

An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna
Department of Education and Skills

Programme Evaluation in TY

REPORT

Ainm na scoile / School name	Wilson's Hospital School
Seoladh na scoile / School address	Multyfarnham Co Westmeath
Uimhir rolla / Roll number	63300Q

Date of Evaluation: 03-05-2018



An Roinn Oideachais
agus Scileanna
Department of
Education and Skills

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 TY 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 TY

Dates of inspection	26-04-2018
Inspection activities undertaken <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Meetings with principal and deputy principal• Meetings with key staff• Review of relevant documents• Student focus-group interview	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Observation of teaching and learning• Examination of students' work• Interaction with students• Feedback to senior management team, the TY co-ordinator and teachers

School context

Wilson's Hospital School is a co-educational post-primary school in County Westmeath and is under the trusteeship of the Church of Ireland. The school offers a range of curricular programmes and the Transition Year (TY) programme is compulsory for all students. At the time of the evaluation the enrolment was 373 students, including a significant number of international students who enrol for one year to follow the TY programme.

Summary of main findings and recommendations:

Findings

- The quality of teaching and learning ranged from excellent to fair and the overall quality was very good.
- In some lessons excellent practice was noted in the manner in which group work was organised for the learners which ensured maximum student learning and collaboration.
- Programme provision and whole-school support for the TY programme is very good and an effective curriculum, which includes the four layers of the TY programme, is delivered throughout the year.
- The support for students with special education needs (SEN) in TY is not adequate and should be reviewed.
- Work experience is well integrated into the programme and the provision of career guidance in TY is highly effective; students' projects in relation to career investigations were of a very high quality.
- The programme is very well co-ordinated by the TY co-ordinator and a number of key members of staff play a very valuable role in contributing to the organisation and development of the TY programme.

Recommendations

- In order to extend the use of the excellent teaching and learning practices observed teachers should consider engaging in peer collaborative visits to lessons.
- The principal, in collaboration with the TY co-ordinator and members of staff, should establish a TY core team.

- The provision for students with special educational needs and students for whom English is an additional language (EAL) should be reviewed in order to ensure that supports for these students are maximised.
- Teachers should collaboratively devise a common planning template for TY which is underpinned by the key principles of the TY programme in relation to appropriate teaching methodologies.

DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. TEACHING AND LEARNING

- The quality of teaching and learning ranged from excellent to fair with the overall quality being very good.
- Highly effective teaching methodologies were used in a number of lessons. Where students were given clear tasks and had opportunities to learn from one another their learning was optimal. In a minority of instances practice was fair where clear tasks were not set for learners and as a result they became disengaged.
- In some lessons students had very good opportunities to learn through effective group work. Teachers organised the groups in a highly effective manner to ensure that each group comprised students of different nationalities, different cultural backgrounds and complementary strengths. It is recommended that this excellent practice be extended to all group-work activities to ensure that the diverse nature of the student cohort is reflected in the groups and that the students are provided with optimal opportunities to collaborate and learn from each other.
- The quality of student learning was very effective in most lessons. Student engagement and motivation were good in most lessons and students enjoyed learning. Student participation in tasks and activities was very good overall.
- In some lessons very good use was made of strategies associated with Assessment for Learning (AfL) such as the display of clear learning intentions, think-pair-share opportunities, and self and peer assessment. Students also had opportunities to discuss their learning which provided learners with very good opportunity for self-reflection.
- The quality of assessment was good overall with some examples of excellent practice. Students were provided with a variety of means to express their learning throughout the TY programme.
- A sample of students' project work across a range of subjects provided evidence of some excellent work done by students. In some cases students received very comprehensive feedback on their projects. However in a minority of instances students had not received feedback. It is recommended that teachers agree on a format for the provision of useful feedback that can be given on project work and extend the good practice that was evident.
- The learning environment in lessons was very positive and good student-teacher rapport was evident. In some classrooms the furniture was laid out in a manner which facilitated good student engagement and collaboration, while in other rooms the traditional layout was noted. Teachers are encouraged to provide a learning environment that readily enables students to be active and to work co-operatively.
- As excellent practices were observed in the majority of lessons it is timely for teachers of the TY programme to consider engaging in peer collaborative visits to lessons with a view to sharing and extending the use of best practice.

