An Roinn Oideachais
Department of Education

Subject Inspection: Mathematics & Mathematical Applications
REPORT

Ainm na scoile/School name	Moyne Community School
Seoladh na scoile/School address	Moyne Co Longford
Uimhir rolla/Roll number	91436D
Dáta na cigireachta/ Date of evaluation	06/02/2025
Dáta eisiúna na tuairisce/Date of issue of report	26/05/2025

What is a subject inspection?

Subject Inspections report on the quality of work in individual curriculum areas within a school. 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 Mathematics & Mathematical Applications under the following headings:

1. Teaching, learning and assessment
2. Subject provision and whole-school support
3. Planning and preparation

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 subject inspection 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 students.</td></tr>
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The school met the requirements in relation to each of the checks above.

Subject inspection

Date of inspection	06/02/2025
Inspection activities undertaken • Review of relevant documents • Discussion with principal and key staff • Interaction with students, including focus groups	• Observation of teaching and learning during seven lessons • Examination of students' work • Feedback to principal and relevant staff

School context

Moyne Community School is a co-educational post-primary school, operating under the joint trusteeship of the Bishop of Ardagh and Clonmacnoise and Longford-Westmeath Education and Training Board (LWETB). There were 624 students enrolled at the time of the inspection. The school offered the Junior Cycle, an optional Transition Year (TY) programme, the Leaving Certificate (Established) (LCE) and the Leaving Certificate Applied (LCA).

Summary of main findings and recommendations:

Findings

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment was very good.
- Teachers created a supportive and positive learning environment in lessons; students displayed confidence when asking questions and teachers regularly affirmed students' efforts.
- There was excellent support for the subject; senior management actively encouraged teachers to engage with additional training, professional development and funded teachers' membership to the subject's teacher association.
- The subject team and management were very active in expanding the learning opportunities for students in the subject, by connecting with the community and various organisations.
- Overall, planning and preparation was of a very good quality; the department in the majority of cases demonstrated a high level of reflection and responsiveness by designing a variety of resources that met identified and emerging needs of students.

Recommendations

- There was potential to extend the use of the digital platform to enable greater communication between teachers and students. Teachers should explore ways to further use the digital platform, for example, to display and record whiteboard notation digitally and to support organised, autonomous learning.
- A few lessons featured very good consolidation and review of students' learning at the end of the lesson. Teachers should embed this practice further, ensuring that they assess students learning and allow time for reflection on the learning at the conclusion of lessons.
- A significant minority of schemes of work needed additional detail to be effective in supporting a collaborative approach to teaching, learning and assessment. The subject department should develop these schemes by emphasising resources and strategies that meet the range of students' needs and abilities.

Detailed findings and recommendations

1. Teaching, learning and assessment

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment was very good.
- In all lessons, teachers communicated learning intentions orally or visually, in language that was easily accessible to students, making it clear what they should know or be able to do by the end of the lesson.
- In all lessons, the relationship between students and teachers and among students was of a high-quality. Teachers created a supportive environment where students felt comfortable asking questions and expressing their ideas in the lessons. In a few lessons, teachers facilitated students to think critically and encouraged discussions, where students had opportunities to answer each other's questions. There was scope to extend this very good practice, to ensure that all students have similar opportunities.
- Teachers in all lessons explained new concepts very well, in language that was easy to understand. Teachers used very good, grounded examples to help explain more difficult mathematical ideas. High-quality links were often made across the subject's specification which helped students to revise and understand concepts. The application of mathematical rules were explained very well, though in a small number of lessons, there was scope to help students to have a better understanding of the reasoning behind the rules.
- Students engaged very well in their learning. Teachers maintained a good or very good balance of time in all lessons, with student-centred activities planned for large portions of the lessons. This allowed the teachers to give individual support to students where it was needed. Most activities were pitched at an appropriate level that challenged students to do their best. In a few instances, however, more differentiated support was required.
- Students who participated in the focus group reported that lessons were well-structured. They spoke about teachers being enthusiastic about the subject; they always encouraged students and provided help when needed. They spoke of how teachers were very good at explaining how the learning applied to the real world. They enjoyed experiences which helped them to apply their skills to practical applications and when tasks were designed to allow them to work with other students.
- In all lessons, students had opportunities to work with each other, which promoted key skills in communication and working with one another. These skills were exceptionally well-developed in a small number of lessons, where collaborative activities were well-structured and facilitated students to work together more confidently. These highly effective approaches should be further embedded and recorded in plans.
- Digital technologies were used well in the lessons by teachers. A few very good approaches enabled students to use technologies to participate in quizzes, share their solutions with the class and to use graphing software to check their answers.
- Teachers in the majority of lessons posed very good questions, which challenged students to recall various areas across the specifications or to engage with higher-order thinking. Miniature whiteboards were used to very good effect in a few lessons to quickly assess all of the students' knowledge in the room. In a small number of lessons, there was a reliance on whole-class questions, and questioning needed to be extended further to ensure that all students were challenged appropriately.
- In a few instances, teachers concluded the lessons very effectively, with students reviewing and demonstrating their learning very well. These highly effective strategies, that allow students to consolidate and reflect on their learning, and for teachers to assess the learning, should be shared and extended to all lessons.
- In a review of students' work, it was noted that in a small number of lessons, teachers had provided regular feedback in students' copy books, which is highly commendable. The main approach taken by teachers when monitoring work was for students to correct their own work in the lessons. In a few lessons, students were very successfully guided

towards self-correction and peer-correction through clear success criteria, which is a strategy that should be extended.
- In a majority of lessons, a significant number of copybooks reviewed were inconsistently marked; there was scope to encourage students to increase ownership of their own work by noting corrections and feedback.

