



An Roinn Oideachais
Department of Education

Curriculum Evaluation: Mathematics Report

REPORT

Ainm na scoile/School name	Scoil Naomh Bríd
Seoladh na scoile/School address	Ballycastle County Mayo
Uimhir rolla/Roll number	142900
Dáta na cigireachta/ Date of evaluation	16-11-2022
Dáta eisiúna na tuairisce/ Date of issue of report	19/01/2023

What is a curriculum evaluation?

Curriculum evaluations report on the quality of teaching and learning in specific subjects of the *Primary School Curriculum (1999)* and the *Primary Language Curriculum (2019)*. 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 Mathematics under the following headings:

1. Quality of pupils' learning
2. Supporting pupils' learning through learner 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.

Actions of the school to safeguard children and prevent and tackle bullying

During the inspection visit, the following checks in relation to the school's child protection and anti-bullying procedures were conducted:	
<i>Child Protection</i>	<i>Anti-bullying</i>
<ol style="list-style-type: none">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.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The school has developed an anti-bullying policy that meets the requirements of the <i>Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (2013)</i> and this policy is reviewed annually.2. The board of management minutes record that the principal provides a report to the board at least once a term on the overall number of bullying cases reported (by means of the bullying recording template provided in the <i>Procedures</i>) since the previous report to the board.3. The school's anti-bullying policy is published on its website and/or is readily accessible to board of management members, teachers, parents and pupils.

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

Curriculum evaluation

Date of inspection	15-11-2022 and 16-11-2022
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

Scoil Naomh Bríd is a co-educational primary school located in Ballycastle, County Mayo. This school operates under the patronage of the Catholic Bishop of Killala and participates in Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools (DEIS), the Department of Education's action plan for educational inclusion. At the time of the evaluation, the school had three mainstream teachers, a special education teacher (SET) and a special needs assistant (SNA). There were fifty-five pupils enrolled from junior infants to sixth class.

Summary of main findings and recommendations:

Findings

- The overall quality of pupils' learning in Mathematics was of a very high standard.
- Pupils' learning experiences in Mathematics were very good with active learning and the use of mathematical resources and concrete materials central to all lessons.
- Teaching in Mathematics was highly commendable with the correct use of key mathematical language a notable feature of teachers' practice.
- The school's assessment practices were very effective.
- Additional support for Mathematics was highly commendable and effective early intervention programmes were delivered in a targeted manner.
- The school had developed a DEIS plan for numeracy using the school self-evaluation process and planning to progress pupils' learning in Mathematics was very good.

Recommendations

- The school should use the high quality assessment data it has gathered to ensure that there is a greater level of challenge for the more able pupils.

Detailed findings and recommendations

1. The quality of pupils' learning

The quality of pupils' learning in Mathematics was very good. The pupils presented as enthusiastic and motivated learners and demonstrated very positive attitudes to the subject. The pupils were articulate and confident in explaining the reasoning and problem solving strategies they used while engaged in their learning tasks and activities. They also demonstrated a commendable ability to relate their learning to real-life situations. A whole school-approach to the neat presentation of pupils' written work was reflected in pupils' copybooks and other written work. Summative assessment results and the interactions with the inspector demonstrated that the learning outcomes of the pupils across all strands of the curriculum were of a very high standard.

During the focus-group discussions with pupils from middle and senior classes, each learner spoke positively about their opportunities to play mathematical games, use response boards, participate in Maths trails and use a variety of digital platforms and websites to support their

learning. They spoke of the practical uses of Mathematics and shared many examples of this, such as their monitoring of electricity usage as part of their Green Schools work. They connected their learning in Mathematics with other subjects in the curriculum and relayed how they benefitted from the maths trails and outdoor learning opportunities provided by the school.

2. Supporting pupils' learning: Learner experiences and teachers' practice

There were highly commendable learner experiences provided for pupils in Mathematics. The learning environments were stimulating, print rich and supportive of learning in Mathematics. All pupils were given purposeful opportunities to use a range of mathematical resources in their lessons. Working in pairs and small groups enabled all pupils to have valuable discussions about the tasks to be completed. Digital technologies were used appropriately to support the learning, both as a whole class group and for individual pupils. Pupils' work was well monitored by the teachers and effective formative feedback was given both orally and in written comments in copybooks.

The quality of teaching in Mathematics was very good. Interactions between teachers and pupils were respectful and affirming. In all learning settings visited, lessons were clearly structured and a notable emphasis was placed on the correct use of key mathematical language. The lessons in all settings were appropriately differentiated. Teachers ensured the effective engagement of pupils in the activities through the preparation of small group tasks and conducted a review of the content at the end of the lessons. In all of the lessons observed, teachers shared the content to be taught before each lesson. It is recommended that teachers build on this practice by explicitly sharing the learning intentions for lessons in order to enable pupils to further develop their peer and self-assessment skills.

Additional support for Mathematics was highly commendable and effective early intervention programmes were delivered in a targeted manner. *Ready, Set, Go Maths* and *Mata sa Rang* were delivered in the junior classroom providing engaging and very effective teaching approaches. High quality Student Support Plans supported the delivery of targeted teaching for pupils with identified needs. It was evident that collaborative practices between the SET and mainstream class teachers were well developed.

A range of effective assessment practices were evident during the evaluation. Each teacher maintained an assessment folder of pupils' learning including their progress in Mathematics. This included standardised test results, the completion of pupil profiles and data gathered from tasks and tests. The school should use the high quality assessment data it has gathered to ensure that there is a greater level of challenge for the more able pupils.

3. The effectiveness of school planning, including SSE, in progressing pupils' learning

The quality of whole-school planning to progress pupils' learning in Mathematics was very good. The whole-school plan outlines all aspects of provision and provided effective guidance. It was evident that individual teachers' practice was informed by the plan including whole school approaches to the use of mathematical resources and key mathematical vocabulary. Monthly progress reports indicated that a broad and balanced programme in Mathematics was provided.

The school had developed an effective DEIS plan for numeracy using the school self-evaluation process. It was clear that the plan had a positive impact on the delivery of the Mathematics curriculum for the pupils. The school should consider using the recommendations in this report to inform its next DEIS plan for numeracy.

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 Scoil Naomh Bríd is very proud and satisfied with the outcome of the Curriculum Evaluation of teaching and learning in the subject area of Mathematics. This report is very positive and affirming of the very high standard of work which is being undertaken in our school in the areas of pupil learning, support of pupils learning through learning experiences and teachers practice and the effectiveness of school planning in progressing pupils' learning.

The Board of Management is also satisfied to read that all the regulations related to Child Protection and Safeguarding have been met.

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 welcomes the guidance on using the high quality assessment data to ensure that there is a greater level of challenge for the more able pupils. The staff are already looking at including an 'extension objectives/enrichment suggestions' section in their planning for the more able pupils which will include reference to puzzles/extended tasks/, problems/investigations and STEM Activities. They are also actively sourcing books/activities etc. to support the learning experiences of the more able pupils.

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 of the school's provision of each area.

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