

An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna

Department of Education and Skills

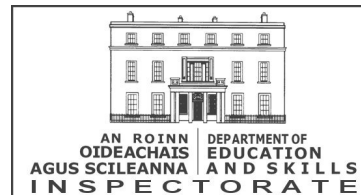
**Follow-Through Inspection
REPORT**

De La Salle College

Waterford

Roll number: 649500

Date of inspection: 3 May 2016



Date of original inspection	February 2012	Type of original report	Whole-School Evaluation	Date of FT inspection	3 May 2016
Report published	Yes				
Follow-through inspection activities					
Meeting with senior management team Meeting with members of the in-school management team Meeting with relevant teachers/members of staff Review of school documentation and records Review of resources and facilities Meeting with chairperson of board of management Meeting with Education Officer of Le Chéile Trust					
Recommendation in original inspection report		Progress achieved to date on implementation of recommendation			
The principal should exercise his leadership role in a way that motivates and empowers the teaching staff as a whole.		Very good progress The new senior management team in place since September 2015 is working together effectively and bringing renewed commitment and energy to managing and leading the school. The newly-appointed principal was a long-serving member of staff, and recognises the need to build on the school's strengths, preserving but also innovating. The establishment of this team, and its demonstrable ability to take a co-operative and constructive approach to its leadership and management role, is a significant step forward. It is likely to have an increasingly positive impact on the teaching staff as a whole, creating an environment which is motivating and empowering for teachers.			
The elements of the school plan should be brought together into a cohesive overarching document, which will articulate the school's educational mission and vision.		Very good progress A comprehensive school plan is now in place. A section appropriately described as 'relatively permanent', contains statutory and other policies, with timeframes for implementation and review. This represents very significant work by the board of management and the senior management team. The developmental section of the plan has been informed by the 2012 WSE and the school's self-evaluation process. The priorities identified are valid and specific.			
The board should develop a policy to inform future practice in the deployment of teachers, to optimally fulfil the specialist needs of subjects.		Very good progress The deployment of teachers outside their specialist fields and the dispersed pattern of deployment noted in the WSE have been substantially addressed in the intervening years. The senior management team is committed to deployment policy and practice that builds subject department capacity and recognises the specialist demands of each subject.			
An advisory board of studies should be established to lead curriculum planning.		Good progress An advisory board of studies was established following the WSE. However, a major review of posts of responsibility to reflect the needs of the school was undertaken, and the work of the advisory board was temporarily suspended during this process. One of the new posts identified and filled is that of curriculum and assessment development co-ordinator, a very valuable addition to the school's middle leadership structure. The advisory board will now recommence its work. It is recommended that the board consider the position of JCSP, and review provision and organisation of the junior cycle curriculum in the school, in light of the revised Junior Cycle Framework. This work may need to take priority over considering the introduction of LCVP, a focus already identified.			
With the aim of streamlining and co-ordinating student support, a pastoral care team should be established.		Very good progress A student support team was established in March 2014, with members drawn from senior management, year heads, guidance counsellors, the special education needs department, and the religious education department. Good structures, including a weekly meeting, support the team's work. Information is communicated to relevant teachers and other staff as required, and clear referral procedures are in place.			

Summary of findings

Very substantial progress has been made with regard to all recommendations. A well-functioning senior management team with a complementary range of skills and experience is now in place. This is a new and welcome reality for the school. The senior management team is looking beyond organisational matters and has shown educational leadership. New school structures and areas of responsibility; a more considered approach to school self-evaluation and meaningful school improvement planning; and significant reviewing of policy and practice in key areas have all contributed to addressing recommendations in the WSE report.

The reinstatement of a board of management in March 2015 signalled a return to normal governance structures in the school. It has been diligent and active, and has done commendable work in reviewing, updating, developing and adopting a range of policies.

Recommendations

The trustees and the board of management should assist the senior management team in ensuring a continuing and increasing focus on developing and strengthening the core function of the school: the provision of teaching and learning that supports the best possible outcomes for all students.

The board of management 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.

Appendix

School response to the report

Submitted by the Board of Management

Part A: Observations on the content of the inspection report

The Board warmly welcomes the findings of the inspection as they reflect and represent the excellent provision of services that impact positively on student outcomes in De la Salle College Waterford. It affords us great satisfaction to read in relation to the school leadership that 'the new senior management team in place since September 2015 is working together effectively and bringing renewed commitment and energy to managing and leading the school' and that this senior management team 'is likely to have an increasingly positive impact on the teaching staff as a whole, creating an environment which is motivating and empowering for teachers'. Given the uncompromising priority afforded to promoting quality teaching and learning in De La Salle College, the Board is very pleased that the Inspector noted, affirmed and reinforced the following positive aspects to our school : that 'new school structures and areas of responsibility' are in place and that a 'more considered approach to school self-evaluation and meaningful school improvement planning' are evident together with 'significant renewing of policy and practice in key areas' being further developed in our school. The Board is also very heartened to read that their work commitment has been noted. The Inspector noted that the Board are 'diligent and active' and have done 'commendable work in reviewing, updating developing and adopting a range of policies'.

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 key recommendation made by the Inspector was that 'The Trustees and the Board of Management should assist the senior management team in ensuring a continuing and increasing focus on developing and strengthening the core function of the school: the provision of teaching learning that supports the best possible outcomes for all students'.

The Board of Management had a special meeting since the follow-through inspection which was convened to initiate a strategic mid-term review of the working of the Board with a particular emphasis placed on looking at the key strengths of the recent Inspection and identifying how to address areas of development in line with the key recommendation of this Inspection.

Follow-Up Actions planned

- An Advisory Board of Studies is to be elected at the start of the next academic year. The Advisory Board of Studies will consider the position of JCSP and review provision and organization of the Junior Cycle curriculum in the school. It will also contribute to the development of the Statement of Strategy for School Attendance which aims to build a culture of high expectations among all staff and with every student for the students learning, participation and attendance. The introduction of LCVP will also be considered by the Advisory Board of Studies over the term of its office.
- School Self-Evaluation will form part of the continuous Board of Management discussion and planning for Teaching and Learning including new developments in curriculum and assessment will be prioritized by the Board.
- The Board will assist the Senior Management Team in the continued provision of a high quality learning environment for students in De La Salle College enabling each student to reach his full potential. The Board will ensure that opportunities are provided for continuing professional development for staff as appropriate.

The Board will support the high quality Pastoral Care System of the school which nurtures student development by creating an environment in harmony with the vision and Catholic values of the school in the La Sallian tradition.