An Roinn Oideachais agus Óige
Department of Education and Youth

Curriculum Evaluation: English
REPORT

Ainm na scoile/School name	Saint Anne's Loreto National School
Seoladh na scoile/School address	Fairgreen Navan County Meath
Uimhir rolla/Roll number	00883P
Dáta na cigireachta/ Date of evaluation	12/06/2025
Dáta eisiúna na tuairisce/Date of issue of report	11/11/2025

What is a curriculum evaluation?

Curriculum evaluations report on the quality of teaching and learning in specific subjects of the *Primary School Curriculum (1999),* the *Primary Language Curriculum (2019)* and the *Primary Mathematics Curriculum.* 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 English under the following headings:

1. Quality of pupils' learning outcomes
2. Supporting pupils' learning through learning 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.

Included in this curriculum evaluation report is a student-friendly page that provides information for the children/young people in your school about the inspection that occurred recently. It outlines for them some of the main findings and recommendations.

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.

Actions of the school to safeguard children and prevent and tackle bullying

<table>
<tr><td colspan="2">During the inspection visit, the following checks in relation to the school's child protection and anti-bullying procedures were conducted:</td></tr>
<tr><td>Child Protection</td><td>Anti-bullying</td></tr>
<tr><td>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.</td><td>1. The school has developed an anti-bullying policy that meets the requirements of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (2013) or Bí Cineálta (2024) and this policy is reviewed annually.
2. The school's current anti-bullying policy is published on its website and/or is readily accessible to board of management members, teachers, parents and pupils.</td></tr>
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The school met the requirements in relation to each of the checks above.

Curriculum evaluation

Date of inspection	12/06/2025
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

Saint Anne's Loreto National School is a co-educational school operating under the patronage of the Roman Catholic Bishop of Meath. At the time of the evaluation there were 306 pupils enrolled in the school from junior infants to sixth class. Teaching staff included the administrative principal, twelve class teachers, one teacher for a class of pupils with additional speech and language needs, five special education teachers and one part-time special education teacher. The school also had access to the services of a part-time home-school-community-liaison-coordinator (HSCL). Saint Anne's Loreto National School participates in Band 2 of Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools (DEIS), the action plan of the Department of Education for educational inclusion. A representative sample of teachers was visited during the course of this evaluation.

Summary of main findings and recommendations:

Findings

- The quality of pupils' learning outcomes was very good with excellent learning observed in a few settings.
- The learning experiences provided for pupils were of a very high standard.
- The quality of teaching ranged from good to excellent with very good teaching skills observed in almost all lessons.
- Teachers implemented assessment procedures very effectively and assessment records provided useful information on pupils' progress and achievements.
- School planning, including school self-evaluation (SSE), was very effective in progressing pupils' learning.

Recommendations

- According as pupils progress through the school, teachers should encourage pupils to select and retain samples of writing to support their reflection on their progress and influence their ongoing development as writers.
- Teachers should develop pupils' self- assessment practices further to support pupils in setting their own learning goals in oral language, reading and writing.
- Mainstream teachers and special education teachers should place a greater emphasis on encouraging and showing pupils with identified needs how to connect their learning between the classroom and the support setting.

1. The quality of pupils' learning outcomes

The quality of pupils' learning outcomes was very good with excellent learning observed in a few lessons. In all the classrooms and support settings visited during the inspection, pupils demonstrated a very good level of knowledge, skill and understanding across all aspects of English. Pupils engaged very well in lessons and could work independently, in pairs and in

groups. In a focus group meeting between pupil representatives and the inspectors, held as part of the evaluation, pupils stated that they enjoyed their learning in English and they were enthusiastic in their description of interesting and varied lessons in English. The pupils also stated that they felt supported by teachers in their learning and confident in their progress.

Pupils had very well developed oral-language skills; they had a broad and appropriate vocabulary and demonstrated a very good capacity to structure and sequence sentences coherently in response to different kinds of questions. Pupils were also confident and articulate in initiating and volunteering contributions to class and group work. They were knowledgeable about the conventions of different oral language genres, including speeches, interviews, meetings and debates. In the senior classes, pupils had a very good understanding of how to prepare and present motions for debate and to respond well to counter arguments. In a focus group meeting with inspectors, pupils stated that they would like more opportunities to create and deliver oral presentations of their learning.

