



An Roinn Oideachais
agus Óige
Department of Education
and Youth

Curriculum Evaluation: English REPORT

Ainm na scoile/School name	Aughadreena National School
Seoladh na scoile/School address	Aughadreena Stradone Co. Cavan
Uimhir rolla/Roll number	18355N
Dáta na cigireachta/ Date of evaluation	20/05/2025
Dáta eisiúna na tuairisce/Date of issue of report	15/09/2025

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 valuated 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

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>
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.	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	20/05/2025
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

Aughadreena NS is a rural co-educational school situated in Lavey, Co. Cavan. It operates under the patronage of the Roman Catholic Bishop of Kilmore. At the time of the evaluation, there were eighty-five pupils enrolled. The school staff comprised of four mainstream class teachers, one special education teacher, who is the teaching principal, and one part-time special education teacher whose post is shared with another school.

Summary of main findings and recommendations:

Findings

- The overall quality of pupils' learning was very good.
- Learning experiences of an exceptionally high quality were provided in the lessons observed; pupils engaged purposefully in their learning activities and enjoyed autonomy in choosing topics for research, discussion, reading and writing.
- The quality of teaching in English was very good with some examples of excellent practice observed.
- The effectiveness of school planning, including school self-evaluation (SSE), in progressing pupils' learning was excellent.
- Teachers and school leaders skilfully built a culture of inclusion and creativity by providing considered, cross-curricular learning opportunities, which celebrated all pupils' interests and abilities.

Recommendations

- To optimise pupils' learning outcomes, teachers should collaborate to develop a more systematic whole-school approach to monitor and assess the progression of pupils' oral language skills.

Detailed findings and recommendations

1. The quality of pupils' learning outcomes

The quality of pupils' learning outcomes was very good. Pupils presented as enthusiastic and motivated learners. They successfully combined reading, writing and oral language skills during literacy activities, which included debating, creating sequels to class novels and re-interpreting myths and legends. In the junior classes, pupils read texts at their individual ability level, recited poems and played word games to develop phonemic awareness and word identification strategies. In all settings visited, pupils read fluently with good expression and demonstrated the ability to self-correct when required. Pupils in the middle and senior classes confidently discussed favourite books spanning a range of authors and genres. In the focus group meeting conducted as part of the evaluation, pupils appreciated the choice of books available in the school library space. Pupils ably explained planning and editing processes, which they found useful when writing. They appreciated the opportunities provided to meet visiting authors, play

word games, publish their writing digitally, organise book clubs and host intergenerational events in the school.

The standard of pupils' writing on display throughout the school was of a very high quality. Pupils playfully explored the aesthetic and creative dimensions of language with a sense of purpose and audience across a range of genres. Pupils at all levels had successfully produced imaginative narrative writing based on their personal interests, many of which were developed into illustrated and printed books. There was scope for all teachers to further support the development of pupils' handwriting skills to enhance the presentation of their successful texts. Pupils confidently articulated thoughts and opinions in secure learning environments. Where excellent learner outcomes were observed, pupils delivered well-developed oral and written presentations to peers, shared ideas, made decisions, and offered constructive feedback among themselves.

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

Pupils' learning experiences in English were excellent. The interactions among pupils and between pupils and teachers were warm and respectful. In all lessons observed, pupils were engaged in collaborative and meaningful learning opportunities. Class libraries were well-stocked and organised to promote independent reading opportunities for pupils at all reading levels. It was exemplary that pupils at all levels had autonomy in choosing topics for research, discussion, reading and writing, individually and in groups. It was highly commendable that pupils in most classes used digital learning technologies very effectively as a research tool to enrich their learning, expand their vocabulary and to consolidate their spelling skills.

The quality of teaching was very good with aspects of exemplary practice observed during the evaluation. Teachers were well prepared and they had a clear focus for learning in their lessons, which they shared with the pupils. They successfully used a range of appropriate teaching methodologies to maximise pupil engagement. Where exemplary practice was observed, teachers provided pupils with strategies to acquire and show understanding of new words and phrases from different sources such as literature, subject-specific texts and other languages. Teachers created highly effective print-rich, learning environments, which celebrated pupils' achievement in English. Interesting charts and word walls of an exceptionally high standard reinforced pupils' vocabulary development and word identification skills.

School assessment practices were very effective. Teachers posed questions skilfully to extend the pupils' critical thinking skills and to assess their comprehension. Regular test data, teacher-designed tasks, reading records and checklists were in place to monitor pupils' reading and writing outcomes; there is scope to build on this effective practice to track pupils' oral language skills development. To optimise pupils' learner outcomes, teachers should collaborate to develop a more systematic whole-school approach to monitor and assess the progression of pupils' oral language skills.

The quality of support for pupils was very good overall. A range of supports including in-class interventions and small-group withdrawal, was deployed very effectively to support the needs, interests and abilities of pupils. Special education teachers and class teachers collaborated in a highly effective manner to ensure learning activities across all settings were linked in a meaningful way to enable all pupils to participate actively in all lessons. The continuum of support was implemented very successfully; a comprehensive range of diagnostic and screening processes were judiciously used to identify pupils' emerging needs and to develop specific targets in student-support planning.

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

The quality of school planning, including school self-evaluation (SSE), was excellent. Teachers and school leaders recently sought input from Oide, the national support service for teachers and school leaders, to review the whole-school plan for English. The plan provided highly effective guidance to enhance teachers' practice and progress pupils' learning. There was a notable balance between teachers' agency in their practice and consistency in whole-school approaches to English, which impacted positively on learner outcomes and experiences.

School leaders and teachers had reflected on midway considerations during the current cycle of SSE. They gathered data from pupils and parents to inform the school's decision-making processes, and identified that participation in the Creative Schools' initiative was a successful means to integrate the teaching of English with rich learning experiences in Art, Music and Drama.



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**For the pupils of Aughadreena National
School about their learning in English**
Date of inspection: 20/05/2025



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:

- It is very good that pupils can choose their own topics to write about.
- Pupils enjoyed using digital technology to help with spellings, projects and editing stories in English.
- Teachers provided very good opportunities for pupils to work together in pairs and groups.



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

- Teachers should keep track of and monitor pupils' progress in oral language skills.

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

Area 1 Observations on the content of the inspection report

The Board of Management welcomes the very positive findings of the Curriculum Evaluation in English.

The Board appreciates the recognition that the pupils' learning experiences in English were excellent, commending them as enthusiastic and motivated learners who engage in collaborative and meaningful learning opportunities.

The Board also welcomes the acknowledgment that aspects of exemplary teaching practices were observed, with teachers being well prepared and having a clear focus for learning. They are pleased that the quality of school planning, including SSE, was regarded as excellent.

The Board is delighted that the report captured the school's inclusive and creative culture, which celebrates all pupils' interests and abilities, highlighting the warm and respectful interactions between pupils and teachers that reflect the school's holistic approach to learning.

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 made to enhance teaching and learning in the school.

Since the evaluation, the teachers have engaged in school sustained support in oral language assessment and monitoring. This will be further developed throughout the school as part of SSE with a view to enhancing and subsequently embedding improved practices.