

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

**Programme Evaluation in LCVP**

**REPORT**

<b>School name</b>	Bunclody Vocational College
<b>School address</b>	Bunclody Enniscorthy Co Wexford
<b>Roll number</b>	71620H

**Date of Evaluation: 12-03-2018**



## **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.

## **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 did not meet the requirements in relation to 1, 2 and 3 above and therefore was not fully compliant with the checks undertaken.

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.

## Programme evaluation in LCVP

<b>Date of inspection</b>	<b>12-03-2018</b>
Inspection activities undertaken <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Meetings with principal</li><li>• Meetings with key staff</li><li>• Review of relevant documents</li><li>• Student focus-group interview</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Observation of teaching and learning during a single and a double lesson</li><li>• Examination of students' work</li><li>• Interaction with students</li><li>• Feedback to senior management team and teachers</li></ul>

### School context

Bunclody Vocational College is a co-educational school managed by Waterford and Wexford Education and Training Board and has a current enrolment of 205 students. The Junior Certificate, the Junior Certificate School Programme, the Leaving Certificate and the LCVP are offered to students. Bunclody Vocational College is part of the Delivering Equality of Educational Opportunity (DEIS) action plan for educational inclusion.

### Summary of main findings and recommendations

#### Findings

- The very high quality of teaching in link module lessons enhanced students' learning experiences; LCVP students have opportunities to engage in experiential learning activities and in work experience.
- High quality learning was enabled through the very good atmosphere, effective student participation, high expectations and affirmation of effort evident in lessons.
- Assessment of students' knowledge in lessons was very good; the provision of additional written formative feedback on students' work is an area for further development.
- The school provides a high-quality LCVP programme for students; there is good whole-school awareness of and support for the programme.
- Planning for LCVP and implementation of the programme are of very good quality; evaluation and review procedures need to be strengthened.
- The school does not meet the requirements in relation to current child protection procedures.

#### Recommendations

- Further use of constructive, developmental written feedback on students' work is recommended.
- A formal programme review should take place more regularly with the views of students, teachers, employers and parents included in the process.
- The school should fully comply with all the statutory requirements in relation to current child protection procedures.

## DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 1. TEACHING AND LEARNING

- The very high quality of teaching in link module lessons enhanced students' learning experiences. Working with others was a constant theme throughout all lessons and activities associated with the programme.
- Teachers' planning and preparation of lessons were of a high standard. Lesson objectives were articulated in terms of each unit's specific learning outcomes and these were checked for attainment at the end of lessons.
- The use of methodologies, including well-structured pair work with plenary feedback that further consolidated students' learning and effective discussion and questioning strategies supported the delivery of the LCVP syllabus.
- Teacher instruction was clear, subject terminology was well explained and good links were made to the local community and to previous learning. Key learning concepts were reinforced through well-chosen subject material and resources.
- Homework is regularly assigned and provided with some written feedback; the provision of additional constructive formative feedback on students' work is an area for further development.
- The samples of students' portfolio work reviewed during the evaluation reflected the high standard of work completed by students. A good system is in place to ensure the timely completion of portfolio items. Students are provided with marking schemes and support materials to assist them in the layout of reports; this is good practice.
- Each class group sits formal summative assessments at key points in the academic year. The assessments follow the same format as certificate examinations. This good practice aids student competency in answering written examination-type questions.
- Link module teachers have created very good visual learning environments in their classrooms and in the environs of the school, with notice boards displaying photographs of LCVP activities.
- High quality learning was enabled through the very good atmosphere, high expectations and affirming environment evident in lessons. Students were engaged throughout and their participation was very good.
- It was praiseworthy that in lessons, students shared their reflections on what they had learned from programme activities. To further develop this good practice, the maintenance of a reflective journal that could serve as an aide memoire when completing portfolio items could be investigated.
- Throughout the delivery of the programme, there is a very good focus on enterprise education. Commendably, all fifth-year students partake in local county enterprise mini-company competitions. Students engage in visits out to voluntary and business enterprises and organise guest speakers into the school. Students' participation in these activities has led to valuable whole-school activities such as the establishment of a branch of the young St Vincent de Paul, an annual Christmas hamper appeal and a Christmas enterprise fair which is open to the public.

- Currently, students do not formally carry out an investigation of 'My Own Place'. It is advised that students partake in this beneficial activity as it provides them with additional learning opportunities and greater choice when selecting portfolio items.
- Students' folders were well organised and contained drafts and final editions of portfolio items and learning materials. The dedicated email account and electronic storage system for portfolio preparation is good practice.

