



An Roinn Oideachais  
Department of Education

# Curriculum Evaluation: History Report

## REPORT

Ainm na scoile/School name	Scoil an Chroí Ró-Naofa
Seoladh na scoile/School address	Urlingford Co Kilkenny Via Thurles
Uimhir rolla/Roll number	19930D
Dáta na cigireachta/ Date of evaluation	07-12-2023
Dáta eisiúna na tuairisce/ Date of issue of report	20/02/2024

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## 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(s) evaluated learning and teaching in History under the following headings:

1. Quality of pupils' learning outcomes
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"><li>1. The name of the DLP and the Child Safeguarding Statement are prominently displayed near the main entrance to the school.</li><li>2. The Child Safeguarding Statement has been ratified by the board and includes an annual review and a risk assessment.</li><li>3. All teachers visited reported that they have read the Child Safeguarding Statement and that they are aware of their responsibilities as mandated persons.</li></ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>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.</li><li>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.</li><li>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.</li></ol>

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

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# Curriculum evaluation

<b>Date of inspection</b>	07-12-2023
<b>Inspection activities undertaken</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Discussion with principal and teachers</li><li>• Review of relevant documents</li><li>• Pupil focus-group interview</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Observation of teaching and learning</li><li>• Examination of pupils' work</li><li>• Interaction with pupils</li><li>• Feedback to principal and teachers</li></ul>

## School context

Scoil an Chroí Ró-Naofa is a co-educational primary school, situated in the town of Urlingford. It is under the patronage of the Roman Catholic Bishop of Ossory. At the time of the evaluation, there were 223 pupils enrolled, with a teaching staff of nine class teachers and three special education teachers (SETs).

## Summary of main findings and recommendations:

### Findings

- The quality of pupils' learning in History was commendable; pupils showed high levels of curiosity and interest.
- The quality of experiences to support pupils' learning in History was good with pupils experiencing a broad range of activities, which supported their learning.
- The overall quality of teachers' practice was good, with some very good practice also observed; teachers created inclusive and positive learning environments and exhibited highly effective classroom management skills.
- The quality of school planning was good.
- Project work was a significant feature of the work in the school.

### Recommendations

- The pupils were familiar with their family histories and aspects of local history. However, teachers should place additional emphasis on the exploration of the history of the locality.
- In some classes, the main emphasis was on the content of the lessons. All teachers should explicitly plan for skill development during history lessons. These skills should be linked to the school plan, with progression across the school.

## Detailed findings and recommendations

### 1. The quality of pupils' learning outcomes

The overall quality of the pupil's learning was commendable. In the lessons observed, pupils showed high levels of curiosity and interest in History. Classrooms and school corridors celebrated pupils' learning and fostered an appreciation of History. Pupils generally had good recall of their previous learning and could articulate their learning well.

Pupils in all classes demonstrated an understanding of the concept of time and chronology. In junior classes, pupils recounted the stories they had learned enthusiastically and could apply their learning to make judgements about sequence and cause and effect. In some classes, timelines were used productively during lessons to contextualise the learning. A whole-school emphasis on the use and display of timelines should be developed.

Research into various topics has helped to deepen understanding and develop the pupils' ability to use and interpret evidence. This was evidenced in the variety of project work undertaken. Empathy with historical characters was successfully developed and was a feature of many of the historical topics covered.

During the pupil focus group discussion, the pupils indicated that they enjoyed learning History, particularly working collaboratively to produce projects linked to their learning. They also reported that KWL charts, digital presentations and quizzes supported their learning. They reported that they would like more fieldtrips and visits to local historical sites.

## **2. Supporting pupils' learning outcomes through learner experiences and teachers' practice**

The quality of experiences to support pupils' learning in History was good. It was evident that a wide range of methodologies was employed including story, digital presentations, talk, and discussion. The pupils were active in their learning and engaged productively in tasks, both collaboratively and independently.

In some classes, pupils used and interpreted evidence using pictures, asked questions and made decisions. In other cases, the content was prioritised with less emphasis on skills. Teachers should explicitly plan for skill development during lessons in History by linking the skill with the historical knowledge and content of the lesson.

The pupils were familiar with their family histories and aspects of local history. However, teachers should place additional emphasis on the exploration of the history of the locality.

Overall, the quality of teachers' practice was good, with some very good practice also observed. Teachers created inclusive and positive learning environments and exhibited highly effective classroom management skills. Lessons were well structured and presented. All teachers were very good communicators and teacher questioning was very clear and included both lower and higher-order questions. History was integrated effectively across other subjects, including Geography and literacy. Pupils accessed digital technologies to extend and reinforce their learning.

Teachers employed a variety of assessment methods, including teacher observation and questioning, projects, work samples and quizzes to gather information about pupils' learning in History.

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

Overall, the quality of school planning was good. The school plan for History outlined the content to be taught at each class level and the local historical sites to be studied. To further support the continuity and progression of pupils' learning, the plan should identify how skills in History will be taught as pupils move through the school and the progression of their learning of local history.

All teachers prepared for their teaching of History and provided long-term and short-term plans.

## 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;

# **Appendix**

**SCHOOL RESPONSE TO THE REPORT**

**Submitted by the Board of Management**

### **Part A Observations on the content of the inspection report**

The school accepts the report as an accurate and fair representation of the Inspectors' visit and are accepting of it's contents.

### **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 plans to revisit the area of SESE, specifically History to incorporate the recommendations of the report.

The school is already actively working on updating our local history and reintroducing this area to our practice

The revisited plan will look at how we can focus on the skills of history in our teaching practices.