

## Curriculum Evaluation (Primary)

### FEEDBACK FORM for Partners

You are invited to provide written feedback regarding the Curriculum Evaluation (Primary) model on this feedback form.

- **Section A** provides an opportunity to comment on specific aspects of the evaluation
- **Section B** provides space for your general observations about any aspect of the Curriculum Evaluation (Primary) Model
- Please return the feedback form to **brian\_macgiollaphdraig@education.gov.ie** on or before Friday May 27<sup>th</sup>

<b>Name of organisation:</b>	IPPN – The Irish Primary Principals’ Network
<b>E-mail address:</b>	geraldine.darcy@ippn.ie
<b>Phone:</b>	021 4824084
<b>Comment</b>	<p>Please note that IPPN conducted a survey of the pilot principals in relation to Curriculum Evaluation in March 2016. Seven of the principals completed the survey.</p> <p>See separate survey results which provide additional context and information to supplement the information below, which was sought from the same cohort based on the DES CE Review form itself.</p>

<b>Section A: Feedback on specific aspects of the Curriculum Evaluation</b>	
<b>Aspect of the evaluation</b>	<b>Comments on this aspect</b>
<p><b>Before inspection visit</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Notice</li> <li>• Documents</li> <li>• Parental Permission for participation in pupil group interview</li> </ul>	<p>Favourable reaction in general. Over 70% of pilot principals said the notice period was ‘just right’, although 28% said it was ‘too short’. All said the information form was helpful and easy to complete. In terms of the perceived administration burden relating to the evaluation, almost 30% said it was ‘high’, 57% said it was ‘medium’ and 14% said it was ‘low’ burden.</p> <p>Specific comments received:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All good</li> <li>• Inspector pleasant and professional</li> <li>• Our Evaluation took place in May in the middle of testing and School tours ..... it took x 2 FULL DAYS in a 5 teacher school.</li> <li>• We found that aspect very stressful. All documentation regarding the evaluation itself was simple and straight forward.</li> </ul>
<p><b>During the inspection visit</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meetings and interviews</li> <li>• Classroom visits</li> <li>• Documents</li> <li>• Feedback meetings</li> </ul>	<p>Very favourable reaction from principals regarding the focus on teaching and learning – teachers’ practice, learner outcomes and pupils’ experience as well as the involvement of pupils in the evaluation. Good practice was affirmed. Principals emphasized the manner in which the inspectors engaged with them and how crucial this was to the success of the evaluation, and the pilot.</p> <p>Specific comments received:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All good, but everything was predicated on the approach of Inspector. She was open and flexible and had understanding and good rapport with all. She did not adopt a checklist approach</li> <li>• The implementation of the actual evaluation was uncomplicated, however, by virtue of the fact that it was taking place combined with the time of year involved it did add significantly to stress Levels of us all.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Following the inspection visit</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The evaluation report</li><li>• Factual Verification, School Response</li><li>• Acting on the report</li></ul>	<p>Principals were happy with how their schools' work on assessment, SSE, SIP and other aspects such as the school context were reflected in the report. Most felt that the recommendations fit with their SIP.</p> <p>Specific comments received:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Whole process very professional</li><li>• The evaluation report was very useful from a whole School planning perspective. It highlighted areas where we refine our focus and attend to in our School Improvement Plan.</li><li>• I found it helpful as a teacher and Administrator.</li><li>• All staff members found it helpful.... retrospectively!</li></ul>
-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

## **Section B – General observations on the Curriculum Evaluation (Primary)**

The general sense is that the pilot was successful and worthwhile and that the Inspectors engaged very positively in the process.

All principals who responded agreed that:

- the information form was helpful and easy to complete,
- pupils had an opportunity to interact positively with the evaluation of this curricular area
- the document review sufficiently matched the evaluation focus
- the school context adequately reflected in the evaluation
- the school's work on assessment reflected in the evaluation
- Pupils' Learning Experiences were focused on adequately
- the school happy with the recommendations for improvement
- the report was clearly written and easily understood,
- sufficient time was given to teaching and learning during the evaluation.

The majority agreed that:

- the school's work on SSE and the School's Improvement Plan sufficiently reflected in the evaluation
- learner outcomes and teachers' practice were focused on adequately
- the recommendations fit with the School's Improvement Plan for the next three years
- good practice was affirmed.

Specific comments from principals regarding their general observations:

- This type of assessment should take the place of the WSE, school could be assessed on 2 or 3 areas a year, meaning all subject areas would be seen over a 6 year cycle and inspectors would be in schools yearly and have time to see each area
- In general the staff regarded the whole experience as positive.
- My school had a very positive experience with this pilot. We were invited to participate and we accepted. We were very happy as we had just completed extensive SSE work on in the area of Numeracy. This pilot was successful for us because we opted to participate. I have huge concerns over the implementation of this scheme. Schools need to be able to opt in or out. I am very concerned that this scheme may be rolled out in such a manner that a school will be informed as to what subject area they will be evaluated in. I am concerned that these results may be used to pigeon hole schools e.g. such and such is great for Maths but not at all good for Irish etc. I am concerned that schools will be forced to focus on 'subjects' and not the children we teach. I strongly recommend that schools be piloted in subjects they feel are not strong. Then we will see the true impact/burden of curriculum evaluation.
- Over all the school found the whole process and evaluation very positive and re affirming. The narrow focus, less notification time and reduced administration burden made the inspection a much more positive and worthwhile process. However the open minded listening and interactive disposition of the inspector set the tone of the whole process. The staff and principal were treated as competent and reflective professional educators - which greatly mitigated the 'checklist' structure of other inspection processes. The one subject inspection model does very much set a framework with which the school can evaluate other subject areas. The school has found this an ongoing benefit of the inspection. The school found this model more useful and providing direction and guidance than the WSE or Incidental model. The open minded and flexible approach of the inspector was paramount in building on the open minded and reflective nature of the staff in making this 'one subject' model beneficial to the overall learning and teaching in the school
- Overall found this pilot positive, far less stressful than WSE or even an incidental. The shorter notice and tighter parameters meant the process very manageable. Enough time beforehand to get documentation order but not enough time to worry about it. Whole process over quickly and rapid provision of feedback was efficient and beneficial.
- Did find that the process was less Checklist based and more collaborative than WSE.
- Have to emphasise that school found this pilot process beneficial and productive primarily because the Inspector was helpful, interested, open to the school's views and treated the enterprise of teaching and learning and evaluation as a person-based activity.

We would be grateful if this form could be returned by e-mail to [brian\\_macgiollaphadraig@education.gov.ie](mailto:brian_macgiollaphadraig@education.gov.ie) on or before Friday May 27<sup>th</sup>  
*Evaluation Support and Research Unit,*  
*Inspectorate,*  
*Department of Education and Skills*