## **2. PROGRAMME PROVISION AND WHOLE SCHOOL SUPPORT**

- The school provides a high-quality LCVP programme for students; there is good whole-school awareness of and support for the programme.
- Currently there is no TY programme in the school. Students through their participation in LCVP, have opportunities to participate in experiential learning activities and work experience. All fifth-year students participate in the programme's activities. On entry into sixth year, all students have an option to continue with the programme and those who have the required vocational subject groupings (VSGs) are encouraged to sit the certificate examinations. There is a high uptake of the LCVP, with most sixth-year students currently following the programme.
- There is very good time provision for link module lessons with three periods in fifth year and two periods in sixth year. In addition, students have a single period of Career Guidance and Computer Studies in fifth and sixth year, which further supports programme-related activities.
- Implementation of the programme is ably managed by the LCVP co-ordinator. There is support from a core team of link module teachers with specialisms in Business, Home Economics, modern European languages and guidance. Commendably, the guidance counsellor takes responsibility for the delivery of some aspects of the programme such as the career investigation.
- Work experience is well managed by the school's overall programme co-coordinator with very good preparation and employer follow-up procedures on completion of work placements.
- The link module teachers have engaged in continuing professional development and reported very positively on the benefits gained from networking with other teachers at in-service events.
- A school-based language module in French is available to students who do not study a modern European language to Leaving Certificate. The French department should now delineate assessment criteria and develop certification for this module.
- The very good links maintained with local business and voluntary enterprises provide valuable learning opportunities for students. The school's very good link with a local business as part of the Business in the Community initiative is highly supportive of students' learning experiences.
- The students interviewed indicated a high level of satisfaction with the programme and the opportunities it provides to learn new skills, engage in experiential learning activities and partake in work experience.

### **3. PROGRAMME PLANNING, CO-ORDINATION AND REVIEW**

- Planning for LCVP and implementation of the programme are of very good quality. The LCVP co-ordinator is very committed to ensuring that the programme is a successful learning experience for students. The high level of co-operation between the enthusiastic and hard-working link module teachers is a key factor in the successful implementation and delivery of LCVP.
- The very good communication between link module teachers and the special education needs (SEN) team is supportive of students. Commendably a SEN teacher attends the LCVP team meetings to ensure awareness of students' progress and needs.
- Planning documentation provided is of a very high quality. The setting of developmental goals by the core team is good practice as is detailing of how whole-school DEIS literacy and numeracy targets are deployed in the delivery of the programme. It is advisable that contacts for local enterprise and community organisations are noted in planning documentation.
- Very detailed and high quality curriculum plans have been developed for the delivery of link module lessons. The aligning of topics with their specific learning outcomes, activities, resources and assessment modes ensures that link module teachers provide a consistently high standard of delivery of the programme.
- The provision of a LCVP induction pack for students is commendable.
- The programme is informally evaluated annually through comparison of students' attainment in the certificate examinations, written feedback from employers and reflection on some activities by teachers and students. Evaluation procedures should be strengthened. It is recommended that a formal programme review should take place regularly, with the views of the students, their teachers, employers and parents included in the process.

## 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 in each area.

Level	Description	Example of descriptive terms
<b>Very Good</b>	<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
<b>Good</b>	<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
<b>Satisfactory</b>	<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
<b>Fair</b>	<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
<b>Weak</b>	<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.**

### ***Recommendation 1. Further use of constructive, developmental written feedback on students' work is recommended.***

In future students will be encouraged to record oral feedback given by their teachers during their 1:1 meetings. Drafts of work will be maintained by teachers who will also provide feedback via a written feedback sheet. The feedback sheet will assist in demonstrating progress and will act as a record of advice and assistance given throughout the programme.

Management are currently developing a revised reporting and feedback strategy for use by Junior Cycle teachers, students and parents. The initiative aims to provide feedback regarding the development of the Key Skills and the indicators of wellbeing in addition to academic progress. If successful, the initiative may be further developed into senior cycle programmes.

All teachers are encouraged to engage in CPD. The provision of constructive feedback will also continue to be promoted by teachers involved in WWETB initiatives such as the Barrie Bennet programme, the Mike Hughes Magenta Principles initiative and the ETB's Office 365 training programme.

### ***Recommendation 2: A formal review should take place more regularly with the views of students, teachers, employers and parents included in the process.***

Some aspects of the LCVP are currently being evaluated as stand-alone elements within the programme. A survey of 5th year students is conducted in relation to their involvement in work experience, the School Business partnership and enterprise initiatives. Students also explore links between the work that they do during the programme and their preferred future careers. Bunclody Vocational College is committed to exploring new ways of gathering feedback from all stakeholders. Existing surveys and evaluations of students, parents, teachers and employers will be reviewed in order to gauge satisfaction, to provide feedback, and to determine new developments that will further enhance the programme. It is envisaged that a review with teachers, students and parents could be completed after the final exam in May of each year.

### ***Recommendation 3: The school should fully comply with all the statutory requirements in relation to child protection procedures.***

BVC is very aware of its obligations in relation to child protection and has a proud record of timely referrals to outside agencies as applicable. Our recent DEIS inspection also duly noted the ethos of care which permeates our school.

It should be noted by the reader that training for school management in relation to the new child protection procedures took place on March 8th and April 27<sup>th</sup> 2018. Our inspection however took place on March 12th. The child protection strategy statement and risk assessment has been carried out since the inspection. It is due for ratification at our board meeting on June 13th 2018.