2. Subject provision and whole school support

- Subject provision and whole-school support was excellent.
- There were effective timetabling arrangements in place for Mathematics and Mathematical Applications for students in junior and senior cycle.
- Members of the mathematics department had participated in a variety of teacher professional learning events, to extend their capacity, which was encouraged and supported by management.
- Management provided funding for all mathematics teachers to become members of the national subject association. Teachers and students were also provided software to aid in assessment analysis and revision.
- There was very effective use of whole-school initiatives, with visible actions noted in almost all lessons. To build literacy skills, teachers drew attention to key words and placed considerable emphasis on embedding mathematical language in most lessons. In giving feedback, teachers used well-structured feedback strategies such as “what worked well” (WWW) and “even better if” (EBI), which were well-understood by students.
- Students had very good opportunities to engage with extra-curricular activities related to Mathematics. Students participated in a variety of school, local and national competitions. The school ran a variety of successful events to promote Mathematics. As part of *Maths Week*, the subject team ran competitions and an *Olympiad*, which students said that they enjoyed. TY students had leadership opportunities to mentor and play mathematics games with younger year groups. Students commented that the weekly mathematics club was a good place to get involved and to make friends.
- The school had built strong links with local businesses, the community and the county council. These valuable links enabled students to extend their learning. Local businesses facilitated students in projects and key assignments to apply their mathematical skills in a practical space. The school had recently hosted a mathematics competition for schools in the surrounding area, which strengthened interactions with the local schools. A third level institution, ran science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) courses, which was availed of by a significant number of students.
- Additional resources and strategies specific to students’ individual needs were available on the schools’ digital platform. These were provided by the special educational needs (SEN) department.

3. Planning and preparation

- Subject planning and preparation for Mathematics was very good overall.
- There was clear evidence of very effective collaboration in the subject department, with distribution of work among the subject team. A desire for improvement to meet evolving students’ needs was evident in the department’s work.
- All individual lessons were well-prepared and teachers made good use of the learning environment to connect mathematics to the real world. In conversations with students, they noted the range of helpful, additional materials provided to them on the digital platform.
- There was good evidence of communication and sharing of resources on the digital platform between teachers. The subject team should extend practices which help maximise the potential of the digital platform, to aid in planning and meeting the needs of all students. For example, the platform could be used to record whiteboard notation,

to better organise digital information and further integrate differentiated approaches in individual lessons.

- Units of learning and schemes of work were of a good quality overall. A small number of schemes were very well-developed, which included clear guidance for useful resources, learning outcomes and literacy focuses.
- At junior cycle, units were well-developed with outcomes, key learning, activities, worksheets and digital resources clearly linked to the unit. Nonetheless, there was scope to improve the schemes of work in a significant minority of plans, in particular at senior cycle. The subject department should ensure that all schemes and units of learning are designed with a high degree of clarity and consistency, by including strategies and resources which support high quality differentiated teaching, learning and assessment.
- TY students completed modules, with associated projects in financial maths, number systems, statistics and algebra. Teachers in TY rotated to diversify students' experiences. The teachers were very creative in making interesting experiences for students studying LCA Mathematical Applications, for example linking with local businesses for investigations and surveys to apply their mathematical skills.
- The team had developed a school-designed booklet for first-year students to provide additional accessibility and focus on identified areas of learning. It was commendable that teachers were very reflective in revising this booklet continuously to support areas of identified needs. The team had also developed supporting materials for classroom-based assessments (CBAs). In discussions with students, they said that they had a lot of freedom and creativity to take the CBAs in directions that interested them.
- Minutes of meetings included discussion of logistics in addition to strategies on how to improve and embed good teaching and learning practices. There was evidence of the subject team being very reflective; they recorded an annual review of all subject levels and reflected on results from CBAs, in addition to outcomes of subject learning and review (SLAR) meetings, using it to inform their planning.

The draft findings and recommendations arising out of this evaluation were discussed with the principal/subject teachers at the conclusion of the evaluation.

An Roinn Oideachais
Department of Education

For the students of Moyne Community School about their learning in Mathematics & Mathematical Applications

Date of inspection: 06/02/2025

What kind of inspection did your school have?

A subject inspection was completed in your school. The inspector observed lessons and spoke with the principal and teachers. The inspector met with a group of students to talk to them about their learning in Mathematics & Mathematical Applications.

What were the main findings of the inspection?

- Teachers created a positive environment, were very encouraging of students' efforts and questions.
- School management strongly supported teachers with training and resources as well as working with the community and businesses to create more learning opportunities for students.
- Teachers responded very well to students' needs and designed resources to help students learn better.

What did the inspector recommend to make teaching and learning better in Mathematics & Mathematical Applications?

- Teachers and school leaders should share ways in which the digital platform can be used better to share information with students.
- Teachers should check students' understanding at the end of lessons and help them to think about what they have learned.
- Teachers have been asked to ensure that teaching plans include resources and ways to teach units of learning for all years and levels.

Thank you for taking the time to read this page.
Special thanks to the students who participated 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 welcomes the very positive and affirming report and for the positive feedback and recommendations.

We acknowledge the work of our mathematics subject department and thank them for their ongoing commitment to their subject and students.

We will continue to ensure that the good practices continue and are shared across all subject departments.

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

Recommendations have been shared across all subject departments and will be included in all planning going forward.