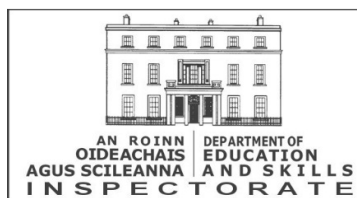


An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna
Department of Education and Skills

Curriculum Evaluation
History
REPORT

Scoil na Croise Naofa,
Geashill, Co.Offaly
Roll Number: 091911

Date of inspection: 05/02/2015



Introduction

An evaluation of History was undertaken in Scoil na Croise Naofa in February 2015. This report is based on a selection of lessons observed in a range of learning settings in the school, interaction with pupils and review of their work, meetings with the principal / teachers, completed pupil questionnaires, and a review of a selection of school documents and assessment data. The board of management of the school was given an opportunity to comment on the findings and recommendations of the report; the board chose to accept the report without response.

Findings:

- Provision for breadth and balance in History is very good.
- Support for pupil's learning is very good in most classes with some exemplary practice evident.
- The integration of History with other curriculum areas is excellent.
- Assessment practices within History are of a very high standard.
- The quality of the pupils' learning is very good.

Recommendations:

- The school should devise history trails for all class levels and identify how the local environment can be further utilised for historical investigation.
- More regular opportunities should be provided for pupils in the hearing impaired unit to learn History at a level appropriate to their ability.

1. Breadth, balance and developmental nature of the curriculum programme provided in History

Provision for breadth and balance in History is very good. The menu curriculum in History is well planned and implemented. Pupils are enabled to learn about local, national, European and international history. They investigate the lives of men, women and children from a wide range of backgrounds. Provision for the development of the pupils' skills is commendable.

2. Supports for pupils' learning in History

Support for pupil's learning is very good with some exemplary practice evident. All teachers create very effective learning environments to support History including a wide variety of timelines and displays. The school forges very strong links with the community including the County Heritage Officer to support and develop the History programme.

Teaching is of a very high standard. All teachers expertly utilise a wide range of resources and methodologies. Responses to pupil questionnaires administered as part of the evaluation indicate that a very high number of pupils agree that they use computers during history lessons and a significant number agree that they often do projects in History. The integration of History with other curricular areas is excellent. Writing genres are successfully integrated with History. While there was evidence that classes go on fieldtrips a good number of pupils surveyed disagreed or were unsure of this. It is recommended that the school creates History trails for all class levels and identifies how fieldtrips within the local environment can be further utilised to address specific elements of the History curriculum. A very good History lesson was observed in the unit for the hearing impaired. The teacher reported that language learning was the main focus of provision in this setting for the majority of time. It is recommended that more regular opportunities are provided for these pupils to learn History at a level appropriate to their ability.

School and classroom planning for History is very effective. Most teachers' short-term planning includes specific learning outcomes for History. As part of the 150th celebration of the school a wide variety of useful resources

were acquired which could now be developed into a school museum. During the next review of the History programme, consideration should be given to identifying how the spiral nature of the curriculum is developed.

Assessment practices within History are of a very high standard. All mainstream class teachers have developed and utilise criterion-referenced checklists. In addition, they administer regular teacher-designed tasks and tests and maintain a wide variety of work samples and pupil portfolios.

3. The quality of pupils' learning in History

Overall, the quality of the pupils learning is very good. Pupils are highly engaged in lessons and display enthusiasm for History. Almost all pupils surveyed agree that they find History interesting. Younger pupils confidently discuss the chronology of events in a wide variety of stories, myths and legends. Middle and senior pupils can capably recall the lives of famous artists, explorers and significant people from the past. Pupils successfully apply historical skills and successfully use primary and secondary sources of evidence. Overall, pupils are highly commended for their knowledge and use of subject-specific vocabulary. The quality of written work in copybooks and on display is exemplary.

Terminology used in Curriculum Evaluation reports

Description
<i>Excellent</i> applies where the quality of what is evaluated is exemplary.
<i>Very good</i> applies where the quality of what is evaluated is of a very high standard.
<i>Good</i> applies where the strengths in what is being evaluated outweigh the areas in need of improvement.
<i>Weaknesses outweigh strengths</i> applies where, although there are some strengths in what is being evaluated, deficiencies or shortcomings that outweigh those strengths also exist.
<i>Significant weakness</i> applies where there are serious deficiencies in what is being evaluated