

An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna
Department of Education and Skills

Programme Evaluation in TY

REPORT

Ainm na scoile / School name	Presentation Secondary School
Seoladh na scoile / School address	Cannon Street Waterford
Uimhir rolla / Roll number	64970U

Date of Evaluation: 10-04-2018



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

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	09 & 10-04-2018
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 during six lessons, including double and single periods• Examination of students' work• Interaction with students• Feedback to senior management team, and co-ordinator

School context

Presentation Secondary School, Waterford is a voluntary secondary school under the trusteeship of Catholic Education, an Irish Schools' Trust (CEIST). A compulsory TY programme is provided. The school is part of the Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools (DEIS) action plan for educational inclusion.

Summary of main findings and recommendations:

Findings

- High quality teaching that engaged students and ensured they were active in their learning was observed in TY lessons and learning settings.
- The quality of student learning, leadership opportunities and skill development was very good; students clearly enjoyed their learning.
- Assessments processes are very good in TY with a wide range of assessment tools in use.
- Provision and whole-school support for the TY programme is of a very high quality; the opportunities for communication with parents could be strengthened.
- The overall quality of planning and organisation for the implementation of the TY programme is very high; however the quality of curriculum plans varied with examples of very good quality subject planning while some plans required further development.
- The small TY team is highly committed and enthusiastic but requires further diversity.

Recommendations

- An annual parent-teacher meeting for TY should be introduced.
- An agreed common template for subject planning is recommended as it would enable further consistency in planning for TY by subject departments.
- The planning team should be expanded in order to share the tasks involved in TY planning and to build leadership capacity in order to ensure that succession is seamless.

DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. TEACHING AND LEARNING

- High quality teaching that engaged students and ensured they were active in their learning was observed in TY lessons and learning settings.
- The well-chosen learning activities enabled teachers to place a strong focus on the development of students' key skills. In lessons, teachers used a range of methodologies that included very effective collaborative learning opportunities and very good student and teacher discussions and questioning.
- The level of teacher preparedness for lessons was very good. Teachers generated additional resources to support learning.
- The effective use of information and communication technology that included colourful and visually enriched resources and short film clips helped to contextualise student learning and in many instances allowed students to link learning across the curriculum and to their own lives.
- The positive and mutually respectful classroom atmosphere and the high expectations that teachers had for their students reflected the strong learner-focused approach that was evident in all classrooms.
- The quality of student learning and skill development was very good. Students clearly enjoyed their learning, were motivated and interested in lessons.
- Engagement with collaborative learning activities and practical tasks created very positive and interesting classrooms. Students were articulate and confident to engage and voice their opinions, where appropriate.
- In many lessons, a focus was placed on the development of reflective and self-directed learning. This was also promoted through the completion of an electronic weekly journal wherein students were required to reflect on their learning experiences. This is very good practice as it aids the co-ordinator and teachers to evaluate the programmes activities and modules.
- Commendably, a range of activities, such as those involving the teams of students that assist in the organising of TY events all provide students with superb opportunities to develop strong leadership skills. Such events and opportunities include: Gaisce, the President's Award; homework club tutors; assistant game coaches; volunteering in the community; the integrated physical education programme with service users of the Brothers of Charity; and participation in the business in the community initiative.
- Apart from classroom-focused activities, students are provided with a very good range of other learning experiences including drama, musical production, gardening, work experience and community involvement.
- Assessment processes are very good. In lessons, teachers used very good questioning strategies to extend student learning. Oral formative feedback was given in lessons and written feedback was provided on project and longer pieces of work.
- Throughout the year, students complete summative assessments at the end of the subject sampling modules and complete projects related to areas of learning. At the end of the year, students' compile an individual portfolio of all their work and partake in a student interview process to assess their overall engagement with, and personal development and achievement in, the programme. This wide range of assessment tools is commendable.

2. PROGRAMME PROVISION AND WHOLE SCHOOL SUPPORT

- Provision and whole-school support for the TY programme is of a very high quality. TY has a strong whole-school profile and almost all staff are involved in its delivery. The co-ordinator is in regular contact with the principal regarding the programme and the staff are informed about TY matters on a regular basis through staff meetings, the provision of a calendar of planned activities, weekly and monthly TY newsletters and electronic mail.
- The TY programme is compulsory in the school. It is recommended that the obligatory nature of student participation in the TY programme be specified in the school admissions policy.
- Commendably, the school has developed a TY student charter grounded in universal aims of the TY programme. The charter sets out realistic expectations for students to further enhance their learning, key skills and personal development.
- Students partake in a two-week work experience and a two-week community involvement placement; both are co-ordinated and monitored very effectively. In addition to guidance provision, a dedicated weekly work experience lesson is in place to support this central aspect of TY.
- There are appropriate opportunities for communication with parents; regular reports are given and the celebration of students' achievements, including information evenings and the TY graduation, are provided. It is recommended that an annual parent-teacher meeting for TY be introduced.

3. PROGRAMME PLANNING, CO-ORDINATION AND REVIEW

- The overall quality of planning and organisation for the implementation of the TY programme is very high. However the quality of curriculum plans varied with examples of very good quality subject planning, while some plans required further development. An agreed common template for subject planning is recommended as it should effect further consistency in planning for TY by subject departments.
- The comprehensive TY programme plan provides a very good overview of how the programme is organised and delivered in the school.
- The programme is structured in a way that facilitates the development of students' academic, leadership, social and personal progression. The very good use of local resources, linkages to the community and risk assessments for out-of-school activities is commendable.
- The highly committed and enthusiastic co-ordination team, consisting of the TY co-ordinator and the overall programme co-ordinator, has ensured that the programme fits the ethos of TY and continually evolves in a sustainable manner. During the year, TY teachers form core teams to organise and oversee activities such as the musical, work experience monitoring, portfolio assessments and graduation. Notwithstanding this good practice, it is recommended that the planning team be expanded to share the tasks involved in planning of the programme, to build leadership capacity and to ensure succession is seamless.
- In line with best practice, the programme is evaluated on an ongoing basis in a systematic manner by the core team and students. A full review that involved parents, teachers and students took place a number of years ago, it is now timely to conduct this process again.

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;