

**An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna
Department of Education and Skills**

DEIS EVALUATION

REPORT

School Name	Coláiste Eoin
School Address	Cappagh Road Finglas West Dublin 11
Roll number	70180A

Date of Evaluation: 18-05-2017



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 inspectors 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 on the findings and recommendations of the report; the board chose to accept the report without response.

DEIS Evaluation

INSPECTION ACTIVITIES

Dates of inspection	15,16,18 May 2017
Inspection activities undertaken <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Discussion with principal, deputy 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 student questionnaires• Observation of teaching and learning• Examination of students' work• Interaction with students• Feedback to principal, deputy principal and teachers

SCHOOL CONTEXT

Coláiste Eoin participates in the DEIS action plan for educational inclusion. It has the services of a part-time home-school-community liaison (HSCL) co-ordinator and participates in the School Completion Programme (SCP). At the time of the evaluation, there were 157 students enrolled and the school offers the Junior Certificate, Junior Certificate School Programme (JCSP), the Transition Year (TY), the Leaving Certificate and the Leaving Certificate Applied (LCA) programme.

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 overall quality of leadership of the DEIS planning process in the school is satisfactory; a degree of disaffection was reported amongst some key personnel.
- The DEIS plan is good overall; the targets in some areas are not sufficiently specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time bound (SMART).
- DEIS resources are being used to varying levels of effectiveness for the purpose of improving educational outcomes.
- There is significant tuition time lost due to student and teacher absence, suspensions, and attendance at various non-curricular events taking place during school hours.
- The quality of teaching and learning observed was very good overall; however, the student questionnaires highlight classroom experience as an area of dissatisfaction.
- The interventions outlined by the school to improve attainment comprise a list of measures to be delivered outside of the classroom; a better balance is required to ensure that the value of good teaching is appropriately recognised.

RECOMMENDATIONS

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

- The views and ideas of all members of the school community should be further incorporated at relevant stages of the DEIS planning process.
- SMART targets, informed by analysis of all available data, should be set in consultation with relevant key personnel.

- The learning benefits of non-curricular activities should be carefully weighed against consequent lost tuition time, participation rates and value in terms of resources.
- The review process should focus on the measurable impact of the interventions in relation to the established baseline and each target, and should inform future planning.
- Increased use of classroom activities to stimulate student attention and motivation should be a focus of future DEIS interventions.

DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. DEIS ACTION PLANNING IMPROVEMENT

The quality of leadership of the DEIS planning process is satisfactory. However, a degree of disaffection was reported amongst some key personnel. Work needs to be done to ensure that DEIS planning benefits fully from meaningful consultation between the planning team, strand-specific teams, senior management, and staff. The views and ideas of all members of the school community should be incorporated at relevant stages of the planning process.

The quality of the written plans is good overall. The review sections of the plans need improvement so that they provide a better steer for management and staff to constructively review the effectiveness of measures to achieve the targets. The targets should be adjusted in light of reviews.

In some strands, the available baseline data is not used effectively to set SMART targets for improvement. Some targets are overly ambitious or unspecific. The small size of the student cohort, together with the complexity and variability of students' needs, reduces the meaningfulness of statistical analysis in target setting and review. Target setting, and decisions regarding interventions, should be carried out on a student-by-student basis taking into consideration all available information and in consultation with relevant key personnel.

DEIS resources are used with varying levels of effectiveness to improve educational outcomes. Funding, resources and interventions sourced from outside agencies have been of great value to students' learning and personal development. However, this value is limited by the small number of students who stay after school to avail of them. The effectiveness of the homework club is undermined by inconsistencies in applying the school's homework policy in some instances.

The quality of teaching and learning observed was very good overall. The relationships between teachers and students were positive. In some lessons, the measures outlined in the DEIS plan were being implemented well in some strands. However, the student questionnaires highlight classroom experience as an area of dissatisfaction. Further activities to stimulate student attention and motivation should be a focus of future DEIS interventions.

The student questionnaires identified homework as an area of concern. The school should agree a homework policy that can be implemented consistently. While students should be strongly encouraged to engage fully with the homework policy, increased opportunities should also be provided in lessons for students to develop independent learning skills. Similarly, to mitigate the impact of poor study habits, revision should be further built into lessons where possible, particularly for examination classes.

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, Numeracy and Examination Attainment

Literacy

The school self-evaluation (SSE) report of 2014 for literacy demonstrates aspects of good DEIS planning. SMART targets have been set and valuable measures for improvement chosen. An intervention to improve vocabulary was implemented initially by teachers with relevant expertise. However, this provision was disrupted by staff changes and the corresponding DEIS targets remain unachieved.

