



An Roinn Oideachais  
Department of Education

# Curriculum Evaluation: English Report

## REPORT

Ainm na scoile/School name	Scoil Bride C
Seoladh na scoile/School address	Turret Road Palmerstown Dublin 20
Uimhir rolla/Roll number	18324C
Dáta na cigireachta/ Date of evaluation	10/05/2024
Dáta eisiúna na tuairisce/ Date of issue of report	19/06/2024

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## What is a curriculum evaluation?

Curriculum evaluations report on the quality of teaching and learning in specific subjects of the *Primary School Curriculum (1999)* and the *Primary Language Curriculum (2019)*. 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

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.

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.

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

During the inspection visit, the following checks in relation to the school's child protection and anti-bullying procedures were conducted:	
<i>Child Protection</i>	<i>Anti-bullying</i>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. The name of the DLP and the Child Safeguarding Statement are prominently displayed near the main entrance to the school.</li><li>2. The Child Safeguarding Statement has been ratified by the board and includes an annual review and a risk assessment.</li><li>3. All teachers visited reported that they have read the Child Safeguarding Statement and that they are aware of their responsibilities as mandated persons.</li></ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. The school has developed an anti-bullying policy that meets the requirements of the <i>Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (2013)</i> or <i>Bí Cineálta (2024)</i> and this policy is reviewed annually.</li><li>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.</li></ol>

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

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# Curriculum evaluation

<b>Date of inspection</b>	10/05/2024
<b>Inspection activities undertaken</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Discussion with principal and teachers</li><li>• Review of relevant documents</li><li>• Pupil focus-group interview</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Observation of teaching and learning</li><li>• Examination of pupils' work</li><li>• Interaction with pupils</li><li>• Feedback to principal and teachers</li></ul>

## School context

Scoil Bríde C, located in Palmerstown, Dublin 20, is an all-girls primary school under the patronage of the Catholic Archbishop of Dublin. The school caters for pupils from junior infants to sixth class. At the time of the evaluation, there were 353 pupils enrolled. School staffing comprised an administrative principal, fourteen mainstream teachers, one teacher with responsibility for the special class for pupils with autism, four special education teachers (SETs) and one part-time SET. Inspectors observed teaching and learning in a sample of settings.

## Summary of main findings and recommendations:

### Findings

- The quality of pupils' learning was very good; pupils demonstrated very well-developed reading skills.
- Pupils engaged in very good quality learning experiences.
- The quality of teaching in both mainstream and special education settings was very good; teachers were skilful communicators who used a variety of teaching methodologies with confidence.
- Assessment practices were good.
- The processes and impact of whole-school planning and school self-evaluation (SSE) for English were commendable.

### Recommendations

- To enhance pupils' critical literacy skills, teachers should extend the range of text types and learning experiences to enable pupils to actively analyse, interpret and respond to texts of increasing complexity.
- To ensure that pupils know what to improve and how to improve their work, teachers should extend their assessment practices to include the provision of formative feedback and regular opportunities for self- and peer assessment.
- Teachers should further develop pupils' digital literacy skills to enable them to create content, discover and share new information, and learn and collaborate with their peers using digital technologies.

## Detailed findings and recommendations

### 1. The quality of pupils' learning outcomes

The quality of pupils' learning was very good. Pupils were highly motivated and interested in their learning. They had a very good understanding of the content and structure of language. Pupils demonstrated effective comprehension skills and read with fluency, expression, and intonation. They used a variety of word-identification strategies when reading and could capably use dictionaries for understanding. Pupils in the infant and junior classes demonstrated very effective early-reading skills, phonological awareness, book-handling skills, and a well-developed awareness of the conventions of print. Opportunities existed for pupils' critical literacy skills to be enhanced through deeper, more sustained engagement with the element of exploring and using language. To this end, teachers should focus more on pupils' critical skills to enable them to create, analyse, interpret, and respond to texts of increasing complexity.

Pupils were effective communicators. Their listening skills were well developed. They were confident in discussing and justifying their authors of choice in terms of style and content. The school implemented agreed approaches to vocabulary development. To build on this good work, it is advised that that pupils be given ongoing opportunities to use new vocabulary in varied, more generalised contexts for consolidation.

Pupils wrote for a wide range of audiences and for different purposes. They engaged systematically and regularly with writing across a specified selection of genres. The school's focus on disciplinary literacy offered rich potential for the meaningful and critical application of language and literacy skills across other curriculum areas. Teachers modelled the writing process effectively in terms of planning and drafting text types; opportunities existed to further emphasise the editing process. At times, pupils achieved effective learning outcomes in the creative and playful use of language, for example, as they explored the features of poetry. Teachers should enable pupils to engage in a creative and playful way with various text types, such as podcasts, speeches and radio broadcasts. The progression of pupils' language learning aligned with the detailed content specified in the school plan and commercial programmes. To enhance learning further, pupils' programmes of learning required further alignment with the learning outcomes and milestones in the progression continua of the Primary Language Curriculum. Pupils' written work in terms of penmanship, layout and presentation was exemplary.