Across all class levels, pupils were achieving well in reading and demonstrated very good decoding and comprehension skills. Pupils with identified needs in English were achieving well relative to their targets in literacy outlined in their support plans. They approached their learning with confidence and enthusiasm. To enhance provision for these pupils, mainstream and special education teachers should place a greater emphasis on encouraging and showing pupils with identified needs how to connect their learning between the classroom and the support setting.

It was evident from reviewing pupils' written work that teachers set high expectations for the presentation and content of lessons. Pupils had very good penmanship and spelling skills. It was very good practice that teachers encouraged the pupils in the senior classes to develop their own handwriting style based on their knowledge and mastery of handwriting conventions. Pupils also had good opportunities to use digital technologies to record and present their work. Pupils had a very good understanding of grammar and punctuation rules. Examples of pupils' writing on display in classrooms were of a very high quality. These examples demonstrated that pupils understood and could skilfully apply the writing conventions of different genres to create well-structured and descriptive texts, which communicated their messages clearly. There were also examples of very good quality writing across other curriculum areas including History and Social, Personal and Health Education.

It was evident that teachers developed pupils' knowledge and skills progressively across class levels and in line with pupils' ability and achievement levels. Pupils demonstrated a very good capacity to combine their speaking, reading and writing skills during language lessons resulting in rich language-learning outcomes.

2. Supporting pupils' learning outcomes through learning experiences and teachers' practice

The learning experiences provided for pupils were of a very high standard. Lesson objectives built successfully on previous learning to provide pupils with progressive and appropriately challenging language-learning opportunities.

Teachers were very skilful in posing open-ended questions to pupils and in probing and connecting their responses to create interesting discussions. Teachers were very successful in identifying a wide range of school and classroom contexts in which they could develop pupils' oral language skills. These contexts included school activities such as participation in the student council, public-address school announcements, and through other curriculum areas, for example, project work in Social, Environmental and Scientific Education (SESE). In the focus-group discussion, pupils described their enjoyment of participating in a number of SESE initiatives and cultural and religious events that had a strong public-speaking dimension. In addition to lessons focusing on poetry, there were examples of pupils enjoying poetic language incidentally as opportunities arose naturally in lessons. All teachers should use poetry, word play and word games more frequently and more incidentally to cultivate pupils' enjoyment in and curiosity about language. There were some highly-commendable examples where pupils had

the opportunity to explore similarities and differences in the range of languages spoken by pupils in different classrooms; these examples should be extended further as they enhance pupils' understanding and appreciation of language.

Teachers skilfully implemented a range of effective programmes and approaches to teach the full range of reading skills, taking account of pupils' needs and achievements. These approaches included developing pupils' capacity to work independently and in pairs and small groups to select, decode and understand a broad range of different reading texts.

The quality of assessment was very good. Teachers monitored pupils' written work on a regular basis. Teachers generally provided pupils with informative and helpful feedback. In a few instances, it was evident that teachers needed to adapt writing activities further to meet individual pupil needs. Pupils were articulate in recounting and explaining the advice their teachers provided them with to improve their learning. Pupils were also articulate in describing how their learning had evolved over the course of the year. As pupils progress through the school, teachers should encourage and provide pupils with the opportunity to select and retain samples of writing to support them in reflecting on their own progress to help their development as writers.

In addition to developing pupils' self-assessment skills generally, teachers should develop pupils' self-assessment practices further to support pupils in setting their own learning goals in oral language, reading and writing. Mainstream teachers and special education teachers should place a greater emphasis on encouraging and showing pupils with identified needs how to connect their learning between the classroom and the support settings.

Classroom displays were very effective in providing pupils with reminders and resources to support their learning. These reminders and resources were particularly effective when they were created by teachers in consultation with pupils. There was potential for teachers to enhance the role of pupils in contributing to the creation and maintenance of classroom word walls through suggesting vocabulary from their own independent reading. Teachers used technology well to provide pupils with a range of ways in which to present their learning.

