

An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna
Department of Education and Skills

DEIS EVALUATION

REPORT

School Name	Saint Eithne's Senior Girls' National School
School Address	Edenmore Raheny Dublin 5
Roll number	18969C

Date of Evaluation: 16-12-2016



WHAT IS A DEIS EVALUATION?

In 2005 the Department published *DEIS (Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools): An Action Plan for Educational Inclusion*. The aim of this action plan is to ensure that the educational needs of children and young people from disadvantaged communities are met.

Schools are expected to develop action plans for improvement in the following areas (referred to as the DEIS themes): attendance; retention; educational progression; literacy; numeracy; partnership with parents; partnership with other schools and educational providers, and with external agencies. The DEIS Evaluation model evaluates and reports on the school's action planning for improvement.

HOW TO READ THIS REPORT

During this inspection, the inspector(s) evaluated the school's action planning for improvement under the following headings:

1. DEIS action planning for improvement
2. DEIS themes

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.

The board of management 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.

DEIS Evaluation

INSPECTION ACTIVITIES DURING THIS INSPECTION

Date of inspection	16-12-2016
Inspection activities undertaken <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Discussion with principal and teachers• Examination of school's current action plans for improvement• Observation of DEIS-related activities and interventions• Pupil focus-group discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Parent focus-group discussion• Analysis of parent and pupil questionnaires• Observation of teaching and learning• Examination of pupils' work• Interaction with pupils• Feedback to principal and teachers

SCHOOL CONTEXT

Saint Eithne's Senior Girls' National School participates in Band 1 of DEIS. It has the services of a part-time home-school-community liaison (HSCL) coordinator and participates in the School Completion Programme (SCP). At the time of the evaluation, there were 115 pupils enrolled in the school.

SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

FINDINGS

The key findings in relation to the DEIS action planning for improvement process in this school are the following:

- The quality of leadership of DEIS action planning for improvement is very effective.
- High expectations are set for the pupils in all aspects of their educational experience with commendable attention given to nurturing their aspirations for lifelong learning.
- The quality of the DEIS planning process for both literacy and numeracy is very effective; this planning informs team-teaching which is an effective feature of practice in all classes.
- While targets set for specific cohorts of pupils, in both literacy and numeracy, have been very effective in achieving improvements, pupils achieving at the mid-range could also benefit from a target-setting approach.
- Parental involvement is promoted very positively.
- The SCP and HSCL co-ordinators work very effectively, both independently and collaboratively, to ensure that pupils benefit from these DEIS supports.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Aspects of the DEIS action planning for improvement process that require development in this school include:

- Improvement targets, focused on specific cohorts of pupils achieving at the mid-range level of attainment, should be set in both literacy and numeracy with in-class interventions and whole-class teaching clearly linked to achieving these targets.

DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. DEIS ACTION PLANNING IMPROVEMENT

The quality of leadership of DEIS action planning for improvement is very effective. The leadership team is very successful in implementing the agreed actions for improvement. While the process of DEIS action planning is systematically co-ordinated, monitored and reviewed, the distribution of responsibility for this action planning should be expanded as school circumstances allow. Teachers' individual and collective practices are focused on achieving targets set in all areas of DEIS planning. The commendable practice of targeting support to more able pupils should be extended to benefit a greater number of pupils. A range of initiatives is implemented very effectively to support pupils' learning in both literacy and numeracy. As a result of these very good practices, pupils have on-going opportunities to engage in positive learning experiences. High expectations are set for the pupils in all aspects of their education with commendable attention given to nurturing their aspirations for lifelong learning.

Confirmation was provided that the board of management has formally adopted the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-primary Schools (2011)* without modification and that the school is compliant with the requirements of the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (2011)*.

2. DEIS THEMES

2.1. Literacy and Numeracy

Literacy

The quality of the DEIS planning process for literacy is very effective. Targets are focused on improving literacy outcomes for specific cohorts of pupils. The targets are measurable and set in realistic terms. Significant success has been achieved in reaching and, in some instances, exceeding these targets. It is appropriate now for the school to engage in a similar target-setting process for pupils achieving at the mid-range in literacy, and to establish among teachers a shared understanding of how this target will impact on their classroom practice. Implementation of *First Steps* reading, writing and speaking and listening programmes impact positively on pupils' literacy skill development. However, to more fully develop the approach to literacy, further attention should be given to enhancing pupils' oral language abilities. The overall quality of learning in literacy is very good. Team-teaching, incorporating the authentic use of information and communication technologies, is a feature of practice in all classes. Assessment data indicates that pupils are benefitting from such intervention. On-going monitoring and recording of pupils' engagement and learning during team-teaching would enhance the learning potential of the interventions. The quality of teaching in literacy is very good with teachers' collective practice yielding very positive learning experiences for pupils.

