An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna

Department of Education and Skills

Evaluation of Provision for Pupils with Special Educational Needs

REPORT

Ainm na scoile / School name	SN An Chuileannaigh
Seoladh na scoile / School address	Beaufort Killarney Co. Kerry
Uimhir rolla / Roll number	17710C

Date of inspection: 13-02-2019

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WHAT IS AN EVALUATION OF PROVISION FOR PUPILS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS?

The Evaluation of Provision for Pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN) is a focused evaluation of provision for pupils with special educational needs in mainstream primary schools. As this inspection model places a particular emphasis on the quality of learner outcomes for pupils with special educational needs, most of the time spent in the school by inspectors is given to visits to mainstream classes and support settings.

HOW TO READ THIS REPORT

During this inspection, the inspectors evaluated provision for pupils with special educational needs under the following headings or areas of enquiry:

1. The quality of learning of pupils with special educational needs
2. The quality of teaching of pupils with special educational needs
3. The management and use of resources received to support pupils with special educational needs

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.

Evaluation of Provision for Pupils with Special Educational Needs

Date of inspection	13-02-2019
Inspection activities undertaken • Discussion with principal and teachers • Meeting with SEN team • Meeting with SNAs • Review of relevant documents • Analysis of parent questionnaires	 • Observation of teaching and learning • Examination of pupils' work • Interaction with pupils • Pupil group discussion • Feedback to principal and teachers

SCHOOL CONTEXT

S N An Chuilleanaig is a co-educational, primary school located in Beaufort, twelve kilometres west of Killarney in Co Kerry. The school has seven mainstream class teachers and four special education teachers (SETs). At the time of the evaluation, two of the SETs were on leave and two recently appointed teachers were in place. The school also has two classes for pupils with Autistic Spectrum Disorders (ASD).

SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

FINDINGS

- The overall learning of pupils with special educational needs is of a high quality throughout the school.
- The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is good with the practice observed ranging from satisfactory to excellent.
- The school displays a very high level of commitment to providing a positive and inclusive learning environment for all pupils.
- Class teachers and special education teachers collaborate in an effective manner in the provision of support to specific pupils; scope for development in teacher collaborative practice to build whole-staff capacity in particular areas was noted.
- The management and use of resources to support pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- The use of the Continuum of Support, in line with Circular 0013/2017, is exemplary.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- The school should facilitate the further development of whole-staff capacity in areas such as differentiation and the formative use of assessment data by systematically sharing the significant expertise that is available in the SET team, and among some mainstream class teachers.

DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. THE QUALITY OF LEARNING OF PUPILS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

The overall learning of pupils' with special educational needs is of a high quality throughout the school. Highly respectful classroom interactions supported pupils' confidence and they demonstrated very good subject knowledge.

Observations and interactions with pupils indicate that they enjoy their lessons and their experiences of learning. Pupils confidently discuss the range of supports that they receive and articulate positive views about their learning. They demonstrate high levels of motivation and enjoyment in engaging with appropriately challenging work. The school is highly praised for the organisation of an integrated approach to the provision of positive learning experiences for pupils with SEN. Examples of commendable practices include: use of the move-well, move-often resource designed by the Professional Development Service for Teachers (PDST), and literacy, numeracy and nurture groups which include pupils from different classes and learning settings. These approaches effectively promote social inclusion and peer-mediated learning.

Very supportive, adaptive learning environments have been created in response to pupil needs in most classrooms. The organisation of individualised workstations, quiet spaces, a nurture room and visual aids is particularly noteworthy. These arrangements support high levels of productive pupil engagement in learning tasks.

Highly commendable learner environments support whole-class and individualised learning in most classrooms. The use of workstations, visual aids, quiet spaces, a nurture room and whole-class adapted environments supported high levels of productive pupil engagement in learning tasks.

2. THE QUALITY OF TEACHING OF PUPILS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

The overall quality teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good with lessons observed ranging from satisfactory to excellent. Features of positive practice include the effective use of team-teaching, station teaching in a number of classroom settings and the provision of targeted learning activities to individuals and groups in support settings.

Classroom and special education teachers plan collaboratively and communicate on an ongoing basis in relation to pupils' needs and their progress in learning. In the majority of settings, data from baseline testing was used to inform both the establishment of specific and measurable targets for improvements in pupil learning outcomes and to track and monitor progress. Very effective collaborative planning between the special-class teachers and mainstream-class teachers supported the effective integration of pupils from ASD classes into the mainstream classes.

The majority of teachers differentiate learning tasks to accommodate the range of pupils' needs and abilities. In the most effective settings observed, active-learning methodologies were employed which made very good use of available teaching resources including: ICT, audio supports, personalised visual aids, visual schedules, tactile materials and assisted learning equipment. Features of exemplary practice noted involved the withdrawal of pupils with particular needs for highly personalised targeted learning that consolidated in-class teaching. In some settings, however, there was a need to provide a greater range of learning activities which enable pupils to make meaningful connections with their personal interests and strengths. The school should ensure the

further development of whole-staff capacity in areas such as differentiation and the formative use of assessment data by implementing a systematic approach to sharing the expertise that is available in the SET team and among some mainstream class teachers.

3. THE MANAGEMENT AND USE OF RESOURCES RECEIVED TO SUPPORT PUPILS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

The overall management and use of resources to support pupils with special educational needs is very good. The principal and special education needs coordinator have developed high levels of expertise in providing for pupils with special educational needs. They display very high levels of commitment to the provision of a positive, inclusive and effective learning environment for all pupils. In a questionnaire circulated as part of the evaluation, the majority of parents expressed very positive views about the school and the support that their children receive.

The range of models including in-class teaching, group and individualised support and early intervention programmes effectively ensures that resources are prioritised for pupils with the greatest levels of need. While there is a significant weighting of SET allocation towards in-class support for pupils, there is considered and very effective use of withdrawal to provide additional support for some students. This balanced needs-based approach is a significant strength of the school. The use of the NEPS Continuum of Support in line with Circular 0013/2017 is exemplary.

The available human resources are used to very good effect to ensure that learning for pupils with additional needs is supported in a positive and inclusive environment. A meeting with the special-needs assistants indicated that very positive working relationships have been cultivated with the teachers and their work was observed to contribute very positively to the care and inclusion of pupils.

The school liaises in an effective manner with a range of external agencies to access support, interventions and advice. Teachers use evidence-informed interventions to support learning and achievement for pupils with additional or special educational needs. While pupils' views and opinions about school and learning are sought, there is scope to incorporate these opinions more into the development of student support files.

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 of quality 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;

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 warmly welcomes the findings of the inspection report. We are delighted that our use of the Continuum of Support has been noted as 'exemplary'. We are proud that our learner environments are considered to be 'highly commendable'. We welcome the very positive feedback in the parent questionnaires which is very reassuring about the provision for SEN 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 Board of Management welcomes the recommendations in the report.

- Additional time at staff meetings will be spent sharing ideas on differentiation and on the formative use of assessment data. Those with significant expertise in these areas will mentor their colleagues
- Pupils' views and opinions will be further incorporated into their support files
- The Board is fully committed to maintaining the overall high quality of learning throughout the school