3. The effectiveness of school planning, including SSE, in progressing pupils' learning

School planning, including SSE, was very effective in progressing pupils' learning. School management and teachers had worked very systematically to involve all members of the school community in reviewing and setting priorities for the development of provision in English. It was very good practice that this review had a broad focus, encompassing not just knowledge and skills but also the extent to which pupils enjoyed their learning in English. This approach was effective in ensuring that the full extent of the primary language curriculum was considered. The resulting priorities were well supported by evidence. A worthwhile action plan was implemented and reviewed in terms of its impact on improving practice. Care was also taken to consider how successful actions could be embedded into school practice and recorded as school policy.

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For the pupils of Saint Anne's National School about their learning in English

Date of inspection: 12/06/2025

Introduction

Your school had an inspection of English recently. This page for pupils describes what the inspectors found and gives ideas about what the school should do to make learning better.

What did the inspectors do during the visit ?

The inspectors visited classrooms and talked to teachers and pupils about the work they were doing. An inspector also met with a focus group of pupils to talk to them about their learning.

What did the inspectors find?

Here are some of the main things:

- Pupils were learning well in all aspects of English.
- Teachers taught English lessons very well.
- Teachers were aware of the different needs, which pupils had in English, and they were very good at making lessons suitable and interesting for all pupils.

What the inspectors said the school should do to make learning better

- Teachers should help pupils identify for themselves what they need to improve in English.
- Teachers should show pupils who are getting extra help for English how to connect this learning with their learning in their classroom.

Thank you for taking the time to read this page.
A special thank you to pupils who took part in the focus group.

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	Examples of descriptive terms
Excellent	**Provision that is excellent** is exemplary in meeting the needs of learners. This provision provides an example for other schools and settings of exceptionally high standards of provision.	Excellent; exemplary; outstanding; exceptionally high standard; with very significant strengths
Very good	**Provision that is very good** is very effective in meeting the needs of learners and is of a very high standard. There is potential to build on existing strengths to achieve an excellent standard.	Very good; of a very high quality; very effective practice; highly commendable; very successful
Good	**Provision that is good** is effective in meeting the needs of learners. There is need to build on existing strengths in order to address the aspects to be developed and achieve a very good standard.	Good; of good quality; effective practice; competent; useful; commendable; good standard; strengths outweigh the shortcomings; appropriate provision although some possibilities for improvement exist
Requires improvement to achieve a good standard	**Provision that requires improvement to achieve a good standard** is not sufficiently effective in meeting the needs of learners. There is need to address certain deficiencies without delay in order to ensure that provision is good or better.	Fair; less than effective; less than sufficient; evident weaknesses that are impacting on learning; experiencing difficulty; shortcomings outweigh strengths; must improve in specified areas; action required to improve
Requires significant improvement to achieve a good standard	**Provision that requires significant improvement to achieve a good standard** is not meeting the needs of learners. There is immediate need for significant action to address the areas of concern.	Weak; poor; ineffective; insufficient; unacceptable; experiencing significant difficulties; serious deficiencies in the areas evaluated; requiring significant change, development and improvement to be effective

Appendix

SCHOOL RESPONSE TO THE REPORT

Submitted by the Board of Management

Area 1 Observations on the content of the inspection report

The Board of Management of Saint Anne's Loreto Primary School welcomes the publication of this Curriculum Evaluation Report on the teaching and learning of English.

The Board is particularly pleased that the report recognises: ·

- The very high quality of pupils' learning outcomes, with examples of excellent learning observed. ·
- The very high standard of learning experiences provided for pupils. ·
- The quality of teaching and the effective assessment practices in place. ·
- The strong culture of school planning and self-evaluation (SSE) that effectively supports pupils' progress and achievement.

The Board acknowledges the dedication, professionalism, and commitment of the principal, teachers, and support staff in fostering a positive learning environment where pupils are confident, articulate, and enthusiastic learners.

The Board notes the recommendations outlined in the report and commits to supporting their implementation.

Finally, the Board of Management is very appreciative of the positive engagement of pupils and parents with the school's work and acknowledges their contribution to the overall success of the school.

Area 2 Follow-up actions planned or undertaken since the completion of the inspection activity to implement the findings and recommendations of the inspection.

The Board notes the recommendations outlined in the report and commits to supporting their implementation.