

An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna
Department of Education and Skills

Whole School Evaluation
Management, Leadership and Learning

REPORT

Ainm na scoile / School name	Henrietta Street School
Seoladh na scoile / School address	Henrietta St Dublin 1
Uimhir rolla / Roll number	20021T

Date of inspection: 30-05-2019



An Roinn Oideachais
agus Scileanna
Department of
Education and Skills

WHAT IS WHOLE-SCHOOL EVALUATION – MANAGEMENT, LEADERSHIP AND LEARNING?

Whole-School Evaluation – Management, Leadership and Learning reports on the quality of teaching and learning and on the quality of management and leadership in a school. It affirms good practice and makes recommendations, where appropriate, to aid the further development of educational provision in the school.

HOW TO READ THIS REPORT

During this inspection, the inspectors evaluated and reported under the following headings or areas of enquiry:

1. The quality of students' learning
2. The quality of teaching
3. The quality of support for students' well-being
4. The quality of leadership and management
5. The quality of school self-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, 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.
4. The Child Safeguarding Statement meets the requirements of the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017.
5. The records of the last three board of management meetings record a child protection oversight report that meet the requirements of the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary schools 2017.
6. The board of management has ensured that arrangements are in place to provide information to all school personnel on the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools, 2017
7. School planning documentation indicates that the school is making full provision for the relevant aspects of the curriculum (SPHE, Stay Safe, RSE, Wellbeing).
8. Child protection records are maintained in a secure location.

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

Whole-School Evaluation – Management, Leadership and Learning

Dates of inspection	28-05-2019 to 30-05-2019
Inspection activities undertaken <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Meetings with principal• Meeting with representatives of the board of management• Meeting with parent representatives• Meeting with teachers• Review of relevant documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Analysis of parent, pupil and teacher questionnaires• Observation of teaching and learning• Examination of students' work• Interaction with students• Feedback to principal, deputy principal and teachers, and to the board of management representatives

SCHOOL CONTEXT

Henrietta Street School is a community-based high-support school for children considered to be 'at risk'. It provides an educational placement to twenty students from Dublin's north inner city and the wider area. Students are very well supported by full-time and part-time teachers, a full-time social worker, a 'Bean an Tí', a part-time classroom assistant and school secretary. The Junior Cycle framework is a significant focus and the school also provides Level Two Learning Programmes (L2LPs), where appropriate.

SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

FINDINGS

- Students' outcomes and experiences in almost all areas of the school's work are very good; however, the need to develop Mathematics has been identified by the school.
- The excellent level of care, interest and warmth in the staff-student relationships contributes greatly to students' engagement with school and their educational outcomes.
- All lessons were well planned and comprised a variety of learning activities for students; there was scope to further develop some skills.
- Teaching and learning is highly individualised and is very well supported by education and behaviour support plans and this has contributed significantly to the very high quality of provision evident.
- The quality of support for students' wellbeing is outstanding.
- Leadership and management is exceptionally good; there is a well-embedded culture of continual reflection and improvement which is very well supported by the school's self-evaluation (SSE) processes.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Teachers should provide further opportunities for collaborative learning, should extend the use of visuals, concrete materials and Assessment for Learning (AfL) strategies, and should ensure that teaching has a deeper focus on understanding complex concepts.
- The excellent approaches to literacy development noted should be extended to all lessons, in order to provide more integrated teaching of literacy and numeracy.

DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. THE QUALITY OF STUDENTS' LEARNING

- Students' outcomes and experiences are very good overall. Teaching for wellbeing, life skills, most curricular subjects and most aspects of literacy are very good. The school has very high expectations for students' achievement. While there is some expertise in teaching Mathematics and students achieve well in the subject, the school has identified Mathematics for development and plans are underway to access support in this subject.
- The quality of learning in the lessons observed was good with some very good aspects. All lessons were well planned and comprised a variety of learning activities. Students co-operated very well with their teachers, participated very well, and demonstrated enjoyment of learning. Best practice was noted when students discussed their learning with the teacher and each other. Further opportunities for students to collaborate should be provided.
- The students have a wide range of literacy and numeracy strengths and needs. Student support plans outline valuable strategies for supporting literacy. Excellent practice was noted when aspects of literacy were an integral part of lessons but in some lessons there was scope for a stronger literacy focus. In particular, the language of examinations should be further included and reinforced. Numeracy support requires a stronger focus.
- Additional subjects are provided by part-time teachers, and students engaged very well in the lessons observed. In one highly effective language lesson, there was excellent use of the target language by teacher and student alike. In other lessons, students showed competency in using a range of culinary and art skills. However, in these lessons, students needed to be further enabled to be independent learners. Better organisation of the art room and written instructions in cookery should be considered as alternatives to teacher input.

2. THE QUALITY OF TEACHING

- The quality of teaching was good overall with some very good practice noted. There are four full-time teachers with primary or post-primary qualifications. The flexibility of teachers to teach a broad range of subjects is key to enabling students to achieve their potential. The high degree of teacher planning, and collaboration with outside agencies and teachers from other schools, is indicative of their commitment to the students in their care.
- Very high quality teacher instruction combined with individual student tasks was the predominant methodology used. Excellent practice was observed when explanations were clear, where short simple sentences were used and where key terms were highlighted. Digital technology was used to very good effect in the lessons observed and very good learning was evident when visuals and concrete materials were provided to support learning. However, at times there was a need for clearer explanation of difficult concepts.
- The new Junior Cycle specifications are well embedded in subject and programme planning. Teachers are planning to collaborate with a neighbouring school for Subject Learning and Assessment Review (SLAR) meetings and Classroom Based Assessments (CBAs) have successfully taken place. This work is of an exceptionally high standard and is evidence of the teachers' creativity in overcoming the challenges that being a small school presents.
- Highly effective use of assessment for learning (AfL) was noted throughout the evaluation. Students' work was closely monitored, instruction was adapted on foot of assessment and the teaching targeted students' needs accurately. Very good use of a range of strategies such as 'Stop and Jot', think-pair-share, and mind maps were noted in some lessons. There is scope to extend the use of these valuable approaches.

