively on pupils' learning. Pupils displayed good listening skills and gave rich and varied responses in their engagement in discussion. They used their knowledge, skills and understanding of Visual Arts

competently and confidently and showed a capacity to link these to prior learning. The emphasis on the development of oral language skills in structured conversations and on discussions as an integral feature of teaching and learning in Visual Arts lessons is highly commendable. Pupils spoke very positively about their enjoyable and interesting Visual Arts lessons during the focus group discussion. The use of language experience charts would further enhance language development work.

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

Pupils' learning in Visual Arts is very well supported throughout the school. Overall, teaching is of a very high standard and effective use is made of a wide range of resources and methodologies. Stimulating and attractive learning environments have been developed through the display of pupils' own high quality work across all of the strands of the Visual Arts curriculum.

Teachers demonstrate competence and proficiency in their skills and knowledge of Visual Arts. Particularly effective practice was observed where multiple opportunities were provided to ensure that pupils actively engage in their learning to ensure consolidation of key concepts. The principles of *Aistear: the Early Childhood Curriculum Framework* are implemented through structured play activities that incorporate inventing, exploring, designing and making. This good work provides the pupils with an opportunity to develop awareness of their visual, spatial and tactile world. Pupils are afforded opportunities to participate in a variety of art competitions.

Individual teacher planning and whole-school planning is of a very good quality. Detailed short term planning includes reference to SSE and differentiated approaches to meet the needs of all pupils. Interesting activities are well-planned and well-prepared and progress pupils' learning. Appropriate theme-based integrated activities and linkage with other areas of the curriculum, especially Social, Environmental and Scientific Education (SESE) and Irish, is particularly effective. The links with visual stimuli and use of the environment and the birdsong and birdfeeders in the school garden is impressive. The work in manipulating, experimenting with and developing shape, texture and pattern in clay, mark-making, and exploring texture and patterns in paintings and the work of other artists, is very commendable.

A variety of assessment practices is implemented. These include pupil discussion, sharing, reflection, self-assessment and peer-assessment, work samples, teacher observation, looking at and talking about their own work. The recent introduction of portfolios is commendable.

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

The quality of school planning, including SSE is very good. The school has identified key improvement targets for literacy and numeracy. Clear statements of specific and measurable targets for improvement and the careful monitoring and evaluation of their achievement are outlined.

Appendix

SCHOOL RESPONSE TO THE REPORT

Submitted by the Board of Management

Part A Observations on the content of the inspection report

The Board is delighted with the findings of the Curriculum Evaluation of Art carried out on the 7th of March 2017. The findings outline the very high quality teaching and learning experiences throughout the school. We feel it is a true reflection of the positive and valuable work that is taking place.

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

We welcome the Inspector's advice and as per the recommendation, language experience charts will be used further to revise and extend vocabulary and language development.

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;