

An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna
Department of Education and Skills

DEIS EVALUATION

REPORT

School Name	Moyne College
School Address	Ballina County Mayo
Roll number	72020L

Date of Evaluation: 22-10-2018



An Roinn Oideachais
agus Scileanna
Department of
Education and Skills

DEIS EVALUATION

In 2017, the Department published the DEIS (*Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools*) Plan. The aim of this plan is to ensure better educational outcomes for learners in schools from disadvantaged communities and to maximise the chances of every child getting the best possible opportunity to fulfil her/his potential in life.

Schools are expected to develop action plans for improvement in the following areas (referred to as the DEIS themes): attendance; retention; transitions; literacy; numeracy; partnership with parents; partnership with other schools and educational providers, and with external agencies. Post-primary schools are also expected to develop action plans for improvement in examination attainment.

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 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.

CHILD PROTECTION

During the inspection visit, the following checks in relation to the school's child protection procedures were conducted:

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.
4. The Child Safeguarding Statement meets the requirements of the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017.
5. The records of the last three board of management meetings record a child protection oversight report that meet the requirements of the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary schools 2017.
6. The board of management has ensured that arrangements are in place to provide information to all school personnel on the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools, 2017
7. School planning documentation indicates that the school is making full provision for the relevant aspects of the curriculum (SPHE, Stay Safe, RSE, Wellbeing).
8. Child protection records are maintained in a secure location.

The school met the requirements in relation to each of the checks above.

DEIS Evaluation

INSPECTION ACTIVITIES

Dates of inspection	22-10-2018 to 24-10-2018
Inspection activities undertaken <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Interview with principal and relevant staff• Examination of school's current action plans for improvement• Observation of DEIS-related activities and interventions• Student focus-group interview	<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 and relevant staff

SCHOOL CONTEXT

Moyne College participates in Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools (DEIS), the action plan of the Department of Education and Skills for educational inclusion. It has the services of a full-time home-school-community-liaison (HSCL) co-ordinator and participates in the School Completion Programme (SCP). At the time of the evaluation there were 184 students enrolled in the school.

The programmes offered are the Junior Cycle, the Junior Certificate School Programme (JCSP), the Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme (LCVP), the Leaving Certificate Applied (LCA) programme and the established Leaving Certificate. The school does not currently offer a Transition Year (TY) 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 quality of leadership and implementation of DEIS action planning for improvement is of a very high standard.
- Three-year Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-Bound (SMART) targets have been set across all of the DEIS themes; some other targets would be more appropriately documented as measures.
- DEIS action planning has had a very positive impact on teaching and learning.
- Teachers and support staff are highly skilled and have availed of a range of relevant continuing professional development (CPD) opportunities.
- Students expressed a high level of interest in the idea of introducing a TY programme to the school and there is an exceptionally high level of capacity within the school to develop a very worthwhile TY programme.
- The involvement of parents in the life of the school is a key priority for school management, however a summary of the school's action plan is yet to be shared formally with parents.

RECOMMENDATIONS

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

- All targets should be SMART; where relevant, yearly targets should be set in order to take account of the varying aptitudes of successive cohorts of students.

- Management should conduct a feasibility study into the potential of introducing a TY programme on an optional basis for students.
- A summary version of the DEIS action plan for improvement should be made available to parents.

DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. DEIS ACTION PLANNING FOR IMPROVEMENT

DEIS action planning for improvement is of a very high standard. School management, led by the principal, demonstrates a very strong commitment to progressing DEIS action planning and provides very good leadership. There is a shared vision among staff and management as to how the DEIS supports can provide greater opportunities for improved student outcomes and there is a very high level of commitment to addressing the challenges faced by the student cohort.

Senior management, the DEIS co-ordinator and the DEIS team communicate a clear connection between the DEIS plan and classroom practice. Teaching and learning strategies are an integral part of the DEIS plan. In particular, the creation of a student-centred learning environment is actively promoted. The results of this were clearly evident in the lessons observed. Teachers demonstrated a keen understanding of the value of collaborative and task-based learning and skilfully crafted learning experiences that allowed all students to achieve while also challenging the more able students.

Management endeavours to maximise the impact of DEIS resources available. A range of initiatives relevant to a variety of the DEIS themes was observed during the course of the evaluation.