3. THE QUALITY OF SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS' WELL-BEING

- Support for students' wellbeing is outstanding. The key role that wellbeing plays in ensuring that students reach their potential is recognised as a cornerstone of the work of the school. Considerable effort is invested in assessing students' wellbeing and developing individualised support plans for students. These support plans inform all aspects of educational provision for students.
- The school benefits greatly from the services of a full-time social worker who provides a range of supports that have a very positive impact on students' educational outcomes and life chances in areas including attendance, progression to post-school placements, personal counselling and family support. The social worker also provides invaluable aftercare to students who transition to other schools and settings.
- There is a cohesive team approach to managing students' behaviour. The school team knows the students very well and an exceptionally compassionate culture is evident. Very high expectations for behaviour are set and there are well-communicated routines, rules and clear boundaries. A restorative approach forms the basis of the code of behaviour which is clear, positive and consistently implemented.
- Students and staff eat together and this supports students' wellbeing in a highly effective way. Students are provided with freshly prepared, wholesome and nourishing meals. A strong appreciation for the warm relationships between the students and the ancillary staff and the positive impact of this on wellbeing was evident. Highly-organised activities at break times support the development of a range of Junior Cycle key skills in areas such as communication, co-operative learning and numeracy.
- Teachers are highly committed to their work and have a strong empathetic connection to the students. They show a keen interest in their progression, development and outcomes. They show this through diligently planning for their lessons, for behaviour management and for optimal educational outcomes.

4. THE QUALITY OF LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

- Leadership and management is of an exceptionally high standard. The core values of the Daughters of Charity underpin all aspects of school life. The board of management ensures that these values are clearly enunciated in policies that are transparent, plainly written and student-centred. There is a strong vision that centres on a deep commitment to the students and their families permeating every aspect of the work of the school.
- A key strength of school management is in securing staff who have the requisite qualities and skills to support students in accordance with the ethos and values of the school. Leadership in the school is highly consultative and democratic. Staff wellbeing is a priority for the principal and this is most appreciated by the teachers who demonstrate a high level of support for the principal.
- Senior management has significant experience in working with students at risk. There is extensive continuing professional development for staff. One teacher contributes valuable knowledge from her associate involvement with Junior Cycle for Teachers (JCT). This excellent collaboration and sharing of expertise ensures the ongoing development of teaching and learning.
- Students have a very strong voice in the school. The principal, teachers and social worker provide a safe and compassionate space for students to voice their concerns, discuss issues and express their views. However, there is currently no formal student council and this should be considered as a further way of including the student voice in the work of the school.

5. THE QUALITY OF SCHOOL SELF-EVALUATION

- The SSE process is used effectively as a mechanism to bring about positive change and improvement. There is a strong culture of reflection, planning and improvement across all aspects of the school's work which informs and is supported by the SSE process.
- Teachers are reflective in their planning and teaching. Notes attached to student support files demonstrate ongoing monitoring, reflection and adaption of practice.
- Meeting time is used very well to identify areas for improvement and to find solutions to often complex problems. The highly effective systems for monitoring students' progress and development ensure that students reach their full potential within the school and beyond.

Appendix

SCHOOL RESPONSE TO THE REPORT

Submitted by the Board of Management

Part A: Observations on the content of the inspection report

The report was discussed at length at a meeting of the Board of Management on 17th September 2019. The Board sees the report as a ringing endorsement of the culture and work ethic of the school and welcomes it without reservation.

The report falls broadly into three areas: teaching and learning; wellbeing; leadership and management. In relation to these and other areas the report points out that “the core values of the Daughters of Charity underpin all aspects of school life”.

We welcome the acknowledgement that “teaching and learning is highly individualised and is very well supported by education and behaviour support plans and this has contributed significantly to the very high quality of provision evident”.

Key points made in relation to student wellbeing in the report include reference to the “excellent level of care, interest and warmth in the staff-student relationships”, the “freshly prepared, wholesome and nourishing meals” and the finding that “students have a very strong voice in the school”.

These factors led the Inspectors to conclude that “the quality of support for students’ wellbeing is outstanding”.

The Board echoes the finding that the school’s social worker plays a key role in the delivery of “a range of supports that have a very positive impact on students’ educational outcomes and life chances”. It welcomes the finding that “a strong appreciation for the warm relationships between the students and the [support] staff and the positive impact of this on wellbeing was evident”.

We welcome the recognition in the report that in our school the “leadership and management is of an exceptionally high standard” and that “there is a well-embedded culture of continual reflection and improvement”.

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 Inspectors’ recommendations to extend collaborative learning, the use of visuals, concrete materials, Assessment for Learning (AfL) strategies and “the excellent approaches to literacy development noted” will be acted upon during this school year with time devoted at staff meetings to sharing good practice in all of these areas.

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 of quality the school's provision of each area.

Level	Description	Example of descriptive terms
Very Good	Very good 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 outstanding 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	Good 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 students' 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 very good standard.	Good; good quality; valuable; effective practice; competent; useful; commendable; good standard; some areas for improvement
Satisfactory	Satisfactory 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	Fair 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 students' learning; less than satisfactory; experiencing difficulty; must improve in specified areas; action required to improve
Weak	Weak 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;