2. PROGRAMME PROVISION AND WHOLE SCHOOL SUPPORT

- Programme provision and whole-school support for the TY programme is very good overall. An effective curriculum which includes the four layers of the TY programme is delivered throughout the year. A number of appropriate seminars, workshops and trips enrich the student experience. The area of social education is an aspect that could be strengthened in the future.
- The support for students with SEN in TY is not adequate. Most of the resources are deployed to support the needs of students in junior cycle and for co-ordination time. The amount of time allocated for co-ordination and the lack of resources allocated to students with SEN in

TY needs to be reviewed to ensure that the needs of these students are also met. The good practice of student-support files for some TY students is noted but more support and monitoring of these students' progress needs to take place.

- A significant number of international students have particular learning needs in relation to EAL. In order to meet these needs careful assessment of the skills of language acquisition, target setting for improvement and reviews of progress should take place. The formation of class groupings comprising students with EAL needs and with SEN is not appropriate and should cease.
- Work experience is very well integrated into the TY programme. Students carry out career investigations and some of this student work is excellent. It is evident that students benefit greatly from the coherent approach taken to the delivery of the 'world of work' component of the programme.
- Career guidance is an integral part of programme provision and provides an excellent support to students. Cognitive ability tests are administered to students and emphasis is placed on encouraging students to become familiar with their own learning styles. In interaction with students it was evident that this self-awareness and knowledge assisted in their own 'learning to learn' which is a very valuable skill to develop in the course of the TY programme.

3. PROGRAMME PLANNING, CO-ORDINATION AND REVIEW

- The overall quality of planning for the implementation of the TY programme is very good and the TY plan documents clearly how the programme is organised and delivered in the school. Good information is also provided in relation to the calendar and modular aspects of the programme.
- The quality of subject planning in TY ranged from very good to requiring development. Excellent practice was noted where differentiated learning outcomes, success criteria, active teaching methodologies and cross-curricular components were very well documented. In order to share this very good practice it is recommended that a common planning template for TY be used across all subjects. This will promote consistency in planning, ensure a focus on the use of appropriate TY teaching and learning methodologies and encourage increased cross-curricular planning.
- The programme is very well co-ordinated and management has appropriately assigned a post of responsibility for TY co-ordination. A number of key members of staff play a very valuable role in contributing to the organisation and development of the TY programme, however there is no established TY core team. Given the commitment and dedication of the TY co-ordinator and key staff members it would be very beneficial to establish a TY core team which would serve to strengthen teacher collaboration and to develop leadership capacity among teachers.
- The programme is reviewed regularly and the good practice of incorporating the student voice in reviews is noted. Students are required to complete evaluation forms as part of the annual review.
- In interaction with students it is evident that the TY programme is highly successful and that students are deriving great benefit from the rich educational experiences that are being provided for them.

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	<i>Very good</i> 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 <i>outstanding</i> 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	<i>Good</i> 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 <i>very good</i> standard.	Good; good quality; valuable; effective practice; competent; useful; commendable; good standard; some areas for improvement
Satisfactory	<i>Satisfactory</i> 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	<i>Fair</i> 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' learning; less than satisfactory; experiencing difficulty; must improve in specified areas; action required to improve
Weak	<i>Weak</i> 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;

Appendix

SCHOOL RESPONSE TO THE REPORT

Submitted by the Board of Management

Area 1 Observations on the content of the inspection report

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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 TY Inspection Report will be circulated once completed, to all staff and teachers will be encouraged to share practice and to engage in peer collaborative visits to lessons in order to develop and extend their own practices.

A workshop on giving feedback will be organised for the teaching staff during this academic year 2018/19.

We have introduced a Social Outreach Module into the TY Programme for this academic year. We have also removed any choice from the TY curriculum to allow all TY students access to all TY subjects throughout the year.

We have re-evaluated the SEN support for students in TY and are ensuring that those in need of support get as much support as necessary.

International students will now receive TEFL classes outside of the curriculum.

The TY Programme continues to be coordinated by the TY Co-ordinator but we have now established a TY Core Team in the form of 3 class teachers.