An Roinn Oideachais agus Óige
Department of Education and Youth

Curriculum Evaluation: English
REPORT

Ainm na scoile/School name	Tralee Educate Together National School
Seoladh na scoile/School address	Collis Sandes House Killeen Oakpark Co. Kerry
Uimhir rolla/Roll number	20158A
Dáta na cigireachta/ Date of evaluation	24/09/2025
Dáta eisiúna na tuairisce/Date of issue of report	04/12/2025

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 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>Bí Cineálta</td></tr>
<tr><td>1. The name of the DLP and the Child Safeguarding Statement (CSS) are prominently displayed near the main door of the school / in the reception area. Following the school's adoption of the updated procedures 2025, it is also required to display a student-friendly version incorporating the name of the DLP beside the CSS.
2. The school's child safeguarding statement has been ratified by the board and includes an annual review and a risk assessment.
3. All teachers visited were aware of who to go to if they had a child protection concern.</td><td>1. The school has developed an anti-bullying policy using Appendix A of Bí Cineálta, it is reviewed annually (or earlier if required) and includes a student/pupil friendly version that is displayed where students/pupils and the school community can see it.
2. The school's anti-bullying policy is published on its website and/or is readily accessible to board of management members, staff, parents and students/pupils.
3. The board of management minutes record that the principal provides an update to the board at each ordinary board meeting that meets the requirements of Bí Cineálta</td></tr>
</table>

The school met the requirements in relation to each of the checks above.

Curriculum evaluation

Date of inspection	23/09/2025 and 24/09/2025
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

Tralee Educate Together National School is a co-educational primary school located in Tralee, County Kerry. It operates under the patronage of Educate Together. At the time of the evaluation the school had an enrolment of eighty-eight pupils. The staff comprised of four mainstream class teachers, two full-time special education teachers, one of whom was the principal, one part-time special education teacher, based in another school, and a part-time teacher for pupils with English as an additional language. The school participates in Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools (DEIS), the action plan of the Department of Education and Youth for educational inclusion.

Summary of main findings and recommendations:

Findings

- The quality of pupils' learning outcomes was very good; pupils demonstrated enjoyment in their learning and were highly engaged during literacy activities.
- The overall quality of pupils' learning experiences was highly commendable; the use of the outdoor environment and educational field trips provided rich opportunities for them to apply their literacy skills in collaborative activities.
- The quality of teaching was very good; teachers planned well-structured lessons that supported pupils' progress in language development, reading and writing.
- The quality of assessment was effective; teachers used a variety of summative assessments and observations to identify emerging needs and to monitor pupil progress.
- The effectiveness of school planning, including DEIS planning, in progressing pupils' learning was very good; teachers collaborated to develop an integrated language plan aligned with the *Primary Language Curriculum (2019)* and the school context.

Recommendations

- Teachers should plan to extend the use of digital technology beyond research, to include the development of pupils' critical literacy skills, and to enable them to create and present their learning in innovative ways.
- To support the ongoing development of pupils' language awareness, teachers should plan to implement plurilingual whole-school approaches.
- To strengthen pupils' independence in learning, teachers should provide regular opportunities for them to reflect on their learning as they develop the language and skills associated with self-assessment strategies.

Detailed findings and recommendations

1. The quality of pupils' learning outcomes

The quality of pupils' learning outcomes was very good. They demonstrated enjoyment in their learning and were highly engaged during literacy activities.

All lessons had a clear focus on oral language development. In junior classes, pupils recited rhymes with confidence. Almost all pupils listened actively and followed instructions carefully. Their vocabulary was extended through language games and sequencing activities. In middle and senior classes, there was a continued focus on vocabulary development and pupils used a variety of strategies to learn new words. Middle and senior pupils also explored the creative use of language through discussion about adjectives, similes and metaphors in their reading material. It was highly commendable that all classes responded to poetry in different ways, including recitation, reading, discussion, writing and art. To further enhance practice, it is recommended that, in addition to observation, teachers use oral language assessments to monitor pupils' progress. This would help support their continuous progress in oral language skills.

Early literacy skills were well developed in junior classes. Pupils identified initial sounds in words and were developing their understanding of words as units within sentences. This awareness was fostered incrementally as they progressed from using concrete materials to represent words to being able to count the number of words in sentences. In middle classes, pupils' phonological awareness continued to be developed as they blended individual sounds to create new words. To further strengthen this area, there is scope to extend the teaching of phonological awareness through a whole-school approach to ensure continuity and progression across all classes. Pupils read with fluency and used comprehension strategies, including prediction, recall and visualisation, to deepen their understanding of texts. In senior classes, pupils described main events from their class novel and poetry reading. They used inference to answer open-ended questions about characters. Pupils read with appropriate pace and intonation and described their reading preferences. It was highly commendable that pupils used dictionaries to understand new vocabulary and were challenged to provide alternative words.

A whole-school approach to writing supported the incremental development of pupils' cursive handwriting skills and their understanding of writing genres. Almost all pupils wrote legibly and fluently, with senior classes having agency in their choice of script. Emergent writing skills in junior classes were very well developed. Fine motor skills were very effectively nurtured through a variety of playful activities. In middle and senior classes, copybooks contained samples of recount writing, and pupils very ably described its purpose and structure. It was highly commendable that pupils in all classes had regular opportunities to engage in free writing, which encouraged them to use their creativity and imagination. Constrained literacy skills such as punctuation and grammar were highly developed, with visual reminders and teacher prompts helping pupils to use this knowledge in their writing activities. Spelling skills were effectively developed through differentiated spelling lists, memorisation strategies and dictation tests.