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

Learner experiences were of very good quality. Pupils took part in varied activity-based tasks including games, drama, debating, story, creating texts and, in the infant classes, play-based learning. Pupils demonstrated very good ability to work in pairs and groups. Pupils had regular opportunities to engage in reading-buddy systems, sharing their learning with other classes, and weekly school library visits. In the focus-group discussion, pupils described their learning as fun. They loved to read and could recognise the benefits it brought to their lives. They expressed a desire for more creativity and choice in their text types and in their use of digital technologies.

The quality of teachers' practice was very good. Teachers in mainstream and support settings were skilful, vibrant practitioners who were knowledgeable about their pupils and responsive to their learning needs. They structured lessons very capably. Teachers provided purposeful learning opportunities, the best of which were relevant to pupils' everyday lives. In a minority of settings, opportunities existed for teachers to differentiate the activities and resources to ensure that pupils with learning needs were appropriately challenged. For the most part, the selected text types were provided by commercial programmes. Consideration should be given to the selection of multimodal texts, for example comics, storyboards and brochures to enhance learning further.

Teachers engaged in dynamic questioning which promoted good recall of learning among pupils as well as enabling them to make links with learning across the curriculum. Less emphasis was placed on the transfer of skills between English and Irish: this merits attention. Learning environments were good; they were most effective when they supported current learning in terms of learning outcomes and new language and concepts. Samples of pupils' best efforts were attractively displayed. Pupils' written work was monitored and corrected by teachers. The provision of feedback to pupils on their work was not a strong feature of teachers' collective practice. To ensure that pupils take greater ownership of their work and know how to improve their work, teachers should extend their assessment practices to include the provision of formative feedback and regular opportunities for self- and peer assessment.

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

The quality of school planning, including SSE, in progressing pupils' learning in English was commendable. Effective collaboration was underway between leaders and teachers to support the embedding of whole-school practices. The English plan was recently reviewed. It provided very comprehensive guidance on the content to be taught across oral, reading and writing strands. There was scope to consider how the plan could support the full implementation of the elements and learning outcomes of the Primary Language Curriculum. The school engaged productively in the SSE process to date. Leaders, in consultation with teachers, pupils and parents, have implemented cycles of SSE in literacy, and, most recently, wellbeing. The school ensured that areas of focus were determined by comprehensive evidence gathering and analysis, and relevant, attainable target setting.



### **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 could do to make learning in English better.

### **Meeting with pupils**



The inspectors visited classrooms and talked to pupils about the work they were doing. The inspector also met with a focus group of pupils to hear what they had to say about their learning and experiences at school.

### **What did the inspector learn about your school?**



The inspectors saw many things in your school during the inspection. Here are some of the main things:

- Teachers were very good at helping pupils to read, write and talk about their learning.
- Pupils were very good readers. They loved to read and enjoyed their lessons.
- Pupils presented their work very carefully and neatly and took great pride in their handwriting.

### **What the school could do to make learning in English better**



- Pupils should be given opportunities to explore different messages and meanings in the work of authors.
- Pupils should have opportunities to use digital technologies to explore different types of texts as well as to create their own texts in a variety of ways.
- Teachers should find different ways to help pupils know how to improve their work and how to check that they are getting better at learning.

**Thank you for taking the time to read this page.  
A special thank you to the 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
<b>Excellent</b>	<b>Provision that is excellent</b> 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
<b>Very good</b>	<b>Provision that is very good</b> 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
<b>Good</b>	<b>Provision that is good</b> 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
<b>Requires improvement to achieve a good standard</b>	<b>Provision that requires improvement to achieve a good standard</b> 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
<b>Requires significant improvement to achieve a good standard</b>	<b>Provision that requires significant improvement to achieve a good standard</b> 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 is satisfied with the findings and recommendations of the evaluation report as a fair and positive reflection of the dedicated and focused work of the staff of St. Brigid's GNS with the English curriculum.

## **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 of Management welcomes the recommendations and is supportive of school staff members as they actively engage to implement the recommendations through planning and teaching.

A new cycle of SSE, with English as the focus, will be commenced in the school year 2024/2025. In St. Brigid's GNS. The recommendations contained within the report will provide a starting point for professional dialogue while devising our School Improvement Plan.

As a staff we are committed to continuously improving our own practices as well as pupil outcomes. To this end, the direction of future and reviewed plans and policies within St. Brigid's GNS will be influenced by the recommendations within this report.