

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

**Follow-Through Inspection**

**REPORT**

<b>Ainm na scoile/ School name</b>	St Mary's Secondary School
<b>Seoladh na scoile/ School address</b>	Edenderry Co Offaly
<b>Uimhir rolla / Roll number</b>	65582Q

**Date of Evaluation: 28-05-2019**



---

An Roinn Oideachais  
agus Scileanna  
Department of  
Education and Skills

## **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.

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.

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

## Follow-Through Inspection

ORIGINAL INSPECTION DETAILS	FOLLOW-THROUGH INSPECTION DETAILS
<b>Type: WSE-MLL</b> <b>Date of Inspection: 05-04-2017</b> <b>Report Published: Yes</b>	<b>Date of Inspection: 28-05-2019</b>
Follow-through inspection activities	
<p>The following activities took place in the course of the follow-through inspection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meeting with principal and senior management team</li> <li>• Interview with members of in-school management team and subject co-ordinators</li> <li>• Interview with relevant members of staff</li> <li>• Review of school documentation and students' attainment records</li> </ul>	
Recommendation in original inspection report	Progress achieved to date on implementation of recommendation
<p>The board of management should complete a strategic plan for the school, and include action plans with SMART targets for its implementation with regular monitoring and updating of the plan as key developments progress.</p>	<p><b>Very good progress</b></p> <p>Since the WSE-MLL, the board and senior management have undertaken a significant review of the operation of the school. Following an extensive collaborative process with the school community, an excellent whole-school strategic plan for the next five years has been developed.</p> <p>Seven pillars have been identified, each has had SMART targets identified for its successful implementation.</p>
<p>A review of the overall timetable for the school should be initiated with a focus on the optimal use of the available resources, the long-term planning for the school's curriculum and ensuring that all subject areas and programmes are in receipt of the recommended time allocation.</p>	<p><b>Very good progress</b></p> <p>Overall, timetabling arrangement have been reviewed. Junior Cycle subjects are in receipt of appropriate specification requirements.</p> <p>In addition, issues regarding timetabling for Civic, Social and Political Education, and Social Personal and Health Education at junior cycle, and the deployment of a guidance teacher for the Leaving Certificate Applied Guidance module, have now been resolved.</p>
<p>The overall academic performance of students should be tracked and monitored more rigorously by individual subject departments with the findings used to inform the most appropriate delivery of the subject content to challenge all students.</p>	<p><b>Very good progress</b></p> <p>A whole-school approach to tracking and monitoring student performance is being implemented. Various models of presenting students' continuous assessment reports are being trialled, with a view to identifying the most appropriate one for whole-school use.</p> <p>A template for subject department reflection has been introduced to enable departments to reflect on overall student performance, identify areas for improvement and, if necessary, areas for continuing professional development.</p>

<p>The practice of streaming classes from second year should be stopped with current educational research used to inform best practice in class formation.</p>	<p><b>Very good progress</b> The senior management team presented documents indicating how students are assigned to classes. The practice of streaming classes has stopped.</p>
<p>The agenda of subject department planning meetings should allow for discussion and decisions on appropriate teaching and learning strategies that are suitably differentiated to challenge all students to make progress in their learning.</p>	<p><b>Good progress</b> A review of minutes of subject department meetings indicates that discussion is taking place about teaching approaches. Some subject department are using online forums to share teaching and learning strategies and others are discussing methodologies informally. There is scope to further develop opportunities to formally share agreed appropriate teaching approaches and time at department meetings should be used in this regard.</p>
<p><b>Summary of findings</b></p>	
<p>Since the WSE-MLL, the school has had new appointments at senior management and middle-management levels, with the majority of post holders' positions being replaced following a number of retirements. Despite these significant changes, the board of management, in-school management and teaching staff have engaged very positively with the recommendations and have made significant progress with their implementation.</p> <p>Aspects of excellent practice have been noted in the strategic and measured way in which the school has implemented and worked on each of the recommendations. During the evaluation, staff noted the ongoing need to continue to work collaboratively.</p>	
<p><b>Recommendations</b></p>	
<p>No further recommendations arise in relation to the recommendations in the original report.</p>	

<b>THE QUALITY CONTINUUM FOR FOLLOW-THROUGH INSPECTIONS</b>
<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.

# **Appendix**

**SCHOOL RESPONSE TO THE REPORT**

**Submitted by the Board of Management**

## **Area 1 Observations on the content of the inspection report**

St Mary's Secondary School is very pleased to receive this extremely positive report. It is an endorsement of the commitment and dedication of teachers and the leadership teams in the school. The report acknowledges the considerable progress made in relation to all five recommendations from the 2017 MLL Report and affords the highest grade of 'very good progress' to the first four of these.

The follow on inspection report encourages further progress in relation to subject department planning and related collaboration. It acknowledges that dialogue is taking place among our teachers in relation to teaching and learning including on-line forums to share teaching and learning strategies. The school will continue to further enhance the training, dialogue and collaboration for and among teachers so that each department and each teacher is aware of best current practice. All staff are collaborating with energy and focus with particular reference to the new Junior Cycle reforms and similar developments at Senior Cycle. We are adapting the *Schoolwise* platform to further facilitate collaboration, planning, differentiation, tracking and assessment. The platform allows integration of CAT4 scores that will enable meaningful and informed differentiation. Staff meetings are being used to facilitate reflection and inputs by teachers and subject departments so that the spirit of collaboration is fostered.

## **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 school is pleased to note that the report makes no further recommendations