CPD is actively promoted by management. Teachers have availed of a range of opportunities to increase their skills across a range of relevant disciplines. A key result of this is that eight members of staff have qualifications in the area of special educational needs (SEN). This represents a very significant level of capacity to respond to the needs of students in an informed and highly effective manner. A recent increase in the prevalence of team teaching is an indication of the continued drive towards an inclusive approach to education. In cases where team teaching was observed during the evaluation, it was very well planned and executed.

2. DEIS THEMES

2.1 Numeracy, Literacy and Examination Attainment

Numeracy

DEIS planning for numeracy is very good. Two SMART targets have been set, one based on improving numeracy skills among junior-cycle students and the other focused on improving numeracy standards in LCVP and LCA. Year-on-year targets should be considered in order to take into account the varying aptitudes of successive cohorts of students. A further target listed in the plan would be more appropriately documented as a measure.

A key strategy to improve student numeracy evolved from a high level of awareness among the planning team of the need to address anxiety issues associated with Mathematics among the student cohort. At the start of first year, students embark on an intensive and tailored refresher course in Mathematics. A similar intervention is in place for LCA students in order to bridge any gaps that may be identified in the students' basic mathematical skills. It is planned that qualitative and

anecdotal evidence related to student anxiety will be bolstered by a more quantitative analysis in the next few months with a view to developing a SMART target in this area. Students who were interviewed during the evaluation spoke highly of this initiative and the positive impact it has had on their learning. A more quantitative approach will provide more robust evidence of its effectiveness.

Numeracy is very well addressed in the majority of subject and programme plans reviewed. Also, most classrooms contain evidence of numeracy content that is based on whole-school strategies related to numeracy. In order to add further enlightenment to the relevance of numeracy across the curriculum, the common understanding of numeracy should be broadened to include aspects of mathematical thinking that would support learning in all subjects such as discovery learning, problem solving and higher-order tasks.

Literacy

DEIS planning for literacy is very good. Four SMART targets have been set, two of which have a whole-school focus and two of which are focused on the LCVP and LCA cohorts. Baseline data in support of these targets comes from a range of standardised testing instruments. An additional two targets would be more appropriately documented as measures.

Initiatives include an embracing of literacy week, visits from guest authors and the incorporation of a reading corner, a whole-school approach to punctuation as well as Drop Everything and Read. Also, the whole-school adoption of student-centred and collaborative learning strategies promotes the development of students' oral literacy and general competence and confidence in expressing their views.

There is proactive identification of deficits in students' literacy skills and individualised educational plans are developed by the SEN team in cases of chronic literacy delays. There is also a vocabulary enrichment programme in place for targeted students and a focus on subject-specific vocabulary is established practice across all subject areas. There is an emphasis, as part of the JCSP, on students' internalisation of high frequency words that are used by mature language users across several content areas. This initiative is worthy of extension to all first-year students and would align well with the numeracy initiative already in place for first-year students.

Examination attainment

The quality of planning for improvement in examination attainment is very good. Four SMART targets have been set. An additional two targets would be more appropriately documented as measures. Year-on-year targets should be considered in order to take account of the varying aptitudes of successive cohorts of students.

The continued drive towards the creation of student-centred teaching and learning environments is central to the school's strategy in this area. In addition, the whole-school approach to subject and programme planning incorporates a focus on the analysis of results from the certificate examinations. There are some very good examples of concise and focused action plans arising from this analysis. In some other cases, the work that has gone into documenting and commenting on results should be extended to include an action plan to build on strengths and to address any deficits that may be identified.

Students, through interviews and questionnaires indicated very high levels of satisfaction with the level of support that they receive from teachers, both educationally and emotionally. Such support is delivered through a variety of in-school interventions, through classroom contact and through

specialist personnel such as the guidance counsellor, the SEN team, the HSCL co-ordinator and the SCP co-ordinator and project worker, following recommendations from the pastoral care team.

2.2 Attendance, Retention, Transitions

DEIS planning for attendance, retention and transitions is very good. A range of SMART targets has been set in all three areas. Some additional targets would be more appropriately documented as measures. Commendably, particular groups of at-risk students have been identified, including potential early school leavers. It would be worthwhile to include specific targets related to such groups.

