An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna

Department of Education and Skills

Curriculum Evaluation

Visual Arts

REPORT

Ainm na scoile / School name	Eoin Baisde Cailiní Naoidh
Seoladh na scoile / School address	Seafield Road West Clontarf Dublin 3 D03 XK27
Uimhir rolla / Roll number	19007S

Date of inspection: 28-05-2019

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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 Visual Arts 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, and the response of the board will be found in the appendix of this report.

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	28-05-2019
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

Eoin Baisde Cailiní Naoidh is an urban primary school under the patronage of the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Dublin. The school enrols girls from junior infants to first class and the current enrolment is 275 pupils. School staffing includes an administrative principal, ten mainstream class teachers and three special education positions.

SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

FINDINGS

- Learner outcomes in Visual Arts are very good and it is evident that pupils enjoy and take pride in their work; pupils' ability to independently use the language of the Visual Arts would be enriched through the inclusion of this vocabulary in display areas.
- The quality of pupils' learning experiences is very good; very high levels of pupil interest, engagement and motivation were evident during the evaluation.
- Teaching in the Visual Arts is very good; teachers prepare purposefully for lessons with highly commendable emphasis on the artistic process and on pupils' skill and conceptual development.
- The overall quality of assessment is good with a few examples of very good practice; peer- and self-assessment strategies should develop further to optimise the impact on pupils' learning.
- The quality of the school plan is good and the school is engaging very positively with the School Self-Evaluation (SSE) process.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Assessment approaches in the Visual Arts should be extended to include a whole-school approach to the maintenance of pupil portfolios and a more structured approach to peer-assessment.

- Art displays throughout the school should include a greater focus on the language of the Visual Arts.

DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. THE QUALITY OF PUPILS' LEARNING

Learner outcomes in Visual Arts are very good. Observation of lessons and interaction with pupils confirms that they have a very positive attitude towards Visual Arts; very high levels of pupil interest, engagement and motivation were evident during the evaluation. Pupils capably apply artistic skills and techniques and can recall details of previous learning with commendable accuracy. As pupils progress through the school, they demonstrate an increasing sensitivity to and awareness of the visual elements. It is evident that pupils take great pride in their artistic achievements; they are confident in looking at, talking about and making connections between their own work, the work of other children and the work of artists. During the looking and responding activities observed as part of the evaluation, pupils demonstrated a very good understanding of and familiarity with visual vocabulary and they responded very well to teacher questioning and teacher prompting. The inclusion of this topic-specific vocabulary in art displays throughout the school would enhance pupils' ability to use this language independently when critiquing their own work and the work of others. An emphasis on meaningful integration with other curricular areas is evident throughout the school and this is impacting very positively on the quality of pupils' learning in Visual Arts.

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

The quality of pupils' learning experiences is very good. All pupils have access to a wide range of visual arts resources and are enabled to explore and experiment with a broad range of materials, tools and media. The incorporation of literacy concepts into the teaching of the Visual Arts is particularly effective with poetry, story and purposeful oral language discussion used to simulate pupils' thinking about the visual elements. While digital technologies were used very well as stimuli for lessons, pupils would benefit from more regular opportunities to use these technologies during lessons to explore and research art. More time should be provided during lesson introductions for pupils to think about how the various stimuli will translate to action and to reflect upon how they will communicate their verbal and visual ideas through the medium of art; the consistent use by pupils of drawing techniques to plan art activities will be useful in this regard. The school environment promotes and celebrates pupils' achievements in Visual Art and there are stimulating displays of art in a range of media throughout the school; the inclusion of trigger questions to stimulate pupils' creativity, specific references to the intended learning focus, and vocabulary displays featuring the language of the visual elements would enhance the quality of these displays and would serve as a useful resource to support pupils' learning. Pupils receive opportunities to observe, explore and investigate the visual elements in their immediate school and local environment and also receive first-hand experiences of art through visits to art galleries and links with local artists. More systematic provision for these Visual Arts experiences should be provided for in the ongoing review of the whole-school plan for Visual Arts.

The quality of teaching in Visual Arts is very good. Learning environments are motivating, supportive and respectful. Teachers prepare purposefully for lessons with highly commendable emphasis on the artistic process and on pupils' skill and concept development. Very effective use is made of a wide

range of high quality resources and appropriate methodologies including active learning methodologies, skilful discussion and open-ended questioning. All lessons observed were interesting and well-structured with appropriate differentiation of learning activities in response to the range of pupils' needs. Pupils have ample opportunities during the development phase of lessons to be creative and reflective. Teachers model very rich subject-specific language and provide regular opportunities for pupils to make and create art both independently and collaboratively.

The overall quality of assessment is good with a few examples of very good practice. A broad range of approaches is used to monitor pupils' progress including work samples and photographic records. A very good checklist is used by teachers to record pupils' achievement across the breadth of the curriculum. In a few instances, teachers have augmented this checklist to very good effect, incorporating valuable observations on pupils' dispositions, attitudes, strengths and learning needs. All teachers were observed to provide very clear verbal feedback to pupils which focused on pupils' awareness of the visual elements and the interplay of these elements. While pupils display very good levels of confidence in using approaches such as the walking gallery and the artist's chair to discuss their own work and the work of other pupils, peer- and self-assessment strategies should be developed further to optimise the impact of these strategies on pupils' learning. In particular, pupils should be encouraged to use topic-specific vocabulary and success criteria when discussing their own work and the work of other pupils. Pupils should also be afforded time to reflect upon and to respond to suggestions by their peers, and to adapt their work to reflect advice and suggestions which particularly resonates with them. A whole-school approach to the maintenance and use of art portfolios would provide additional opportunities for more structured self-assessment and reflection by pupils.

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

The quality of the school plan is good; it provides useful general guidance to teachers and ensures the delivery of a broad and balanced curriculum to all classes. The school is deploying the SSE process very effectively to review educational provision in a range of aspects of the curriculum and a collaborative review of the whole-school plan for Visual Arts has been initiated as part of the school development process. As part of this review, the school has identified the need for the revised plan to incorporate specific planning for pupils' conceptual, skill and language development in Visual Arts. To build further on this work and to further support continuity and progression, the review process should also identify a broader range of artists, sculptors and painters to be studied. Commendably, whole-school approaches to teachers' short-term planning have been reviewed and a consistent approach to fortnightly planning is implemented throughout the school. There is also evidence of very effective collaborative planning by teachers for integrated learning.

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 recognition and the affirmation of the very high quality of both teaching and learning of Visual Arts in Eoin Baisde Cailiní Naoidh. We are committed to implementing the recommendations outlined in the 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

We welcome all recommendations that will improve teaching and learning in our school. During the school year 2019/2020 the collaborative review of the school plan will be completed. The revised Visual Arts plan will include a whole-school approach to the maintenance of pupil portfolios and a structured approach to peer assessment will also be included. Art displays will now include a greater focus on the language of the Visual Arts.

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;