



An Roinn Oideachais  
Department of Education

# Curriculum Evaluation: Mathematics Report

## REPORT

Ainm na scoile/School name	Kilteely N S
Seoladh na scoile/School address	Kilteely Co. Limerick
Uimhir rolla/Roll number	14005M
Dáta na cigireachta/ Date of evaluation	29-09-2023
Dáta eisiúna na tuairisce/Date of issue of report	04/12/2023

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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 evaluated learning and teaching in Mathematics under the following headings:

1. Quality of pupils' learning outcomes
2. Supporting pupils' learning outcomes 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 checks above.

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# Curriculum evaluation

<b>Date of inspection</b>	21-09-2023 & 29-09-2023
<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

Kilteely National School is a co-educational primary school operating under the patronage of the Catholic Archbishop of Cashel and Emly. At the time of the evaluation the school had a staffing of two mainstream teachers, one special class teacher for pupils with autistic spectrum disorder (ASD) and one special education teacher shared with another school. The school had an enrolment of 30 pupils.

## Summary of main findings and recommendations:

### Findings

- The quality of pupils' learning outcomes was of a high standard with some pupils achieving to very advanced levels; collaborative and playful approaches to learning were a notable feature of pupils' learning across the school.
- The quality of learner experiences was very good; learners were positively disposed towards their learning in Mathematics and demonstrated commendable confidence, determination and resilience when engaging with tasks.
- The quality of teachers' practice was very good overall; a positive mathematics culture was established across the school and teachers encouraged, affirmed and valued pupils' contributions to lessons.
- Information and communications technology (ICT) was a strong feature of lessons and used as a tool to support and enhance teaching and learning; pupils derived great enjoyment from using this technology.
- The quality of assessment was good overall; teachers demonstrated high levels of awareness of pupils' progress and potential.
- The quality of school planning, including school self-evaluation (SSE), in progressing pupils' learning was very good.

### Recommendations

- Teachers should provide increased opportunities for pupils to record their mathematical thinking and reflect on their learning in their copybooks in order to deepen and extend their understanding.
- Assessment information should be further analysed and utilised to support the design of interventions and the target-setting process for pupils in receipt of additional support in Mathematics.

## Detailed findings and recommendations

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

The quality of pupils' learning outcomes was of a high standard, with some pupils achieving to advanced levels. Pupils presented as enthusiastic, motivated and determined learners. During tasks pupils worked purposefully and demonstrated commendable resilience when tackling mathematical challenges. All pupils were offered a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum. Meaningful consideration was given to ensuring pupils at all stages experienced success in their

learning. Pupils confidently recalled concepts and implemented procedures efficiently. During learning activities pupils' positive dispositions towards Mathematics were strongly evident. They had access to a wide range of concrete materials during lessons observed. Pupils were enabled to use these materials in ways which prompted them to apply and consolidate newly acquired mathematical language. They also used these materials to further explain their mathematical ideas to their peers and to their teachers. Pupils' work in their copybooks indicated that they are developing a strong sense of number and operations. They should now be afforded opportunities to also record in their copybooks their mathematical thinking and reflections on their learning in order to consolidate and deepen their mathematical understanding.

In the support setting, pupils' interests were used as a stimulating and motivating context for pupils' learning. Further analysis of pupils' attainment in this setting would help guide the design and effectiveness of interventions. In the special class for pupils with ASD, pupils' higher-order thinking skills were activated and fostered through the use of very effective teacher questioning. Opportunities for these pupils to engage in coding and to also take ownership of their learning during oral mathematics tasks, were highly commended. In a focus group with senior pupils, they described the range of ways teachers make their Mathematics learning a fun and exciting endeavour. Pupils highlighted the emphasis their teachers place on games, collaboration and real-life mathematics, as all contributing to their enjoyment of Mathematics. They also described the strategies and tools they use to assist them in solving tasks. Pupils would welcome increased opportunities to engage with coding and to use the outdoor environment as part of their learning in Mathematics.

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

The quality of learner experiences and teachers' practice were very good overall. Pupils were provided with playful learning experiences from which they derived great enjoyment and satisfaction. Teachers created attractive and stimulating learning environments to support pupils' learning in Mathematics. They introduced new concepts in a systematic and explicit manner and provided many opportunities for pupils to develop fluency in applying new skills. In one lesson intentional emphasis on potential misconceptions in *Data* enabled pupils to achieve a comprehensive understanding of concepts explored. Highly effective use of checklists in this lesson enabled pupils to monitor their own progress and to have agency in their learning. Senior pupils also had access to calculators to review their work. Pupils in all classes benefitted greatly from the explicit teaching and consolidation of mathematical language. Frequent opportunities were provided for pupils to talk about their strategies, decisions and solutions. Of particular note was teachers' skilful use of the multi-grade setting as an authentic context for peer learning. Peer talk and interaction complimented learner experiences and facilitated the development of pupils' skills of communicating, discussing and elaborating on their ideas. Partnerships with parents are encouraged and nurtured. In the focus group, pupils spoke positively about the opportunities they have to share their learning with their parents.

ICT was used to very good effect as a tool to enhance and extend teaching approaches and learner experiences. In one example of exemplary practice, pupils used tablet technology to create, share, critique and publish their mathematical learning. Scope exists to extend opportunities for development of pupils' use of ICT across the school. Classroom preparation for Mathematics was of a very high quality. All teachers provided long and short term plans, and the identification of specific target vocabulary was also a feature of practice.

The quality of assessment was good overall. Teachers demonstrated high levels of awareness of pupils' attainment and progress. A broad range of assessment approaches were in place across the school including the use of pupil checklists, analysis of work samples, recorded observations, classroom tests and analysis of standardised tests. These approaches provided very useful information on pupils' achievement levels. In an example of exemplary practice, a teacher used assessment information gathered about pupils' strengths and weaknesses to adapt their preparation and implement highly differentiated instruction. It was also evident from work samples reviewed that pupils had engaged meaningfully in self-assessment of their own work. There is a need now to further utilise assessment information to support the design and targeting of support interventions. This should also assist in the setting of targets on student support files.

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

The quality of whole school planning, including SSE, in progressing pupils' learning in Mathematics was very good. The principal and staff have established a very positive culture across the school which welcomes and embraces evidence-based approaches to teaching, learning and assessment in Mathematics. The school had engaged productively in a number of cycles of SSE in the area of Mathematics and improvement initiatives positively impacted learner experiences and outcomes. Valuable work had commenced on establishing pupils' current dispositions towards Mathematics and identifying how to enhance provision across the school. The school should now formalise its current approach to SSE for the year ahead.

## 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 Board of Management welcomes the very positive findings of this report and acknowledgement of the high quality learner experiences, teacher practices and the quality school planning that exist in our school. The report reaffirms the ongoing hard work and dedication of our school staff in providing high quality learning experiences for all pupils.

## **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 and staff will work together to address the two recommendations in the report.