Attendance is tracked using an online system and teachers were observed using this system to record attendance in each of the lessons visited. There is a robust and integrated system in place to follow up on non-attendance. Close collaboration between key personnel and school management ensures that all issues are dealt with in line with reporting procedures and that appropriate interventions are identified and put in place where necessary. In cases where students are suspended, management and staff are alert to the need to ensure a smooth re-integration into school life following the suspension. The principles of restorative practice could also be harnessed in this regard.

There is a range of measures in place to promote good attendance. As well as a breakfast club and lunch club, funded through the Department of Social Protection and the SCP, the SCP co-ordinator, following consultation with the year-head committee, organises a range of after-school activities which are well subscribed. There is also a comprehensive range of teacher-led supports, some of which are open to all students and some of which are targeted at specific groups. Many of these interventions were observed during the evaluation and all were well planned, promoted positivity and mindfulness and, when viewed in their totality, represent a comprehensive programme of support for students. While the attendance of the main body of students has seen improvements, the available data shows that the achievement of good attendance by a cohort of students remains a considerable challenge.

Significant improvements in retention rates have been achieved in recent years. Almost all students progress from junior cycle to senior cycle. Responses to both student and parent questionnaires indicate that the vast majority of students would like to complete their Leaving Certificate and progress to further education and/or training.

Students expressed considerable interest in the idea of introducing a TY programme. This has already been given consideration by management and staff. A full feasibility study should now be undertaken. The introduction of TY would allow students the opportunity to become even more informed in relation to what path to choose through the remainder of senior cycle and could prove to be a significant additional support in the retention of students.

First-year students benefit from a comprehensive transition programme that includes team-building interventions for all students as well as more focused interventions for targeted students. There is a programme of subject sampling that takes place in the first four weeks of first year that allows students to make a more informed decision on what subjects to take. In advance of entry students avail of a transition summer camp funded by the SCP.

Students and parents spoke very highly of the level of information they receive in relation to subject and programme choice and students who were interviewed during the evaluation indicated a high level of awareness in relation to the features of the different programmes available to them.

2.3 Partnership with parents and others

DEIS planning for partnership is very good. Parents, through both interviews and surveys, indicated very high levels of satisfaction with how the school actively promotes the inclusion of parents in their child's education.

Communication with parents is achieved through a variety of means. As well as undertaking home visits to the parents of targeted students, the HSCL co-ordinator has set a target of visiting most of the parents of new-entrant students over the course of their first year in the school. Courses and information evenings for parents are organised such as coffee mornings. In order to fulfil reporting obligations under Circular 0040/2016, a summary version of the DEIS plan should be made available to parents.

School management and key personnel have fostered close and productive links with the full range of relevant statutory agencies. In addition, there is widespread involvement of school staff with local and national agencies that provide support to students.

The local community is very supportive of the school, particularly in providing work placements for LCVP and LCA students throughout the year. Such opportunities are vital, particularly in cases where travelling beyond the local area for placement opportunities is not an option for students.

Appendix

SCHOOL RESPONSE TO THE REPORT

Submitted by the Board of Management

Part A Observations on the content of the inspection report

The Board welcomes a very positive and comprehensive report that illustrates practice of the highest quality within all the themes of DEIS which has also had a positive impact on teaching and learning. The Board is delighted that the report is indicative of the school's ethos in its promotion of inclusivity of all the stakeholders.

The Board views this report as excellent and of high quality, as a result of effective coordination and leadership within the school. The Board of Management commends the school in being fully compliant in child protection procedures.

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

The DEIS team currently reviews the DEIS plan yearly and amends targets if necessary. However the school is committed to setting yearly targets, where relevant, in order to take into consideration the varying aptitudes of successive cohorts of students. The school implements a successful system in order to identify needs and this system will be utilised by the DEIS team in order to set yearly SMART targets.

As documented in the report, consideration has already been given by management and staff to introduce a TY programme. Following this inspection the Principal has appointed a senior member of staff to coordinate a steering committee to carry out a feasibility study into the potential of introducing a TY programme on an optional basis for students. This steering committee is comprised of all stakeholders.

Following the inspection the DEIS coordinator has prepared a summary of the school's DEIS Plan which can be viewed on the school's website. In order to support parents' understanding of the school's DEIS plan for improvement, this will feature at parent information evenings in the future and frequent updates will be made available via the school's website.

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 very good 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;