



An Roinn Oideachais  
Department of Education

# Curriculum Evaluation: Geography Report

## DRAFT REPORT FOR FACTUAL VERIFICATION

Ainm na scoile/School name	S N Cnoc An Bhile
Seoladh na scoile/School address	Knockavilla Innishannon Co. Cork
Uimhir rolla/Roll number	04152T
Dáta na cigireachta/ Date of evaluation	04-10-2022
Dáta eisiúna na tuairisce/ Date of issue of report	02-11-2022

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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 valued learning and teaching in Geography under the following headings:

1. Quality of pupils' learning
2. Supporting pupils' learning through learner 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.

## 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> and this policy is reviewed annually.</li><li>2. The board of management minutes record that the principal provides a report to the board at least once a term on the overall number of bullying cases reported (by means of the bullying recording template provided in the <i>Procedures</i>) since the previous report to the board.</li><li>3. The school's 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>	04-10-2022
<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

S N Cnoc an Bhile is a co-educational, rural school located in Knockavilla, Innishannon, Co. Cork. It operates under the patronage of the Catholic Bishop of Cork and Ross. At the time of this inspection Knockavilla NS had an enrolment of 138 pupils. The school has six mainstream teachers, two full time and one part time special education teachers (SETs) and two special needs assistants.

## Summary of main findings and recommendations:

### Findings

- The overall quality of learner outcomes was very good. Pupils' skills in physical and digital map-reading skills have been well developed; they capably described their application of these skills through activities in maps, globes and graphical skills.
- The overall quality of learning experiences was very good.
- The overall quality of teaching was very good. Individual teachers' preparation was of a very high standard, supported by the school plan for Geography.
- The overall quality of assessment was very good. Samples of pupil learning in Geography were stored electronically as e-portfolios and will support future teaching and learning in Geography.
- The overall quality of planning including school self-evaluation (SSE) was very good. The school plan for Geography was organised in a two-year cycle ensuring effective spiral learning in a multi-grade setting.

### Recommendations

- A whole-school approach to the use of geographical investigation skills would improve learning in Geography; teachers should agree on a whole-school approach to the teaching of geographical investigation skills in order to further enhance teaching and learning.
- The principal should ensure the revision of the school plan for Geography to reflect these decisions.

## Detailed findings and recommendations

### 1. The quality of pupils' learning

The overall quality of learner outcomes in Geography was very good. Pupils participated fully in all activities and were motivated to complete all tasks. These included a problem-solving task using ratio to draw local maps to scale and planning the construction of a 3D model of the school environs. Pupils developed physical and digital map-reading skills and during the focus group they identified several practical real-life examples of the use of *Maps, globes and graphical skills*. They demonstrated their understanding of local natural and human features such as the river Brinny and local monastery ruins, contributing to their *Sense of place*. Pupils explored the impact

of water, rock and soil on the human environment through justifying their proposals for a local bypass. They also discussed how digital technologies could be used to research, create and present projects in Geography.

## **2. Supporting pupils' learning: Learner experience and teachers' practice**

The overall quality of learning experiences was very good. Pupils accessed effective learning experiences developing geographical skills such as *A sense of place, A sense of space and Maps, globes and graphical skills*. In some instances this included using digital quiz platforms. Some commendable practice was observed in the use of geographical investigation skills. Extension of this practice throughout the school would improve pupils' learning experiences. A whole-school approach to geographical investigation skills would further enhance learning in Geography. Pupils participated fully in all lessons, competently engaging in individual and group activities. They were encouraged to identify their prior knowledge of river or transport systems, stimulating further learning for pupils in Geography. They explored geographical language through group work and discussion, demonstrating positive and respectful interactions. Pupils confirmed their understanding of their local physical and human environments, discussing local topography referring to local habitats, railways and historical sites. Learning environments were visually organised and considered, to enhance learning opportunities in Geography. Current displays of map-reading resources and globes, 3D map modelling, individual and group projects were evident throughout the school. Junior classes used weather-charts, photography and play to support their concept-making in this area.

The overall quality of teaching was very good. Teachers shared intended learning outcomes at the beginning of lessons with pupils and used this information to focus teaching and learning throughout the lesson. Teachers differentiated teaching approaches to accommodate the learning needs of all pupils using varying levels of challenge in questioning and discussion. In some instances teachers differentiated content, in particular the design of activities to support meaningful inclusion. Teachers used pair work, group work and digital technologies to explore river systems and transport. Map-reading skills were developed through a focus on aerial perspectives, digital mapping systems and local photography, effectively developing a sense of place and space. Individual teachers' preparation was of a very high standard supported by the school plan for Geography which effectively guides progression in teaching and learning through all class levels. All teachers demonstrated effective classroom management skills. It was evident during this evaluation that teachers regularly collaborated and shared good practice.

The overall quality of assessment was very good. Teachers engaged readily in teacher observation, teacher-designed tasks and conferencing with pupils. Teacher feedback was bespoke and positive. Pupils effectively used peer and self-assessment to agree the course of an Innishannon bypass and to identify mapping symbols and explore mapping legends. Samples of pupil learning in Geography were stored electronically as e-portfolios to support future teaching and learning in Geography.

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

The overall effectiveness of school planning, including SSE in progressing pupils' learning in Geography was very good. The school had identified biodiversity as a priority for SSE and had created pollinator-friendly habitats in the grounds in order to develop an understanding of ecosystems and progress the Green Schools' Programme.

The school plan for Geography was organised in a two-year cycle, ensuring effective spiral learning in a multi-grade setting. The principal promoted a culture supportive of continuous professional development.

## 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	Example of descriptive terms
Very Good	<i>Very good</i> 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 <i>outstanding</i> 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	<i>Good</i> 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	<i>Satisfactory</i> 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	<i>Fair</i> 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	<i>Weak</i> applies where there are serious deficiencies in the areas evaluated. Immediate and coordinated whole-school 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;

### Eolas teagmhála na scoile / School contact information

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POF an BOO (más cú) / CE of ETB (if relevant)		R-phost/ Email	
Pátrún nó lontaobhaithe na scoile / School patron or trustee	Bishop Fintan Gavin	R-phost/ Email	<a href="mailto:secretary@corkandross.org">secretary@corkandross.org</a>
Cathaoirleach Chumann na dTuismitheoirí / Chairperson of parents' association	Noreen Smithers	R-phost/ Email	<a href="mailto:noreen.coen@bsci.com">noreen.coen@bsci.com</a>
Cathaoirleach Chomhairle na Mac Léinn (iar- bhunscoil amháin) / Chairperson of student council ( <i>post-primary only</i> )		R-phost/ Email	