An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna

Department of Education and Skills

Curriculum Evaluation

Visual Arts

REPORT

Ainm na scoile / School name	Tulsk NS
Seoladh na scoile / School address	Tulsk Castlerea Co. Roscommon
Uimhir rolla / Roll number	16034G

Date of inspection: 27-09-2017

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 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.

Curriculum Evaluation

Date of inspection	27-09-2017
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

Tulsk NS, under the patronage of the Catholic Bishop of Elphin, is located in the rural village of Tulsk, Co. Roscommon, approximately eighteen kilometres north of Roscommon town. The current enrolment is eighty-four pupils with three mainstream class teachers and two support teachers based in the school.

SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

FINDINGS

- The quality of pupils' learning in Visual Arts is very good. Pupils display an eagerness and enthusiasm for their work and discuss their learning confidently.
- The quality of support provided for pupils' learning in Visual Arts is very good; teaching is of a very high quality and there is skilful integration with other subject areas.
- The quality of display of Visual Arts is very good.
- Pupils engage purposefully and meaningfully in well-planned Visual Art activities within the school across all of the strand units. However, pupils' first-hand experiences of Visual Arts outside the classroom is limited.
- The effectiveness of school planning in progressing pupils' learning is very good.
- The Visual Arts policy outlines a varied and balanced programme of work, including a highly commendable plan for the *Looking and Responding* strand and the work of famous artists.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Pupils' first-hand experience of art should be enhanced through a programme of activities beyond the classroom; this could include visits to art galleries, museums and craft centres, as appropriate.

DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. THE QUALITY OF PUPILS' LEARNING

Overall, the quality of pupils' learning is very good. Pupils experiment in creative and structured ways with a range of art materials. The quality of their experimentation using printing and fabric and fibre during the evaluation was highly commendable. The majority of pupils have accessed open-ended materials at regular intervals as part of *Aistear: The Early Childhood Curriculum Framework* and this has supported the development of their creativity. They express their thoughts and creativity within a wide range of two-dimensional and three-dimensional media including all six strands of the Visual Arts curriculum. The senior pupils are very confident talking about and making connections between their own work and the work of others and linking it to occupations in the

world outside. Pupils' enjoyment of their art experience is evident in the observation of lessons taught and in pupils' engagement in the focus-group discussion. All pupils are highly engaged in their work. They use art terminology effectively when responding to visual art experiences. They are motivated to learn through having a very good standard of skills, knowledge and understanding of the curriculum.

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

The school provides very good support for pupils' learning in Visual Arts. Their experiences are purposeful and integrated with learning in many other subject areas. Classrooms and corridors celebrate pupils' work in Visual Arts through vibrant displays of their finished products alongside pertinent art terminology. Senior pupils upload photos of artwork on the dedicated school blog. They also use information and communications technology to research the work of famous artists. All pupils have access to a wide variety of art resources and are given appropriate opportunities to present their work. They participate in a range of projects and competitions that support their learning in drawing, paint and colour, print, clay, construction and fabric and fibre. Teachers create well-organised, inclusive learning environments in which pupils can work productively in both an independent and collaborative manner.

The quality of teaching is very good. Teachers use the interactive whiteboard regularly to support their teaching and prepare stimulating digital presentations. They provide a wide range of stimuli such as poems, stories, pictures and photographs at the start of lessons. They model enthusiasm for the subject. All teachers integrate literacy and teach specific art terminology during lessons. Teachers link the subject-specific skills and knowledge across and beyond the curriculum. The quality of their planning is highly effective.

The quality of assessment is very good. Teachers assess all relevant aspects of pupils' learning. Pupils maintain art portfolios to retain records of their two-dimensional work while teachers maintain photographic records of pupils' three-dimensional work. Pupils discuss their art work with their peers and teachers use feedback to pupils' work as opportunities to suggest strategies for improvement.

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

The quality of school planning is very good. The school plan has provided for breadth and balance across all of the strand units to ensure progression in pupils' learning. Teachers' individual preparation provides very effectively for the teaching of key concepts and skills of the subject.

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 Tulsk N.S. is delighted with the findings of the Curriculum Evaluation of Visual Arts carried out in September 2017. The findings highlight the very high quality teaching and learning experiences throughout Tulsk N.S. We feel it is a true reflection of the hard work that is taking place.

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 school will organise visits to museums, art galleries and craft centres every year to further enhance the experience of the pupils and their engagement with the Visual Arts Curriculum.

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;