An Roinn Oideachais
Department of Education

Curriculum Evaluation: Mathematics

Report

REPORT

Ainm na scoile/School name	Dublin 6 Clonskeagh and Dublin 6W Primary School
Seoladh na scoile/School address	151/153 Harold's Cross Road Harolds Cross Dublin 6W D6W HP44
Uimhir rolla/Roll number	20520O
Dáta na cigireachta/ Date of evaluation	19-10-2022
Dáta eisiúna na tuairisce/Date of issue of report	13/12/2022

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 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 was given an opportunity to comment in writing on the findings and recommendations of the report; a response was not received from the board.

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

<table>
<tr><td colspan="2">During the inspection visit, the following checks in relation to the school's child protection and anti-bullying procedures were conducted:</td></tr>
<tr><td>Child Protection</td><td>Anti-bullying</td></tr>
<tr><td>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.</td><td>1. The school has developed an anti-bullying policy that meets the requirements of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (2013) 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 Procedures) 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.</td></tr>
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The school met all the requirements in relation to child protection checks. The school met the requirements in relation to checks 2 and 3 of the anti-bullying checks above. The school did not meet the requirements in relation to check 1 of the anti-bullying checks. However, the school subsequently furnished evidence of compliance with this requirement.

Curriculum evaluation

Date of inspection	19-10-2022
Inspection activities undertaken • Discussion with principal and teachers • Review of relevant documents	• Observation of teaching and learning • Examination of pupils' work • Interaction with pupils • Feedback to principal and teachers

School context

Dublin 6 Clonskeagh and Dublin 6W Educate Together (Harold's Cross Educate Together National School) is an urban co-educational primary school, located in Harold's Cross, Dublin 6 and operating under the patronage of Educate Together. At the time of the evaluation, school staffing included an administrative principal, four mainstream class teachers, three full-time special education teachers (SET) and one shared SET who was based in another local school. There were two special classes in operation for pupils with Autism/Autistic Spectrum Disorders. There were ninety-six pupils enrolled in the school during the evaluation.

Summary of main findings and recommendations:

Findings

- The overall quality of pupils' learning, including pupils with special educational needs (SEN), was commendable.
- Pupils' learning experiences were good; teachers created positive and supportive learning environments which were conducive to learning.
- Teaching was good with some exemplary practice observed.
- Assessment practices were effective with some very good examples of formative assessment practices evident.
- School planning, including school self-evaluation (SSE), was very effective in progressing pupils' learning.

Recommendations

- Teachers should use existing assessment information to ensure that all lesson content is pitched at a level that is fully appropriate to pupils' abilities.
- Given the excellent examples of teachers adjusting teaching according to pupils' learning which were evident during the evaluation, school leadership should consider providing more structured opportunities for teachers to share this expertise with other teachers in the school.

Detailed findings and recommendations

1. The quality of pupils' learning

The overall quality of pupils' learning, including pupils with SEN, was good. Pupils presented as engaged and motivated learners who were positive about their learning in Mathematics and confident in their mathematical ability. They demonstrated a good understanding of mathematical operations and concepts, could calculate confidently and could recall terminology and facts to a high standard. Where very good learning was evident, pupils could confidently describe and use a broad range of strategies to solve problems, and could justify, explain and generalise their learning to a very high standard.

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

The overall quality of pupils' learning experiences was good. Teachers created positive learning environments which were conducive to learning. Co-curricular activities organised included pupils' engagement in Maths Week. Pupils' efforts and achievements in Mathematics were encouraged and affirmed. In a few settings, pupils were provided with very rich opportunities to collectively discuss, compare and evaluate their ideas and solutions. A very good focus on play-based learning was evident throughout the school. Pupils had access to a wide range of resources to promote understanding and to support and consolidate their learning. Digital technologies were embedded in pupils' learning experiences. In some settings, very commendable work to connect learning to pupils' familiar experiences was evident. This very effective practice could be extended throughout the school.

The overall quality of teaching was good with some exemplary practice observed. Teachers shared learning objectives and made effective use of questioning to elicit pupils' prior knowledge and to check for understanding. In the best instances, teachers used the feedback they gained from these interactions to adapt lesson content skilfully, ensuring that pupils were consistently challenged and engaged. All teachers used mathematical language explicitly, displayed it and encouraged pupils to use it independently. A wide range of methodologies was in place to foster active learning and pupils received regular opportunities to work both independently and collaboratively. In a few instances, lesson content and the learning tasks assigned to pupils were not pitched appropriately to ensure sustained pupil engagement and deep learning. Teachers should ensure that all lessons are pitched at a level that is fully appropriate to pupils' abilities. The organisation of group work should be reviewed on an ongoing basis to ensure that all groups experience consistent levels of challenge. Where teaching was highly effective, lesson delivery was flexible, accommodating emerging learning opportunities and purposeful pupil talk and discussion. Teachers' recorded preparation in all settings was very good. Provision for Mathematics in the special classes was of a high quality with an appropriate emphasis on functional mathematics. Very positive and supportive teaching interactions were observed in these settings.

Assessment practices were effective. Teachers monitored pupils' work regularly, providing constructive, developmental feedback to support progression in learning. Some very good examples of formative assessment were observed during the evaluation, with teachers using assessment information to anticipate potential challenges for pupils and to provide clarification and support when required. This very good practice should be extended across the school. Very effective systems were in place at whole-school level to analyse assessment information and to ensure that this analysis informed planning for school improvement.

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

School planning, including SSE, was very effective. The whole-school plan provided very good guidance to teachers in all aspects of the Mathematics Curriculum. Under the highly effective leadership of the principal, the school's engagement in the SSE process has impacted very positively on classroom practice and on pupils' learning. The school has identified clear targets for improvement in pupils' learning outcomes and targeted mathematical language for each class has been developed. School leaders have ensured the provision and maintenance of a broad range of very high quality mathematical teaching aids and equipment, including those related to digital learning, to support pupils' learning.

Teachers' collaborative practice was very good. It was evident that teachers recognised and affirmed professional learning and collaboration as intrinsic to their work and that the development of whole-staff capacity has been prioritised. School leaders have provided opportunities for teachers to discuss their professional practice; consideration should now be

given to providing more structured opportunities for teachers to share their expertise in teaching Mathematics with other teachers in the school.

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	*Very good* 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 *outstanding* 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	*Good* 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 *very good* standard.	Good; good quality; valuable; effective practice; competent; useful; commendable; good standard; some areas for improvement
Satisfactory	*Satisfactory* 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	*Fair* 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	*Weak* 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;