

An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna
Department of Education and Skills

Follow-Through Inspection

REPORT

Ainm na scoile/ School name	St. Dympna's National School
Seoladh na scoile/ School address	Kildalkey, Navan, County Meath.
Uimhir rolla / Roll number	19813W

Date of Evaluation: 12-02-2018



WHAT IS A FOLLOW-THROUGH INSPECTION?

Follow-through inspections evaluate the progress a school has made on implementing main recommendations made in an earlier inspection rather than the overall educational provision that the school makes. Inspectors also advise the school on strategies and actions to enable them to fully address recommendations.

HOW TO READ THIS REPORT

During this inspection, the inspector evaluated the progress the school has made in implementing recommendations made in an earlier inspection under the following headings:

1. Progress achieved to date
2. Findings
3. Recommendations

Inspectors describe the quality of the progress made in each of these areas using the Inspectorate's follow-through quality continuum which is shown on the final page of this report. The follow-through quality continuum explains the terms used by inspectors when evaluating the school's progress in implementing recommendations.

ORIGINAL INSPECTION DETAILS	FOLLOW-THROUGH INSPECTION DETAILS
Type: WSE-MLL	Date of Inspection: 12-02-2018
Date of Inspection: 27-1-16	
Report Published? Yes	

Follow-through inspection activities

The following activities took place in the course of the follow-through inspection

- Meeting with Principal
- Interview with a member of in-school management team
- Interview with relevant teachers
- Review of school documentation and records and pupils' work
- Observation of teaching and learning
- Interaction with pupils

Recommendation in original inspection report	Progress achieved to date on implementation of recommendation
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<p>As a priority, a strategic plan should be devised to guide the board of management's work. In addition, the retention of pupils in the same class grade, and the granting of exemptions from the learning of Irish should be in line with Department circulars.</p>	<p>Very good progress</p> <p>Very good progress has been made in addressing this recommendation. Since the evaluation in 2016, the board of management has created a three-year action plan to provide strategic guidance to the school community in areas such as organisational policy development, curricular planning and the management of the school's infrastructure. A number of policies in key areas have been devised. In particular, policies in relation to the retention of pupils in the same class grade and the granting of exemptions from the learning of Irish are now in place and these guide appropriate decision-making and ensure the school's compliance with relevant Department circulars.</p>
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<p>The curricular leadership role of post-holders should be developed.</p>	<p>Partial progress</p> <p>Partial progress has been made in relation to this recommendation. Individual post-holders demonstrate commitment to the school's development. Formal team meetings are now convened at regular intervals. Minutes of these meetings indicate that a wide range of school issues is discussed. Now that post-holders play an active role in policy development, their individual roles could be further</p>
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	<p>expanded by identifying effective systems for monitoring the implementation of these policies and evaluating their impact on teaching and learning in the school. In addition, the identified priority areas for school development should underpin the leadership duties undertaken by individual post-holders.</p>
<p>Further co-ordination of supports for pupils with additional learning needs is recommended.</p>	<p>Good progress</p> <p>Good progress has been made with this recommendation. The school is in the initial stages of implementing programmes of early intervention, and is also exploring approaches to team-teaching in literacy and numeracy. While some effective collaboration is evident in the development of these initiatives, there is scope to refine the organisation of in-class work and to maximise the impact of teaching resources, particularly in relation to in-class interventions for Mathematics. The advice of an external agency will be helpful in this regard. Assessment of pupils' learning prior to and following the initiatives is recommended in order to review the impact of these models on pupils' achievements.</p>
<p>A record of discussion on the subject of child protection should be formally recorded in the minutes of board meetings. School policy should also clarify for teachers the timing for the delivery of the full Stay Safe programme.</p>	<p>Very good progress</p> <p>Progress with this recommendation is very good. Minutes of board of management meetings contain a formal record of the discussion on child protection. The school's policy on Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) now provides clarity with regard to the timing of the delivery of the full Stay Safe programme.</p>
<p>Assessment data should underpin differentiated programme planning in learning settings, and should be integral to target setting in the school self-evaluation process.</p>	<p>Partial progress</p> <p>Partial progress with this recommendation was evident in the lessons observed, and also in the analysis of the monthly progress records reviewed on the day of the inspection. It is noted that the most-used strategies for differentiation are teachers' questioning and the use of some open-ended questions for particular pupils. There is no evidence of differentiated tasks or the identification of particular learning outcomes for individuals or cohorts of pupils. There are pupils in all classes who present with a range of learning needs and pupils who also demonstrate high levels of ability. Teachers' planning should make clear provision for these pupils, based on analysis of the school's assessment data, and arrangements for the delivery of differentiated learning activities which are suited to the pupils' individual needs and abilities should be made.</p>

Summary of findings

- The school has made very good progress in ensuring full compliance with Department circulars relating to the retention of pupils in the same class grade and the granting of exemptions from the learning of Irish.
- While good progress has been made by the school in introducing in-class models of support, assessment data is not analysed to guide their organisation or to plan programmes effectively.
- Individual post-holders are actively involved in policy formulation, although their role in addressing the schools' identified priorities, and in monitoring and evaluating the impact of policies on teaching and learning is not realised.
- While teachers plan conscientiously for their lessons, differentiated learning activities are not identified for individuals and cohorts in the learning settings.

Recommendations

- To further support the development and embedding of in-class support for pupils, the advice of an external agency is recommended.
- The duties of the in-school management team should be aligned with the school's priorities, and individuals should have a clear role in the implementation of agreed actions and in monitoring their impact on teaching and learning.
- Analysis of assessment data should underpin differentiated programme planning in learning settings.

CHILD PROTECTION

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

1. The school principal is aware that revised child protection procedures for primary and post-primary schools came into effect on 11 December 2017 and arrangements are in place to begin the process of implementing these procedures.
2. The name of the designated liaison person for child protection matters was prominently displayed near the main door of the school.
3. The school has a Child Protection policy in place.
4. All teachers are aware that they are mandated persons and of their responsibilities in that regard.

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

The board of management was given an opportunity to comment in writing on the findings and recommendations of the report; a response was not received from the board.

THE QUALITY CONTINUUM FOR FOLLOW-THROUGH INSPECTIONS
<i>Very good progress</i> indicates that appropriate action has been taken to address the recommendation, and that the action has fully achieved or will achieve the required outcome.
<i>Good progress</i> indicates that appropriate action has been taken to address the recommendation, and that substantial improvement has occurred, although further progress is necessary.
<i>Partial progress</i> indicates that some appropriate action has been taken to address the recommendation, and some improvement has occurred, but considerable further progress is necessary.
<i>No progress</i> indicates that no action has been taken, and that the original recommendation remains to be addressed.