Numeracy

The quality of the DEIS planning process for numeracy is very good. The school has been very successful in meeting previous targets and improving attainment levels for particular cohorts of pupils. It is timely for the school to engage in a similar target-setting process for pupils achieving at the mid-

range in numeracy, with teachers identifying the implications of this target on classroom practice. There is strong evidence of teachers selecting and implementing successfully a range of appropriate initiatives to realise targets. The quality of teaching in Mathematics is very good. Lessons are structured appropriately. Concepts are explained clearly. Teacher questioning is effective in probing and extending pupils' learning and encouraging them to make connections in their learning. It is very effective practice that pupils are encouraged to reflect upon and talk about their learning. As with literacy, on-going monitoring and recording of pupils' engagement and learning during team-teaching would enhance the learning potential of these interventions.

2.2. Attendance, Retention, Progression

The overall quality of DEIS planning for attendance, retention and progression is very good. Attendance levels are very good. There are very effective monitoring and tracking systems to identify attendance and punctuality. Analysis of this data should be used to target specific cohorts of pupils; the impact of this should further improve overall attendance levels. The approach to promoting punctuality is to be commended and encouraged. All pupils complete the school cycle.

2.3. Partnership with parents and others

The quality of DEIS planning to promote partnership with parents and others is very good. The school is very welcoming and makes very good efforts to liaise with parents about their child's progress in learning. In a focus-group discussion with parents, very strong levels of satisfaction were expressed with the quality of pupils' learning experiences and with the school's openness to parental involvement. While parents were very aware of their own child's progress and the many DEIS initiatives being implemented, they were less clear about the progress being achieved by the school as part of the DEIS planning process. The school should keep parents informed of its overall progress and involve them in achieving targets. Commendably, there was a clear sense of the school as a centre of learning for the whole-school community.

The work of the HSCL co-ordinator is carried out very effectively and she co-ordinates a broad range of appropriate activities for pupils. Courses facilitated for parents are monitored for their effectiveness and have a life, leisure and educational skills focus. The plan to further develop the school's transition programme for pupils progressing from primary to post-primary, with the involvement of parents, is commended.

The SCP is operated in a very systematic manner. It is very effective in supporting targeted pupils through a range of in-school, after-school and out-of-school activities. The care-team support group, involving the SCP and HSCL co-ordinators, targets support at a specific cohort of pupils and their families. There is very effective communication between the SCP co-ordinator and the school's SCP link person. Very good attention is paid to monitoring the impact of SCP activities on pupils' school attendance. The homework club is generally attended by pupils from second to fifth classes. The school's plan for expanding its range of after-school activities to sixth-class pupils is very commendable. This afterschool provision should include support for pupils with homework and the development of study skills.

Appendix

School response to the report

Submitted by the Board of Management

Part A: Observations on the content of the inspection report

The board of management is delighted that this evaluation affirms the hard work and dedication of our staff, pupils and parents. We are pleased with the very positive content of the report and the findings.

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

Since engaging with this process the board of management and the staff are continuing to work to improve learning outcomes for our pupils, taking into account what has been recommended in the report. In summary, the key areas we are currently working on are as follows:

We have identified pupils achieving at the mid-range in numeracy, initially, that we feel could benefit from targeted intervention. We are starting a programme in partnership with 'Suas' in April to work intensively with these pupils using the 'Power of Two' programme. At our annual DEIS review at the end of the school year, we will then plan to target pupils achieving at the mid-range in literacy.

We welcome any opportunity to communicate with our parent body and we will make our DEIS targets and progress available to parents from now on.

We have identified two new possible strategies to try to further improve attendance and punctuality and are working to target specific pupils who we feel would benefit from this approach.

We have commenced an after-school club for sixth-class pupils as planned.

We will continue to develop our team-teaching strategies and work on ongoing monitoring and recording of pupils' engagement and learning.

As we continue to engage with the new language curriculum, which is being currently rolled out, we will focus on further enhancing pupils' oral language abilities.

The moratorium on posts of responsibility has resulted in a depletion of our in-school management team. Since the evaluation, the literacy and numeracy coordinator has passed on responsibility for physical education (PE) coordination to all the staff, so she can continue to focus on literacy and numeracy planning and 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 the school's provision of each area.

Level	Description	Example of descriptive terms
Very Good	Very good 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 outstanding 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	Good 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	Satisfactory 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	Fair 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	Weak 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;