

An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna
Department of Education and Skills

DEIS EVALUATION

REPORT

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| School Name | Ladyswell N S |
| School Address | Ladyswell Mulhuddart Dublin 15 |
| Roll number | 19850F |

Date of Evaluation: 15-05-2017



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; progression; literacy; numeracy; at post-primary level, educational attainment including examination attainment; 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 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.

DEIS Evaluation

INSPECTION ACTIVITIES

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| Dates of inspection | 15-05-2017 |
| 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 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Parent focus-group interview• 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

Ladyswell NS is a co-educational school catering for pupils from junior infants to sixth class. It operates under the patronage of the Catholic Archbishop of Dublin. The school has two early start classes to serve the needs of pre-school pupils. Ladyswell NS participates in Band 1 of the DEIS programme. It has the services of a home school community liaison (HSCL) co-ordinator, and participates in the School Completion Programme (SCP). At the time of the evaluation there were 515 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 school implements a wide range of initiatives for pupils in literacy and numeracy.
- Overall, the quality of teaching and learning observed ranged between good and very good.
- The school is very well resourced and stimulating educational displays are provided in all classrooms and corridors.
- While the DEIS plan identifies a range of strategies to be implemented, SMART targets need to be outlined to guide school improvement for each theme.
- The school has compiled a good range of assessment data; however there is a need to analyse the data more effectively to establish baselines and to monitor pupils' progress.
- The leadership and monitoring of the DEIS action planning process requires improvement.

RECOMMENDATIONS

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

- The school should identify SMART targets for each DEIS theme to outline desired improvements relative to initial baselines.
- There is a need to analyse school assessment and attendance data more effectively to establish baselines and to monitor pupils' progress.
- The school should ensure that leadership and monitoring of the DEIS action planning process is strengthened by better co-ordination, clearer target setting and more consistent monitoring.

DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. DEIS ACTION PLANNING IMPROVEMENT

- The quality of leadership of the DEIS action planning for improvement process is fair. The school should ensure that leadership and monitoring of the DEIS action planning process is strengthened by better co-ordination, clearer target setting and more consistent monitoring.
- While the DEIS plan outlines a range of supporting initiatives for each of the themes the targets are not SMART. The school now needs to devise targets that are specific, measurable, realistic and timebound for each of the DEIS themes and to inform these using baseline data. In devising targets, the school must analyse its data to identify target groups for whom additional supports will have the greatest impact.
- The school implements a range of strategies to support literacy and numeracy and these are delivered effectively. While the impact of some of these strategies is monitored there needs to be further analysis of this assessment data to inform planning and overall target setting. All staff members need to be aware of the school-level targets and of how interventions and strategies address these targets for particular groups within the school.
- The school is very well resourced and stimulating learning environments have been created in all classrooms and corridors to support teaching and 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

- While the school's DEIS plan for literacy does not identify SMART targets, some specific targets for literacy have been identified through the School Self-Evaluation process. These targets made reference to desired improvements in pupils' attitudes and their attainment in standardised reading tests. The school needs to gather and analyse its data more regularly in order to measure attainment of these targets.
- The overall quality of teaching and learning in literacy ranged from good to very good. Attractive, print-rich environments are evident in all classrooms and there is commendable emphasis on vocabulary enrichment. Pupils' early writing skills are encouraged in junior classes and developed effectively throughout the school. Most pupils attain good standards in reading.
- Teachers implement a commendable range of strategies to support literacy. These include the use of the guided reading approach, *Reading Recovery*, power hour and the *First Steps* programme. A school-wide emphasis on improving spellings is also evident. While some monitoring of the effectiveness of interventions was noted, all teachers should ensure that pupils' progress in literacy is monitored and tracked consistently.

Numeracy

- Although the DEIS plan provides guidance on initiatives and strategies to be implemented, no SMART targets have been set to quantify desired improvements in pupils' numeracy attainment. The school should analyse its data to establish such targets and to facilitate monitoring of whole-school initiatives for numeracy
- The school reports that it implements a range of initiatives to support numeracy including *Maths Recovery*, *Ready Set Go Maths* and *Maths for Fun*. In the numeracy lessons observed the quality of teaching and learning ranged from good to very good. In all settings, teachers ensure that the environment is number-rich and that concrete materials are used to assist with discovery learning.
- Throughout the school, teachers record pupils' progress in numeracy through use of criterion-referenced assessment. Further analysis of these assessment records is advised to ensure that all pupils can acquire all concepts and develop their mathematical skills systematically. Such analysis will reveal a need for targeted reinforcement of challenging topics in some classrooms.

2.2. Attendance, Retention, Progression

- While there are no measurable attendance targets in the DEIS plan, the school has devised strategies to improve pupils' attendance. Full attendance is encouraged and rewarded through termly prizes. The HSCL co-ordinator monitors attendance and maintains regular contact with parents in this regard.
- Through funding from the SCP the school provides a well-run breakfast club for a large number of pupils each morning. A smaller number of pupils attend the schools' homework clubs which are funded by SCP and Barnardos. In response to the Inspectorate survey almost all pupils thought that the breakfast club was a good idea and most pupils said that they liked coming to school
- There are systems in place to communicate with the parents of children who regularly miss school when their absences are approaching twenty days. Notwithstanding these efforts, the school's records show that a very large group of pupils missed more than twenty days in the last school year. Attendance data should to be analysed to determine the extent and patterns of absenteeism with a view to creating realistic improvement targets. These records also require further analysis to determine the reliability of the recorded data.
- While the school reports that all of its pupils in sixth class transfer to second-level, there is neither a DEIS plan nor targets for retention and progression.
- Pupils' wellbeing is promoted by the school's care team and the management of pupils is very effective.

2.3. Partnership with parents and others

- While a target has been identified for increased parental involvement it has not been outlined in SMART terms. In reviewing the DEIS plan the school should devise measurable targets for this area. In their responses to the Inspectorate survey and a focus group discussion almost all parents agreed that the school is a welcoming place for them.

- Parents and members of the community assist in the work of the school through their volunteering services to school clubs and through curricular initiatives such as Maths for Fun, Barnardo's Wizards of Words and through their assistance with the Early Start classes.
- Classes are organised for parents in areas such as knitting, sewing, cooking and gardening. In identifying further opportunities for parental involvement it might be beneficial to survey parents to ascertain if there is a demand for any other types of parent classes.
- The school engages with a number of outside agencies including St Vincent De Paul, Barnardos and other local community organisations to help provide supports for its pupils.

Appendix

SCHOOL RESPONSE TO THE REPORT

Submitted by the Board of Management

Area 1 Observations on the content of the inspection report

We are happy with the content and language of the report. The BOM acknowledges the positive findings outlined in the report which affirms the commitment, expertise and dedication of the school staff and the entire school community. The BOM accepts this report and will encourage and support all school stakeholders in the implementation of the suggested recommendations.

Area 2 Follow-up actions planned or undertaken since the completion of the inspection activity to implement the findings and recommendations of the inspection.

The BOM acknowledges and accepts the recommendations for improvement as laid out in the DEIS evaluation report. The school will analyse school data to identify the areas of need within the five DEIS themes and will establish targets, intervention strategies and assessment approaches to ensure that appropriate progress is being made in these areas.

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'/students' 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'/students' 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; |