

An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna
Department of Education and Skills

Curriculum Evaluation
English

REPORT FOR SCHOOL RESPONSE

Ainm na scoile / School name	Garrafrauns Central School
Seoladh na scoile / School address	Dunmore County Galway
Uimhir rolla / Roll number	19391W

Date of inspection: 04-04-2019

Date of issue of report: 12-09-2019



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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). 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 English 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.

CHILD PROTECTION

During the inspection visit, the following checks in relation to the school's child protection procedures were conducted:

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.

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

Curriculum Evaluation

Date of inspection	04-04-2019
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

Garrafrauns Central School is a rural, co-educational school with an enrolment of eighty-nine pupils. It operates under the patronage of the Catholic Archbishop of Tuam and there are four mainstream teachers and two special education teachers (SET).

SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

FINDINGS

- The quality of learner outcomes is very high, and differentiation is used very effectively to enable access to literacy for all pupils.
- The learner experiences are of a very high standard: there is scope for a greater emphasis, however, on the development of the oral language strand of the *Primary Language Curriculum*.
- There is a whole-school approach to assessment, and assessment in respect of station teaching is very effective.
- The quality of teaching is very high, with teacher collaboration being an embedded feature of the school culture.
- The use of school self-evaluation (SSE) in the area of literacy is highly commendable and integrated into several aspects of planning.
- The principal teacher and in-school management team demonstrate very successful curricular leadership for literacy.

RECOMMENDATION

- The school should build on its current whole-school approach to oral language, developing sentence structure and vocabulary, to include all aspects of the oral language curriculum.

DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. THE QUALITY OF PUPILS' LEARNING

The overall quality of learning is very good. Pupils were highly engaged and motivated in all lessons observed. This was supported by very efficient teacher planning, the implementation of several well-selected literacy initiatives and effective use of in-class support. The school provides opportunities for pupils to apply their literacy skills across all areas of the curriculum, using these initiatives. Pupils demonstrated the knowledge, skills and understanding required by the English curriculum in reading and writing. Pupils have access to class libraries and to information and communications technologies (ICT).

Teachers emphasise the development of vocabulary and sentence structure in oral-language skills. However, the school should consider a whole-school approach to the development of all aspects of the strand of oral language.

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

The overall quality of teaching is very good. Teachers have created a stimulating visual environment through the use of displays and projects. Station teaching was used effectively in the teaching of oral language,

reading and writing. Teachers prepared purposeful and challenging learning activities, planning for relevant and differentiated outcomes that were shared with the pupils. The pupils demonstrated a sense of ownership of their learning and were very active participants in the lessons observed. Pupils' work is monitored with care. They receive positive and personalised feedback from teachers, indicative of the very good relationships observed between pupils and teachers during the inspection.

Teachers participated actively in professional development and school-based collaboration for literacy. The strands of reading and writing are very effectively developed throughout the school. *Power Hour*, *Literacy Lift Off* and *Talk Time* were used very purposefully, reflecting the teachers' strong commitment to working together to implement whole-school approaches in the development of literacy. *Reading Recovery* was scaffolded through the use of running records. Whole-school strategies for oral-language skills are needed in order to fully develop strand of oral language. Such concerted emphasis on the oral language strand will further support the progress being achieved in the strands of reading and writing and will integrate learning across the three strands of the *Primary Language Curriculum* for the benefit of all pupils.

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

Engagement with planning and SSE is very good; this work has successfully influenced the development of literacy throughout the school. Whole-school approaches to language and literacy have been agreed and are implemented consistently by the teachers. The teachers have collaborated on a whole-school approach to assessment and employ agreed assessment practices to monitor pupils' progress. This whole-school approach to assessment supports the teachers' planning for effective learner experiences. This was demonstrated in the way team-teaching was implemented. Each unit of work involved the pre-testing and post-testing of the pupils' learning and progress. The learning needs of pupils who experienced challenges, and those in need of more challenging activities, were accommodated appropriately during the inspection.

The teachers have also identified the area of oral language for further development. It would be beneficial to avail of the SSE process to support the development of all aspects of the strand of oral language.

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;

