



An Roinn Oideachais
Department of Education

Curriculum Evaluation: Mathematics Report

REPORT

Ainm na scoile/School name	Kilkenny School Project
Seoladh na scoile/School address	Springfields Waterford Road Kilkenny
Uimhir rolla/Roll number	19905E
Dáta na cigireachta/ Date of evaluation	12-10-2022
Dáta eisiúna na tuairisce/ Date of issue of report	12/12/2022

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 inspectors 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	12-10-2022
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

Kilkenny School Project NS is a multi-denominational, co-educational, vertical primary school under the patronage of the Kilkenny School Project Executive Committee. At the time of this inspection there were 239 pupils enrolled. The teaching staff comprised nine mainstream class teachers and three special education teachers.

Summary of main findings and recommendations:

Findings

- The overall quality of pupils' learning is good.
- The teaching of Mathematics is of a high standard, and a culture of collaboration in teaching is promoted in the school.
- The overall quality of assessment is good.
- The quality of whole-school planning and school self-evaluation (SSE) in Mathematics is commendable.

Recommendations

- A more comprehensive range of methodologies should be explored in some settings, with particular emphasis on facilitating pupils to engage in open-ended, enquiry-based, mathematical learning experiences.
- A wider use of diagnostic assessments is advised to better inform the specific mathematics targets for pupils with special educational needs.

Detailed findings and recommendations

1. The quality of pupils' learning

The overall quality of pupils' learning was good; pupils presented as enthusiastic and motivated learners with a positive disposition towards Mathematics. Classrooms were well-resourced with displays and equipment that were used purposefully during lessons. There was evidence of high levels of attainment in assessments. Pupils' understanding of number concepts and operations were well developed. They displayed commendable skills in recalling number facts and competently used appropriate mathematical language to outline procedures. Pupils responded enthusiastically to teacher questioning, though there remained scope for them to gain confidence in justifying and explaining their answers and methods. The provision of more open-ended problem-solving and enquiry-based experiences would further enhance pupils' engagement in their learning.

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

The quality of learner experiences in Mathematics was good. Play-based strategies were used productively to enhance the quality of pupils' mathematical language in some junior classes. In a few of the lessons observed, pupils had opportunities to discuss their thinking and learning in Mathematics. This practice should be expanded to become an integral part of all lessons. The school had a wide range of concrete resources that were used to facilitate some active learning. The quality of support for pupils with special educational needs (SEN) was good. Lessons were well planned, and support was delivered through a combination of withdrawal and in-class support interventions. Mathematical displays, including mathematical language, were evident in all classrooms. Pupils were enabled to work in pairs and groups, and they displayed good co-operative skills. During the group interview, pupils reported that they enjoyed their lessons in Mathematics.

The teaching of Mathematics was of a good standard, and a culture of professional collaboration was evident in the school. All teachers exhibited highly effective classroom management skills, and pupils' behaviour was exemplary during the evaluation. Teachers employed an effective blend of methodologies, including structured whole-class teaching, individual teaching and questioning. There was scope for more open-ended, enquiry-based learning opportunities to challenge all pupils. Teachers used mathematical language accurately to explain concepts and to guide pupils' responses. Teachers demonstrated a willingness to adopt new initiatives and to engage in continuous professional development in Mathematics. The quality of teacher planning for Mathematics was good. Collaborative planning for pupils with SEN was evident.

The quality of assessment was commendable. Pupils' work was corrected and monitored carefully by teachers during lessons. An analysis of whole-school standardised test results has been undertaken, and pupils in need of additional support have been identified. There is potential to extend the use of diagnostic assessment to set clear mathematics targets for pupils with SEN.

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

The overall quality of school planning, including SSE, was good. The whole-school plan for Mathematics was currently under development. However, the teachers' classroom planning, monthly progress reports and work in pupils' copybooks indicated that pupils were being provided with a progressive programme throughout the school that includes all strands and strand units of the Primary School Curriculum. The school had engaged successfully in the school self-evaluation (SSE) process; an improvement plan for numeracy had been devised. Strategies to support pupils' engagement in open-ended problem solving should be included in the whole-school plan. The promotion of a culture of improvement and collaboration in the learning, teaching and assessment of Mathematics was evident among school leaders.

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 the Kilkenny School Project N.S. thanks the Inspectorate for this very positive report.

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 recommendations contained in this report and undertakes that the school will take them on board in terms of planning and practice.

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;