An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna

Department of Education and Skills

Curriculum Evaluation

Physical Education

REPORT

Ainm na scoile / School name	Scoil Naomh Iosef
Seoladh na scoile / School address	Castlehackett Belclare Tuam County Galway
Uimhir rolla / Roll number	18289D

Date of inspection: 22-11-2017

AN ROINN OIDEACHAIS AGUS SCILEANNA | DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND SKILLS

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 Physical Education 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.

Curriculum Evaluation

Date of inspection	22-11-2017
Inspection activities undertaken • Discussion with principal and teachers • Review of relevant documents • Pupil focus-group interview	• Observation of teaching and learning • Interaction with pupils • Feedback to principal and teachers

SCHOOL CONTEXT

Scoil Naomh Iosef, Castlehackett is a co-educational school catering for pupils from junior infants to sixth class. It is under the patronage of the Catholic Archbishop of Tuam. At the time of the evaluation, there were three mainstream class teachers, and sixty pupils were enrolled.

SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

FINDINGS

- The overall quality of pupils' learning in Physical Education (PE) is very good.
- Very high-quality learning experiences are provided to the pupils in PE, including a range of extra-curricular opportunities delivered by the teachers on a voluntary basis.
- Pupils' learning in PE is supported by the teachers' highly effective practice.
- While a good range of assessment strategies is in use, pupil progress in each strand of the PE curriculum is not recorded consistently across the school.
- The quality of school planning is very good and many actions agreed as part of the school self-evaluation (SSE) process have been implemented very successfully.
- A very good plan of work has been agreed at school level to further develop the dance strand of the curriculum, although it has not been fully implemented as of yet.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Teachers should use the clear intended learning outcomes from their planning documents as a basis for recording pupil progress across the PE curriculum.
- The agreed actions for developing the dance strand of the curriculum should be implemented to ensure all class teachers are equipped with the necessary skills and resources to provide instruction in dance to the pupils across the school.

DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. THE QUALITY OF PUPILS' LEARNING

The overall quality of learning in PE is very good. In each lesson observed, pupils were engaged meaningfully with purposeful activities to develop their skills, and the majority of pupils achieved the intended learning outcomes. The pupils' enjoyment of learning in PE was evident throughout the school and was strengthened by their engagement with attainable, yet challenging, learning activities. There is evidence of progression in pupils' learning across the curriculum and most pupils are enabled to use relevant vocabulary to describe their learning, in particular in the athletics strand of the curriculum. Commendably, all pupils receive worthwhile water safety instruction to equip them with valuable lifelong skills, including the younger pupils who do not attend swimming lessons until they reach the middles classes. The pupils in the focus group spoke very positively of the benefit of their PE lessons, noting that they develop transferable skills for use outside of the PE

lesson. They also outlined the importance of PE in maintaining good health and wellbeing. The manner in which information is transferred from the special educational needs (SEN) setting to the class teacher is highly commendable as it enables pupils with SEN to develop their motor skills at an appropriate level. A broad range of extra-curricular activities is provided to pupils to further their learning in PE. The voluntary nature of the work of teachers in providing these activities is highly commendable.

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

The quality of the learner experiences is very good. Very respectful interactions between teachers and pupils were observed throughout the evaluation. It is commendable that pupils are given opportunities to reflect on their own progress and to set goals towards improvement for themselves. Pupil leadership in PE is encouraged, in particular for the senior pupils, and a wide range of resources has been provided to support learner experiences. Some effective integration of learning in PE with learning in other subjects, including Geography, Mathematics and Irish, was evident; the school should seek to further develop these opportunities in each setting. It is clear that initiatives such as the annual road race organised by the school are having a very positive impact on developing pupils' skills and enthusiasm for PE outside of the formal class setting.

The overall quality of teachers' practice is very good. All teachers have very high-quality subject knowledge, and their engagement with professional development and their sharing of expertise are highly successful. The application of their knowledge is evident in very high-quality planning and preparation, which is based clearly on specific learning outcomes for pupils. A range of teaching approaches is used in each setting, and the teachers' classroom management skills are very effective. Very good guidance for pupils' individual needs was noted in each setting, and praise and positive reinforcement was used very effectively to progress pupils' learning during the evaluation.

The overall quality of assessment in PE is good. Teachers make very good use of observation skills to provide additional support for pupils in need. General progress in PE is reported to parents in the end-of-year report and at parent-teacher meetings. In most settings, good-quality feedback was provided to pupils, and, where learning outcomes were most successful, success criteria were shared with the pupils. However, the recording of pupil progress in each strand of the curriculum has not been formalised. To this end, the use of the intended learning outcomes from planning documents should now be used as a basis for recording pupils' progress across the curriculum.

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

The quality of school planning, including SSE, is very good. The whole-school plan has been reviewed recently and a yearly timetable for teaching each strand has been agreed and implemented by the teachers. Teachers' monthly progress records indicate that, in general, the pupils experience a broad and balanced curriculum. The school has focused on teaching and learning in PE as part of the SSE process and a number of areas were identified for improvement. Most of the agreed actions have been implemented very effectively, although the plan for improving teaching and learning in dance has not been fully implemented as of yet. It is recommended that the actions outlined in this plan be implemented to ensure that the teachers are fully equipped with the skills and resources necessary to teach the dance strand of the curriculum.

4. CHILD PROTECTION

The following aspects of the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools* were checked during the evaluation:

1. Teachers' access to a copy of the school's child protection policy
2. The prominent display of the name of Designated Liaison Person near the main entrance

The school was fully compliant with both aspects.

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 of Castlehackett N.S. welcomes this detailed curriculum evaluation report in P.E. We are very happy with all that was identified as positive and will engage with the proposed recommendations to further improve the quality of physical education in the school.

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 staff of the school have already focused their attention on the areas identified for improvement. Teachers are now using their intended learning outcomes from their planning documents as a basis for recording pupil progress across the P.E. curriculum.
Also, all agreed actions for developing the dance strand of the curriculum have been fully implemented and teachers are now resourced to provide instruction in dance to their pupils.

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;

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