

An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna
Department of Education and Skills

Curriculum Evaluation
MUSIC
REPORT

Ainm na scoile / School name	St Ailbe's National School
Seoladh na scoile / School address	Emly Tipperary
Uimhir rolla / Roll number	20467N

Date of Evaluation: 16-11-2016



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 evaluated learning and teaching in Music under the following headings:

1. Quality of pupils' learning
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 Music. The board accepts the report as the final inspection report available for publication and wished to respond formally to the report. The Board agrees that the response submitted will be included as an appendix to the published report. The board's response is submitted below.

Curriculum Evaluation

INSPECTION ACTIVITIES DURING THIS INSPECTION

Date of inspection	16-11-2016
Inspection activities undertaken <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Discussion with principal and teachers• Review of relevant documents• Pupil focus-group interview	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Observation of teaching and learning• Examination of pupils' work• Interaction with pupils• Feedback to principal and teachers

SCHOOL CONTEXT

St Ailbe's National School is a co-educational, vertical primary school under the patronage of the Catholic Archbishop of Cashel and Emly. There are five mainstream class teachers, two fulltime resource teachers and one fulltime learning-support teacher based in the school. St. Ailbe's has two special classes for pupils with autistic spectrum disorders (ASD). Pupil enrolment has grown in recent years and current enrolment stands at 116 pupils.

SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

FINDINGS

- The pupils enjoy their learning and are confident in their musical ability.
- There is evidence of clear progression and development in the pupils' learning as they advance through the class levels.
- The pupils play traditional Irish music on a broad range of instruments to a very high standard.
- The principal promotes a collaborative culture of creativity in teaching Music and empowers teachers to carry out leadership roles in the provision for Music.
- The teachers demonstrate high levels of skill in teaching Music.
- The whole-school plan successfully provides for the teaching of music concepts, music literacy and musical instruments.
- Some use is made of information communication technologies (ICTs) in the teaching and learning of Music.
- Potential exists to make greater use of assessment strategies to plan future work in Music and to ensure that provision is balanced for all aspects of Music.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- The school should advance practices in assessment through frequent recordings of pupils' work in composition and performance and use these audio files to facilitate pupil selfassessment.

DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. THE QUALITY OF PUPILS' LEARNING IN MUSIC

The quality of pupils' learning in Music is very good. Their enjoyment of their learning is readily apparent. Their understanding of musical concepts progresses steadily as they proceed from class to class. They respond to Music in a variety of ways and sing a range of songs demonstrating very good capacity with rhythm and pitch. Interaction with pupils in all classes and focus group discussion with pupils from middle and senior classes, confirms that they have a very positive attitude towards Music. The pupils described the capacity for freedom of individual expression through Music and were enthusiastic in recounting the range of audiences available to them through their school. They reported on the schools' comprehensive Music programme using vocabulary acquired from their engagement with the Music curriculum. Very high standards are achieved by a significant number of pupils in playing traditional Irish Music on a range of instruments.

2. SUPPORTING PUPILS' LEARNING IN SUBJECT: LEARNING EXPERIENCES AND TEACHERS' PRACTICE

St. Ailbe's National School provides very high quality learning experiences for all pupils. The school environment promotes and celebrates Music. Collective and individual musical performance is a regular feature of classroom and school life. Teachers work together to devise valuable learning experiences for the pupils. All mainstream classrooms display common posters on notation and these exhibits help to scaffold and reinforce learning in musical literacy throughout the school. ICT is used effectively to promote learning. Music is integrated successfully with other curricular areas, most notably in languages, in Geography and in History.

The quality of teaching is very good. Some excellent practice was observed, both in mainstream and in special classes. The principal promotes a collaborative culture of creativity in teaching Music. She empowers teachers to take on and to carry out leadership roles in this area of learning. Teachers' individual planning is of a high standard and they are successful in adapting their teaching to meet the needs of all pupils, including those who demonstrate very good capacity for Music. Teachers are skilful in the use of a range of teaching methodologies and consequently, the pupils are enabled to learn effectively in whole-class groups, in smaller groups and as individuals. Teachers work in very close partnership with an external tutor for traditional Irish music and the progression of pupils' skills in playing instruments is planned and implemented collaboratively.

There is scope to advance practices in assessment through systematic recording of pupils' work in composition and performance and using these audio files to facilitate pupil self-assessment.

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

The quality of school planning for Music is very good. The whole-school plan gives effective guidance to teachers on all aspects of the programme and successfully provides for the teaching of music concepts, music literacy and musical instruments. Inspection of a range of school documentation including teachers' timetables, short and long-term plans and monthly progress reports confirms the progressive and developmental nature of the highly commendable music programme in St. Ailbe's NS.

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 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 <i>very good</i> 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 wholeschool 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

Area 1 Observations on the content of the inspection report

The Board of Management, staff and pupils of St. Ailbe's N.S. are delighted with the report and the recognition it gives to the great work being done in the school in the area of Music. The report affirms the hard work and commitment shown by all staff in the teaching of Music.

The community of St. Ailbe's N.S. will endeavour to maintain the high standard of music learning in our school using the recommendations outlined in the report to guide us.