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

The overall quality of pupils' learning experiences was highly commendable. Almost all pupils engaged purposefully in appropriately challenging activities, with opportunities to learn both independently and collaboratively. Interactions between pupils and teachers were respectful. Classroom displays supported learning in English and included samples of different writing genres. Pupils in the middle and senior classes had valuable opportunities to further develop their oral language skills through participation in debating competitions. Additional oral language opportunities for all pupils included involvement in school performances. Classroom libraries, a central school library and a mobile library service provided access to a wide range of reading

genres. It was highly commendable that pupils also had opportunities to visit the local library to participate in storytelling and writing workshops with local authors.

Writing experiences were enriched through participation in a local writers' festival, where pupils composed poems for the event. The use of the outdoor environment and educational field trips provided rich opportunities for them to apply their literacy skills in collaborative activities requiring discussion, research and written presentations. Projects such as Celebrating Kerry's Hedgerows and the school garden initiative encouraged pupils to use their literacy skills in an integrated and meaningful way. Cross-curricular literacy opportunities were further enhanced through participation in Junior Entrepreneur, Engineering Week and an Artist Partnership Project. Pupils also used digital technology effectively to conduct research as part of these initiatives. Teachers should plan to extend the use of digital technology beyond research to include the development of pupils' critical literacy skills, and to enable them to create and present their learning in innovative ways.

All pupils in the focus group expressed a positive attitude towards English. They identified debating, the school show, project research and poetry as activities that made learning English fun and interesting. Pupils enjoyed working collaboratively on reading and language games and liked learning in different ways, including modelling, listening to stories and using their comprehension strategies. Pupils spoke confidently about how they applied their English skills in real-life contexts and across other curricular areas such as using new vocabulary in discussions, applying visualisation techniques in Art and writing about Science experiments. All pupils enjoyed free writing and the opportunity it provided them to write imaginatively about topics of their choice. They also appreciated visits to the local library, museum and cultural centre, describing their participation in animation and storytelling workshops. The student council and conferencing with teachers provided valuable opportunities for pupils to share opinions and ideas, with their suggestions influencing different aspects of school life.

The quality of teaching was very good. Teachers planned well-structured lessons that supported pupils' progress in language development, reading and writing. In almost all settings, teachers set and communicated high expectations for learning. Teachers should collaborate to develop this very effective practice as a whole-school approach. It was highly commendable that all teachers used a variety of playful methodologies and differentiation strategies in their teaching. Teachers modelled a high-quality register of language, motivating pupils to use similar vocabulary in class discussions. Teachers prepared classroom environments that promoted an appreciation of English, as evidenced by visual prompts and displays of pupils' learning. To further enhance pupils' language awareness, it is recommended that teachers plan and implement plurilingual whole-school approaches. These approaches could include opportunities for pupils to explore, examine and compare languages as they read and write texts in their home languages, thereby enriching their understanding of language structures and usage.

Support for pupils with identified needs and those with English as an additional language was provided through small-group withdrawal and in-class support. Teachers created very positive, affirming environments that supported pupils' learning. School support plans included documented targets and were reviewed regularly in collaboration with class teachers and parents. Teachers also collaborated informally to plan for in-class and team-teaching sessions. To develop this collaborative practice further, it would be beneficial for teachers to use pre-assessments to inform the strategic development of weekly team-teaching plans, and post-assessments to evaluate the impact of these initiatives on pupils' progress.

The quality of assessment was effective. Teachers used a variety of summative assessments and observation to identify emerging needs and to monitor pupils' progress. In a small number of settings, pupils had opportunities to review the work of their peers and track their own progress using checklists. To strengthen pupils' independence in learning, teachers should provide regular opportunities for pupils to reflect on their learning as they develop the language and skills associated with self-assessment strategies.

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

The effectiveness of school planning, including DEIS planning, in progressing pupils' learning was very good. The DEIS literacy target was informed by standardised test results. To support the further development of the DEIS literacy plan, teachers should collaborate to identify specific areas for improvement based on information about pupils' dispositions and specific needs.

Teachers also collaborated to develop an integrated language plan aligned with the *Primary Language Curriculum (2019)* and the school context. This highly effective language plan informed teachers' recorded preparation and supported the incremental progression of pupils' learning and literacy skills in English.

An Roinn Oideachais agus Óige
Department of Education and Youth

For the pupils of Tralee Educate Together National School about their learning in English

Date of inspection: 23/09/2025 and 24/09/2025

Introduction

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

What did the inspector do during the visit?

The inspector 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 inspector find?

Here are some of the main things:

- Pupils' learning in English was very good.
- Pupils used their learning in English in lots of different ways outside the classroom.
- Teaching was very good. Teachers helped pupils to get better at language, reading and writing.

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

- Teachers should help pupils to learn how to check their research facts and how to use digital technology to share their learning.
- Teachers should help pupils to show their work in their home language and talk about how languages can be the same or different.

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

Part A Observations on the content of the inspection report

The Board of Management of Tralee Educate Together National School welcomes the findings and recommendations of the Curriculum Evaluation in English. We are delighted that the quality of the teaching and the overall quality of pupils' learning experiences was recognised so positively.

The Board was very pleased to see the following:

"The quality of pupils' learning outcomes was very good; pupils demonstrated enjoyment in their learning and were highly engaged during literacy activities."

The report affirms and acknowledges the hard work and dedication of the staff as well as the collaborative culture of the school.

The Board is fully committed to implementing the recommendations of the report.

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