Programme Evaluation in LCVP

REPORT

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aínm na scoile / School name</th>
<th>Holy Family Secondary School</th>
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<tr>
<td>Seoladh na scoile / School address</td>
<td>Naas Road Newbridge Co Kildare</td>
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<tr>
<td>Uimhir rolla / Roll number</td>
<td>61682A</td>
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Date of Evaluation: 15-03-2019
PROGRAMME EVALUATION

The programme evaluation model of inspection is used to evaluate the quality and effectiveness of the following programmes and to provide advice and support to teachers, principals and school management in post-primary schools and centres for education:

- Junior Certificate School Programme (JCSP)
- Transition Year (TY) programme
- Leaving Certificate Applied (LCA) programme
- Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme (LCVP)

HOW TO READ THIS REPORT

During this inspection, the inspector evaluated learning and teaching in LCVP under the following headings:

1. Teaching and learning
2. Programme provision and whole-school support
3. Programme planning, co-ordination and evaluation

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.

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

Dates of inspection

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<tr>
<th>Dates of inspection</th>
<th>14 and 15-03-2019</th>
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<tr>
<td>Inspection activities undertaken</td>
<td>• Observation of teaching and learning in three lessons</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Examination of students’ work</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Interaction with students</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Feedback to senior management team and teachers</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Meeting with principal and deputy principal</td>
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<td>• Meeting with key staff</td>
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<td>• Review of relevant documents</td>
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<td>• Student focus-group interview</td>
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School context

Holy Family Secondary School is a large girls’ post-primary school serving the town of Newbridge. The school is under the trusteeship of the Diocese of Kildare and Leighlin. There are currently 714 students in attendance and these come from a variety of socio-economic and cultural backgrounds. Students study for the Junior Cycle Student Award (JCSA), followed by a compulsory Transition Year (TY). They then follow the established Leaving Certificate or the Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme (LCVP).

Summary of main findings and recommendations:

Findings

- The quality of teaching and learning was very good in all the lessons observed.
- Students were motivated, engaged very well and made very good contributions to the lessons.
- The quality of interactions in the classrooms was very high and this was enabled by the very good rapport that was evident between teachers and students.
- The number of students following the LCVP has fallen in recent years and the position of the programme in the school curriculum has been unclear.
- Information and communications technology (ICT) support for the LCVP has been good; however, the provision of additional supports should be reviewed.
- A very good and collaborative LCVP team is in place and a high-quality plan has been prepared; it is important to ensure that the programme, as implemented, is comprehensive and balanced.

Recommendations

- In the overall context of timetable management, it is recommended the school review the position of the LCVP on the curriculum and allocate appropriate time to it.
- It is recommended that awareness be raised amongst teachers of the LCVP as a whole-school programme.
- The school should encourage students who could benefit from following the programme to take it up.
- More focused Guidance support should be provided, to support students in preparing certain portfolio items; and in preparing them for their work experience placements.
- The range and variety of enterprise activities should be reviewed to give students a more experience of planning and participation in such events.
DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. TEACHING AND LEARNING

- The quality of teaching and learning was very good in all the lessons observed.
- All lessons were well planned and prepared, and well structured: their content was appropriate to the syllabus and to the needs of the learners.
- Students were motivated, engaged very well and made very good contributions to the lessons.
- Learning objectives were shared with students and formed the basis of each lesson. These were achieved in each of the lessons.
- Students’ participation was facilitated by the use of student-centred active teaching methodologies. Their engagement was very good and their contributions to the lessons were affirmed and well used by teachers to progress the lessons.
- Teaching strategies included discussion, role play, pair work and the use of high quality work sheets which included follow-on activities for early finishers.
- Classroom management was very good in all the lessons and students were busy and active at all stages of the lessons.
- The quality of interactions between teachers and students, and amongst students, was very high and this was enabled by the very good rapport that was evident at all levels in the classrooms. The lessons were conducted in a positive and supportive atmosphere.
- Differentiation was achieved through teachers’ questioning of students and through teachers’ movement around the classrooms, supporting students when required.
- Students were very well challenged by their teachers and support was provided, as necessary, to help them meet the challenges, thereby ensuring that all students experienced success during the lessons.
- The quality of questioning was very good with an appropriate mix of lower-order questions to test recall and higher-order questions to challenge students at a deeper level.
- In one lesson, students’ responses to questions were recorded on the classroom board, giving value to them and forming the basis of further discussion. This is very good practice. On occasion, teachers are encouraged to ensure that all students are included in these interactions and that appropriate thinking time is allowed for students to compose their responses.
- There was evidence of good quality learning by students from the work completed and recorded in their copybooks, from the quality of in-class interactions and their responses to teachers’ questions.
- While outcomes for students have been good, it is suggested that the portfolio marking scheme be shared with them to better inform them of the required standards and to increase expectations.