There is a full-time librarian and vibrant library in the school. Students with special educational needs (SEN) are supported well. *Word-of-the-week* and *visual verbal squares* are examples of interventions for improving literacy which are implemented effectively on a whole-school basis.

The literacy review does not measure sufficiently the extent to which the targets have been achieved. The targets for the following year's plan were not adjusted on foot of the review. The literacy review should inform future planning through focusing on each target and the measurable impact of the interventions in relation to the established baseline.

Numeracy

The SSE report of 2015 for numeracy demonstrates aspects of good DEIS planning. Targets have been set; some of these are SMART but some that are not sufficiently specific. The target to increase the uptake of higher-level Mathematics needs careful consideration; it may be more appropriate to focus on the reduction in foundation-level uptake as a main target and to identify individual students for higher level. The numeracy targets should be SMART and adjusted yearly to take account of the variability in student needs and abilities.

The interventions outlined to improve attainment in Mathematics comprise a list of measures to be delivered outside of the classroom. A better balance is required to ensure that the value of good teaching is appropriately recognised in improving student outcomes in Mathematics.

The numeracy review highlights a failure in the implementation of the plan in some areas. For example, it identifies team motivation as an aspect that could have gone better. However, it is not informed by the comprehensive analysis of student achievement in the certificate examinations included in the mathematics plan. The numeracy review should measure the impact of the interventions in relation to the established baseline and each target set.

Examination Attainment

Planning for attainment is good. The draft SSE report of 2017 includes comprehensive baseline data on a focus group of students and shows awareness of the significant challenges faced in improving examination attainment. However, some of the targets set are not achievable, and almost all of the measures for achieving them are outside interventions. Attainment and progression targets should be set with a focus on maximising the potential of each student.

There is significant tuition time lost due to student and teacher absence, suspensions, and from attendance at various non-curricular events. The impact that lost tuition time has on attainment

should be evaluated by the school as a matter of urgency. The learning benefits of non-curricular activities should be carefully considered when making decisions regarding participation in such events.

2.2. Attendance, Retention, Progression

Attendance

The quality of planning for improvement in student attendance is good. There was evidence that the measures listed in the DEIS attendance plan were being implemented. There are awards for attendance and punctuality. However, the level of chronic absenteeism remains a cause of concern.

The school's engagement with the National Behaviour Support Service (NBSS) and the appointment of a 'behaviour for learning' support teacher are recognised. Some teachers are trained in the use of restorative practices; further use should be made of this expertise to reduce the use of suspension and to develop students' life skills around taking responsibility for their behaviour.

The targets set for improved attendance were not achieved. SCP and HSCL monitoring of attendance is diligent and supports are implemented actively. The school should set, review and refocus on SMART attendance targets. The school should consult the TUSLA Child and Family Agency 2015 guidelines for schools.

Attendance data is recorded electronically through the use of two separate attendance-monitoring systems. The SCP manual recording of attendance has improved confidence in the data now being returned. It is essential that the data being collected is reliable and accurate.

Retention

The quality of planning for student retention is good. The review of this strand provided insights on the value of measures such as the focus on student mental health and mindfulness training for teachers. It also outlined the possible negative impact of overly ambitious academic targets and the ineffectiveness of punitive measures in managing behaviour. This review should inform this and every other strand of the DEIS plan.

The school provided detailed records of students who had left the school at various stages. In almost all cases, there was evidence of them having continued their education in another recognised school or centre of education. The care team was seen to operate well in the interests of students with very pressing, individual challenges.

The documentation provided did not give a clear picture of the achievement of the retention targets. Due to the small size of the cohort, there is scope to improve the meaningfulness of certain retention targets.

Progression

The draft plan for educational progression is good. High-quality baseline data has been collated. The review and the consequent revision of targets remain areas for development.

The school has set very ambitious targets in the short term for progression to third level. The interventions to support students to achieve these targets showed that the school is very active in securing places for students on access programmes and in supporting students through after-school interventions. While raising expectations is a welcome and necessary part of DEIS planning, the potential of individual students must also be given due weight as well as the possible effect on students of setting overly ambitious targets.

The majority of students proceed to further-education or post-Leaving Certificate courses. The school should build an accurate profile of their subsequent pathways so as to better inform the setting of targets and interventions for educational progression.

2.3. Partnership with parents and others

The quality of partnership with parents and others is excellent. Parents' feedback was very positive in the evaluation survey and at the focus-group meeting with parents. The school has a dedicated parents' room and a wide range of events is provided. Parents are consulted appropriately on school matters.

There are very good links between the school and a wide range of community resources. The SCP co-ordinator is working very effectively in this area. The HSCL service is enhancing links between school and home in a very successful manner.

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	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;