



An Roinn Oideachais
Department of Education

Curriculum Evaluation: Music Report

REPORT

Ainm na scoile/School name	Scoil Colmcille Naofa
Seoladh na scoile/School address	Idrone Avenue Knocklyon Dublin 16
Uimhir rolla/Roll number	19474D
Dáta na cigireachta/ Date of evaluation	12/02/2025
Dáta eisiúna na tuairisce/ Date of issue of report	13/03/2025

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 inspectors evaluated learning and teaching in Music 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 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	11/02/2025 – 12/02/2025
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

St Colmcille's Junior National School is an urban co-educational school located in Knocklyon, Dublin 16. The school operates under the patronage of the Catholic Archbishop of Dublin. At the time of the evaluation, staffing comprised an administrative principal and an administrative deputy principal, thirty-two mainstream class teachers and nine special education teachers. The school also had a teacher for pupils with autism, a teacher for pupils with English as an additional language, and seventeen special needs assistants. There were 737 pupils enrolled from junior infants to second class.

Summary of main findings and recommendations:

Findings

- The quality of pupils' learning in Music was highly commendable with musical literacy and song singing particularly well developed.
- Teaching was of a very high quality overall with teachers placing notable emphasis on active and playful teaching methodologies.
- Pupils' learning experiences were of a very high standard. Teachers collaborated very effectively to ensure agreed whole-school approaches were implemented.
- The overall quality of assessment was commendable with some very effective practice observed.
- The effectiveness of school planning, including school self-evaluation (SSE), in progressing pupils' learning was exemplary and the central role of music in school life was a very significant strength.

Recommendations

- Building on highly commendable assessment practice in some settings, teachers and school leaders should collectively develop and implement a whole-school approach to the assessment of pupils' knowledge and skills in Music.
- To further develop pupils' opportunities and ability to play tuned and untuned percussion instruments with skill and confidence, teachers and school leaders should ensure regular access to percussion instruments in line with appropriate curricular learning outcomes.

Detailed findings and recommendations

1. The quality of pupils' learning outcomes

The quality of pupils' learning in Music was highly commendable with musical literacy and song singing particularly well developed on a whole-school basis. Pupils demonstrated very good understanding of and application of the musical concepts of pulse, tempo, pitch, dynamics and structure. Pupils' sense of timbre and style were also well developed. Pupils could identify, compose and perform rhythm patterns from notation. In some instances, pupils could recognise and sing familiar tunes with two or three notes.

In classes observed and in whole-school activities during the inspection, pupils sang a range of songs with expression, confidence and enjoyment. Where learning outcomes were highly commendable, teachers ensured that pupils began their performances with a clear starting note and engaged in appropriate warm-up exercises to facilitate tuneful singing.

Pupils' listening skills were well developed. Pupils listened to and responded to a range of musical excerpts through gesture, movement, speech and graphics. Where notably good learning was observed, pupils were scaffolded to respond to music with imaginative interpretation, application of musical concepts and expression of preferences. Pupils demonstrated awareness of ways of making sounds including using manufactured and homemade instruments. They demonstrated knowledge of musical instrument families and were given opportunities to play percussion instruments. To further develop pupils' opportunities and ability to play tuned and untuned percussion instruments with skill and confidence, teachers and school leaders should ensure regular access to percussion instruments in line with appropriate curricular learning outcomes.

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

Pupils' learning experiences were of a very high standard. The enjoyment of and participation in musical activities and events was promoted by the school community. Teachers collaborated very effectively to ensure agreed whole-school approaches and experiences were provided for pupils. Pupils and staff members with particular expertise and interests were included in group activities to complement classroom music lessons.

Teachers provided learning environments that were well resourced and attractive and made very effective use of digital technology to enhance pupils' learning. Teachers and school leaders provided regular planned opportunities for pupils to listen to a wide range of styles and cultural traditions through live and recorded music. They also collaborated to provide pupils with access to external musical performances, music clubs, choir, drumming workshops and participation in musical performances for the school community. Teachers also ensured traditional music was a regular feature of school life and that music was skilfully integrated across the curriculum.

Teaching was of a very high quality overall with teachers placing notable emphasis on active and playful teaching methodologies. School leaders actively promoted the enjoyment of music and ensured the consistent use of active playful teaching methodologies in classrooms. Teachers were very good communicators, used subject-specific language very effectively and aided pupils' recall of learning through displays of language, musical concepts, and songs learned.

