



An Roinn Oideachais
Department of Education

Curriculum Evaluation: English Report

REPORT

Ainm na scoile/School name	Murhur N S
Seoladh na scoile/School address	Listowel Road Moyvane Co. Kerry
Uimhir rolla/Roll number	13540G
Dáta na cigireachta/ Date of evaluation	27/03/2025
Dáta eisiúna na tuairisce/Date of issue of report	13/06/2025

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 (2023)*. 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 pupils in your school about the inspection that occurred recently. It outlines for them some of the main findings and recommendations.

The board of management was given an opportunity to comment in writing on the findings and recommendations of the report; a response was not received from the board.

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">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.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">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.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.

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

Curriculum evaluation

Date of inspection	25-03-25 – to 26-03-25
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

Murhur National School is a mainstream, co-educational primary school located in the village of Moyvane in Co. Kerry. The school operates under the patronage of the Catholic Bishop of Kerry. At the time of the evaluation, the school had an enrolment of seventy pupils. There were three mainstream classroom teaching posts, one of which was filled by two teachers operating in a job-sharing capacity. The teaching principal was fulfilling the role of special education teacher and two additional teachers provided part-time special education support to pupils in the school. There was also a teacher providing support, on a part-time basis, to pupils who were learning English as an additional language. One mainstream class teacher was on leave at the time of the evaluation and this position was filled by a substitute who was employed in accordance with the provisions of Statutory Instrument 32/2014 of the Education Act (1998).

Summary of main findings and recommendations:

Findings

- The overall quality of pupils' learning was very good. High levels of productive pupil participation were observed in all activities and their progress was monitored and recorded at classroom and whole-school level.
- Pupils had access to a broad and diverse range of learning experiences, and they engaged enthusiastically and productively in well-structured independent and collaborative learning activities.
- The quality of teaching in the lessons observed was very good. Teachers displayed an in-depth knowledge of pupils' strengths and areas requiring support and they differentiated their teaching accordingly.
- The effectiveness of school planning, including school self-evaluation (SSE), in progressing pupils' learning was highly commendable.

Recommendations

- As a next stage in the development of pupils' reading skills, the school should focus on enhancing their fluency, enabling them to further develop their pace, intonation and expression for the genre and audience.
- Building on current provision for reading and writing, the school should extend their assessment of pupils' oral language to inform greater targeting of support in this area. The progression continuum in the Primary Language Curriculum (PLC) (2019) toolkit would be a useful resource to support this work.
- Pupils read and had a good understanding of a wide variety of texts. To further develop this work, teachers should provide more opportunities for pupils to evaluate the purpose and reliability of texts and explore how language is used to influence meaning.

Detailed findings and recommendations

1. The quality of pupils' learning outcomes

The overall quality of pupil learning outcomes in English was very good. Almost all pupils had a very positive attitude to the subject and had a clear and well-developed understanding of its significance and potential from both a functional and recreational perspective.

In infant classes, pupils' emergent reading skills were very well developed. Their knowledge and understanding of phonics and phonological awareness was systematically cultivated. They had good sight vocabulary and were making clear progress in the development of emergent writing skills. In junior classes, pupils could identify a range of books that they enjoyed reading and could generally discuss their preferred genres when both reading and writing. The recited poetry with meaning and expression and engaged enthusiastically in oral discussion during walking debates, which were linked to persuasive writing activities. In the middle and senior classes, pupils had well-structured opportunities to read at an instructional level. Their progress was closely monitored and documented in classroom records and through meaningful collaboration with parents. To build on the positive attitudes to reading and on pupil progress in this area, the school should place additional emphasis on implementing specific strategies to enhance fluency, enabling pupils to further develop their pace, intonation and expression for the genre and audience. They had a very well-developed understanding of the structure and purpose of writing genres and high-quality samples of their work were observed in copybooks and displays.