2. PROGRAMME PROVISION AND WHOLE SCHOOL SUPPORT

- The school is very aware that strategic planning for the LCVP has been displaced by other priorities in recent years and the number of students following the LCVP has fallen. However, work has begun to set the programme on a firm footing again.
A new co-ordinator has been appointed and the position of the programme within the curriculum is being reviewed. It is important to realise that the LCVP should be promoted as an integrated programme to enhance the Leaving Certificate, rather than simply the addition of the link modules to the Leaving Certificate.

The school has adopted a timetable based on one-hour lessons. In this context, it is recommended the school review the position of the LCVP on the curriculum and allocate appropriate time to it.

Rather than having two engagements, it is recommended that one session of work experience, of three to five days, over the course of the two-year programme is sufficient to meet programme requirements.

The school provides the required module in a modern European language for those students not taking such a language to Leaving Certificate level and it recommended that time allocation options be explored to provide this in the most efficient manner in the context of the one-hour-lesson timetable. In addition and in order to encourage and motivate students, it is suggested that students of the module be awarded certificates of completion.

There has been good support from the school for relevant continuing professional development for teachers of the link modules and an experienced LCVP team is in place. Teacher deployment, for the most part, has been good.

Appropriate resources have been available to implement the programme and ICT support has been good.

Students are offered an open choice of subjects on entering fifth year and good quality advice and support is provided to them in this regard.

It is suggested that the school examine if there are additional students who could benefit from following the programme and that these should be encouraged to give the LCVP serious consideration.

3. PROGRAMME PLANNING, CO-ORDINATION AND REVIEW

A very good and collaborative LCVP team is in place and has been working effectively to plan and implement the programme to date; and a high-quality plan, built on very good schemes of work and schedules, has been prepared and implemented.

It is recommended that the implementation of the LCVP as a whole-school programme be improved by raising awareness amongst all subject teachers of how they might enhance the programme, for example through the contributions their subjects can make to cross-curricular activities when LCVP-related enterprise and other activities are taking place. It is suggested that an LCVP notice board be used, in the staff room, to keep teachers informed of upcoming events.

The range and variety of enterprise activities should be reviewed to give students more experience of planning and participation in such events, giving greater breadth and balance to the programme.

Consideration should be given to promoting a thematic approach to teaching some sections of the programme, using the My Own Place module.

It is recommended that more focused Guidance support be provided, especially in relation to preparing the Curriculum Vitae and the career investigation for students’ portfolios; and also in preparing students for their work experience placements and their debriefing afterwards.
• The implementation of the programme should be reviewed annually, parents and students should be included in the evidence-gathering process, and the outcomes used to plan for improvement.
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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Example of descriptive terms</th>
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<tr>
<td>Very Good</td>
<td><em>Very good</em> 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 <em>outstanding</em> and provides an example for other schools of exceptionally high standards of provision.</td>
<td>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</td>
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<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td><em>Good</em> 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’ 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 <em>very good</em> standard.</td>
<td>Good; good quality; valuable; effective practice; competent; useful; commendable; good standard; some areas for improvement</td>
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<td>Satisfactory</td>
<td><em>Satisfactory</em> 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 <em>better</em> standard.</td>
<td>Satisfactory; adequate; appropriate provision although some possibilities for improvement exist; acceptable level of quality; improvement needed in some areas</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fair</td>
<td><em>Fair</em> 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.</td>
<td>Fair; evident weaknesses that are impacting on pupils’ learning; less than satisfactory; experiencing difficulty; must improve in specified areas; action required to improve</td>
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<tr>
<td>Weak</td>
<td><em>Weak</em> 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.</td>
<td>Weak; unsatisfactory; insufficient; ineffective; poor; requiring significant change, development or improvement; experiencing significant difficulties;</td>
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Appendix

SCHOOL RESPONSE TO THE REPORT

Submitted by the Board of Management
Area 1  Observations on the content of the inspection report

The Board of Management welcomes the overall findings of this report.

The Board of Management acknowledges the recommendations and will support and encourage the work of senior management and staff in implementing same effectively.

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 timetable has been devised to reflect all recommendations by the report.

• All recommendations will be addressed as advised.

• Strategic planning has been reviewed to reflect all recommendations and targeted interventions will be put in place to promote the LCVP programme and raise awareness with students and staff.