Teachers had very effective collaborative preparation in place with clear curricular learning outcomes. They provided lessons that were very well structured, engaging and appropriately paced. Teachers actively supported pupils' literacy skills in music lessons and were aware of pupils' prior learning in Music. Pupils' emerging and established reading skills were supported by teachers through the display of lyrics and key musical language. Teachers generally provided appropriately challenging activities. In a few instances, there was scope to extend the challenge of the task provided to meet the learning needs of all pupils.

Many teachers demonstrated exceptionally high levels of expertise in Music; they used the exemplary whole-school structures in place to share their expertise, thereby enhancing teachers' collective practice and pupils' learning.

The overall quality of assessment was commendable with some very effective practice observed. Teachers used observation effectively to monitor pupils' engagement in and enjoyment of lesson tasks and songs. They used questioning to assess pupils' understanding of concepts and tasks and to elicit responses to music. In some instances, teachers facilitated pupil self-assessment. Where very good practice was observed, teachers used learning outcome based checklists to monitor pupils' progress across the Music Curriculum. Building on highly commendable assessment practice in some settings, teachers and school leaders should

collectively develop and implement a whole-school approach to the assessment of pupils' knowledge and skills in Music.

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

The effectiveness of school planning, including SSE, in progressing pupils' learning was exemplary. School leaders monitored pupils' learning outcomes and learning experiences in a planned and strategic manner. Exemplary guidance was provided to staff to inform preparation, teaching and learning. The positive impact of the guidance was evident in the consistency of classroom practice and progression in pupils' learning.

The leadership of learning and teaching in Music was of an exceptionally high standard. There was a whole-school focus on improvement in teaching and learning with school leaders fostering leadership in others and facilitating reflection on practice. The SSE process was used to a very high standard to facilitate sharing of staff expertise to develop collective practice and enhance pupils' learning experiences.

The school plan for Music was recently reviewed and the identification of composition as an area for improvement was praiseworthy. Consideration should now be given to the inclusion of guidance on the development of pupils' skill and confidence in playing percussion instruments and a more systematic agreed whole-school approach to the assessment of pupils' skills and knowledge in Music.



An Roinn Oideachais
Department of Education

For the pupils of Scoil Colmcille
Naofa about their learning in Music
Date of inspection: 12/02/2025



Introduction

Your school had an inspection of Music recently. This page for pupils describes what the inspectors found and gives ideas about what the school should do to make learning better.



What did the inspectors do during the visit?

The inspectors visited classrooms and talked to teachers and pupils about the work they were doing.



What did the inspectors find?

Here are some of the main things:

- Teachers planned very good lessons and activities so pupils were able to learn and enjoy music.
- Pupils were very good at singing and listening to music.
- There were lots of teachers who were very good at singing and playing instruments and they shared their talents so everybody could enjoy music.



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

- Teachers should allow pupils to play percussion instruments more often during lessons and teach pupils some tunes.
- Teachers should allow pupils to make and use their own percussion instruments.

Thank you for taking the time to read this page.

Appendix

SCHOOL RESPONSE TO THE REPORT

Submitted by the Board of Management

Part A Observations on the content of the inspection report

We wholeheartedly welcome the findings of this report and are delighted to see the recognition of the high-quality learning experiences and teaching methodologies within our teaching and learning of Music. The commendation of our pupils' musical literacy, song-singing abilities, and overall engagement is particularly notable.

We are also encouraged by the positive feedback regarding our collaborative teaching approaches and the effectiveness of school planning, including our school self-evaluation (SSE) processes. The acknowledgment of music's central role in school life highlights our commitment to fostering creativity and musical appreciation among all students.

Part B Follow-up actions planned or undertaken since the completion of the inspection activity to implement the findings and recommendations of the inspection

In response to the recommendations provided: We acknowledge the commendable assessment practices observed in some settings and will work towards developing a consistent, whole-school approach to assessing pupils' musical knowledge and skills. This will involve structured collaboration among teachers to establish clear assessment criteria. We recognise the importance of hands-on musical experiences and we will take steps to ensure that all pupils have regular access to both tuned and untuned percussion instruments.

This will include a review of our current resources and exploring potential opportunities for expanding our use of instruments.

We appreciate the valuable insights from this report and remain committed to continuous improvement in our Music curriculum delivery to further enrich pupils' learning experiences.

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