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

The overall quality of pupils' learning experiences was very good. Classroom atmospheres were positive, task orientated and characterised by respectful relationships amongst the pupils and between pupils and staff. Classroom environments were bright and stimulating and included useful and effective resources designed to scaffold pupils' learning and to motivate them to engage in reading activities. Attractive and well-organised displays of pupils' work validated their efforts in writing and celebrated their achievements. Play-based learning was a significant feature of provision at infant level and a range of well-chosen games and activities elicited very high levels of enthusiastic pupil participation and meaningful learning.

A noteworthy feature of provision in the middle and senior classrooms was the extent to which pupils had opportunities to share their attitudes to, experiences of and preferences for different genres of reading and writing. The lessons observed were linked to pupils' experiences and classroom libraries contained an extensive range of texts that were aligned with pupils' interests and reading abilities. In the focus group meeting, pupils generally spoke very positively about their learning in English and the opportunities they had to engage in drama performances both in the school and for the wider school community.

The teaching observed during the evaluation was very effective. Lessons were well planned and structured. Differentiated provision was a commendable feature of practice for reading and spelling in particular. In the infant classroom, special education teachers collaborated with the classroom teacher to plan and implement very effective station teaching activities. These included well-structured games designed to extend and consolidate key aspects of pupils' learning. Pupils were introduced to the principles of debating and persuasive writing in junior classes. Building on this good work, it is recommended that the school place additional emphasis on the development of pupils' critical literacy skills in all classes. This would include evaluating the purpose and reliability of texts, and on exploring how language is used to influence meaning during English classes and in a cross-curricular context.

In middle and senior classes, pupils had opportunities to engage with a range of digital technologies, attuning them to an understanding of different operating systems and of the uses and potential of technology for both research and to assist with learning. Of particular note, was the opportunity provided to pupils to engage in a European-wide, three-dimensional printing project, which challenged pupils to address sustainability within the school. The collaborative planning, design and presentation tasks involved in this initiative helped to develop pupils' communication skills using a variety of media.

Support for pupils with special educational needs was provided through a combination of in-class activities and withdrawal individually and in groups. Teaching was delivered in a very supportive, structured and effective manner and positive levels of pupil engagement in activities were observed. Screening and diagnostic testing was used effectively to establish clear targets, and pupils' progress was carefully tracked and monitored. Pupils' learning English as an additional language were observed to be making progress during well-planned and highly supportive interventions. Some scope to further refine the targets in support plans for these pupils was noted.

Good levels of teacher collaborative practice were noted throughout the school in relation to the development of pupils' reading and writing skills. To build on this practice, the school should further refine their assessment of pupils' oral language skills to enhance the provision of targeted support in this area. The progression continuum in the PLC Toolkit would be a useful resource to inform this process.

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

The recently appointed principal had a well-defined vision for the school and was committed to providing clear and effective administrative, organisational and curricular leadership. Whole-school planning and SSE was having a positive impact on pupils' learning. A clear and well-structured whole-school plan for the implementation of the PLC had been recently compiled and teachers were adopting a reflective approach to its implementation in classrooms. The school had a comprehensive school improvement plan in place which targeted key areas for development in learning experiences and learning outcomes in literacy. Given the considerable progress noted in the areas targeted for improvement, it is recommended that the school review the plan to establish the current baseline of provision and agree new targets for the next stage of development.



An Roinn Oideachais
Department of Education

**For the pupils of Murhur N S about
their learning in English**
Date of inspection: 27/03/2025



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. The 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 was very good; they worked hard in their classrooms and their work showed that they were making progress in English.
- Pupils enjoyed lots of different lessons and worked well by themselves and in groups.
- Teachers had a good understanding of how the pupils were learning and they supported their learning in different ways.



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

- As the next step in supporting reading, the school should help pupils to use their voices more to show feelings in stories in order to help listeners to really understand what the author is trying to say.
- The school should explore the speaking skills that pupils are very good at and the ones that could be improved.
- Pupils should have opportunities to investigate the hidden meanings in texts and to look at how various authors sometimes report differently on the same event.

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