An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna

Department of Education and Skills

Curriculum Evaluation

REPORT

Ainm na scoile / School name	Scoil Náisiúnta Tighearnáin Naofa
Seoladh na scoile / School address	Via Crossmolina P.O. Ballina County Mayo
Uimhir rolla / Roll number	17098O

Date of inspection: 21-03-2019

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agus Scileanna
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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(s) 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 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.

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	21-03-2019
Inspection activities undertaken • Discussion with principal and teachers • Review of relevant documents • Pupil focus-group interview	• Observation of teaching and learning • Examination of pupils' work • Interaction with pupils • Feedback to principal and teachers

SCHOOL CONTEXT

Scoil Náisiúnta Tighearnáin Naofa is a co-educational primary school located in a rural setting operating under the patronage of the Catholic Bishop of Killala. Currently, there are four mainstream teachers and two special education teachers (SETs) with ninety-two pupils enrolled.

SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

FINDINGS

- Very good teaching and learning in Visual Arts were observed in all classes; pupils clearly enjoyed their engagement in Visual Arts.
- The emphasis on *Looking and responding* is highly commendable, particularly with regard to the work of artists from the western European art tradition; it results in the development of appropriate language that supports the understanding of artistic concepts.
- The school plans very effectively across all six strands of the visual arts curriculum, supporting progression for all pupils.
- There is notable use of integration with other curricular areas.
- Assessment is good in the subject.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- To further enhance existing practice, the staff should engage in whole-school planning for one strand from the visual arts curriculum each half term.
- The creation of digital portfolios of pupils' work should be explored as means to record learning in a permanent and more accessible format and to support assessment.
- The school should extend opportunities for *Looking and responding* to include works of art outside of the western European art tradition.

DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

1. THE QUALITY OF PUPILS' LEARNING

The overall quality of learning is very good. Pupils are engaged in their art making and demonstrate relevant understanding and skills. Learning objectives are achieved by the pupils in a creative and innovative environment. All class levels are enabled to discuss, compare and contrast styles and characteristics of various artists. *Aistear: the Early Childhood Curriculum Framework* offers relevant experience in various art and design skills in an age-appropriate and language-rich manner and stimulates the pupils' imagination and creativity.

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

The quality of teaching is very good. It is informed by a school plan that facilitates balance and progression across all strands. Aesthetic language and appropriate terminology are consistently

modelled by teachers. A stimulating visual environment is maintained. A commendable level of planning, preparation and collaborative practice results in very effective learner experiences.

The teachers ensure that all pupils have access to the visual arts curriculum. The pupils' individual creativity is developed.

The school has established a comprehensive two-year plan for *Looking and responding*, which provides opportunities for pupils to look at and respond to work by famous artists from the western European art tradition. The school should extend opportunities for *Looking and responding* to include works of art that are outside of the western European art tradition.

The quality of assessment is good. Teacher observations are used for assessment and as a basis for planning. The creation of digital portfolios of pupils' work should be explored as means to record learning in a permanent and more accessible format and to support assessment.

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

The school plans very effectively across all six strands of the visual arts curriculum, supporting progression for all pupils. The school plan informs practice and scaffolds the development of appropriate language and concepts across the full breadth of the curriculum for each class level. It provides an effective framework for teachers' individual planning.

School leadership supports the development of teaching and learning in Visual Arts through facilitating teachers' collective and collaborative practice. The overall approach to *Looking and responding* and the use of Visual Arts in *Aistear* support the development of literacy and language skills.

Appendix

SCHOOL RESPONSE TO THE REPORT

Submitted by the Board of Management

Part A: Observations on the content of the inspection report

The Principal, Staff and Board of Management of Scoil Naisiúnta Tighearnáin Naofa have examined the Visual Arts Evaluation Report and are happy and satisfied with its content. We are proud of the affirming recognition for our effort, and achievements, in providing highly effective learning experiences for all our pupils in Visual Arts. We are always looking at ways to improve our practice and so we fully accept the recommendations outlined. We are committed to implementing the improvements suggested in the coming year and beyond.

Part B: Follow-up actions planned or undertaken since the completion of the inspection activity to implement the findings and recommendations of the inspection.

Recommendation 1: Whole school staff planning for one strand of the visual arts curriculum each half term.

Collaborative planning as part of Croke Park hours will be dedicated this year to updating our Visual Arts Policy to include an agreed Visual Arts calendar. This will set out what two strands are to be covered each term across the school year. This plan will be reviewed on an ongoing basis and refined to facilitate themes and topics originating from school life and the wider curriculum.

Recommendation 2: The creation of digital portfolios of pupils' work.

As part of our school's ongoing commitment to embed the use of technology in our teaching and learning we have begun to trial 'Seesaw'. This commercially produced portfolio and assessment app, though recently introduced, has noticeably boosted pupil engagement in self-assessment. Alongside this, teachers are also committed to recording class collaborative creative work and the experiences our pupils share in such as trips and visits by way of photographs.

Recommendation 3: The school should extend opportunities for Looking and responding to include works of art outside of the western European art tradition.

In accepting our over reliance on European art we, as a school, are actively seeking to broaden the range of art we explore in our Looking and Responding lessons. As part of this year's policy review we will identify the work of artists from outside Western Europe and also explore the traditional art of the native peoples from around the world. The artists and media chosen will complement the existing range of artists covered and give pupils opportunities to compare and contrast the subject, composition, style and techniques.

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;