

An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna
Department of Education and Skills

Whole School Evaluation
Management, Leadership and Learning

REPORT

Ainm na scoile / School name	Coláiste Choilm
Seoladh na scoile / School address	Dublin Road Swords Co Dublin
Uimhir rolla / Roll number	60383I

Date of Evaluation: 18-10-2018



An Roinn Oideachais
agus Scileanna
Department of
Education and Skills

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. Quality of school leadership and management
2. Quality of teaching and learning
3. Implementation of recommendations from previous evaluations
4. The school's self-evaluation process and capacity for school improvement

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 did not meet the requirements in relation to 1 above and therefore was not fully compliant with the checks undertaken. However, the school has subsequently furnished evidence of compliance with these requirements.

WHOLE-SCHOOL EVALUATION – MANAGEMENT, LEADERSHIP AND LEARNING

Dates of inspection	18-10-2018
Inspection activities undertaken <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Meeting with Board of Management• Meetings with principal and deputy principal• Meetings with key staff• Review of relevant documents• Student focus-group interview	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Analysis of parent, student and teacher questionnaires• Observation of teaching and learning• Examination of students' work• Interaction with students• Feedback to senior management team, board of management and teachers

School context

Coláiste Choilm, with an enrolment of 575 boys, is a voluntary secondary school under the trusteeship of the Edmund Rice Schools Trust (ERST). In addition to the Junior Cycle, the school offers the established Leaving Certificate and an optional Transition Year (TY) programme.

Summary of main findings and recommendations:

Findings

- The overall quality of school management is satisfactory; however, strategic leadership to support planning for a number of aspects of teaching, learning and curricular provision is fair.
- The year head and care team structure provides supports for students; however, the school structures and systems that provide for student wellbeing are underdeveloped.
- Teaching resources provided to the school to support mainstream students with special educational needs are being significantly underutilised.
- The overall quality of teaching and learning in the lessons observed was satisfactory with significant variations noted across individual lessons.
- The level of engagement with implementing the recommendations from previous evaluation reports is satisfactory; systematic procedures for the follow through of recommendations from inspections are underdeveloped.
- While the school has engaged with SSE, to date the process has not been fully realised as a means of supporting improvements in teaching and learning.

Recommendations

- The board should oversee the development of an over-arching strategic plan with agreed short, medium and long term whole-school priorities developed by all stakeholders.
- An Advisory Board of Studies should be established to examine current school provision in curricular and programme areas and to make recommendations for improvement.
- The deployment of teaching resources for special educational needs (SEN) should be reviewed to ensure optimum and appropriate use of all the resources allocated to the school, in accordance with Circular letter 14/2017.
- The Wellbeing core team should, as a matter of priority, examine students' perception of their learning experience in the school and, as part of this work, the introduction of formalised tutor time should be considered to support student wellbeing.
- A programme of collaborative planning for teaching and learning, supported by a system that facilitates the sharing of highly effective practice should be put in place

DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. QUALITY OF SCHOOL LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The overall quality of school management is satisfactory. However, strategic planning to support a number of aspects of teaching and learning is fair.

Leading learning and teaching

The board has overseen the implementation of a curriculum for students that is adequate; there are evident weaknesses in the quality of strategic planning for curriculum provision in the school. Notwithstanding the size of the school, the narrow range of programmes available to students at senior cycle and the narrow range of subject options for students at junior cycle is limiting the overall student experience in the school. While the time allocated to subjects is in line with syllabus requirements, there is significant scope to enhance the breadth of student learning experiences.

There is a very good uptake of TY. However, the absence of a TY co-ordinator and core team is impacting on the effectiveness of the programme. The established Leaving Certificate programme is the sole programme provided for fifth-year students. There is scope to enhance the range of subjects and programmes currently on offer.

While planning for teaching the revised junior cycle subject specifications is underway, planning for whole-school aspects of the Junior Cycle Framework is underdeveloped. It is recommended that the board oversee the introduction of an Advisory Board of Studies; the Board of Studies should examine current school provision in curricular and programme areas and consult with all stakeholders to assist in identifying a shared vision for the future student experience in Coláiste Choilm.

The board is supportive of staff engagement with Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and has approved the release of teachers to work with the Professional Development Service for Teachers. However responses to teacher questionnaires indicate that a significant minority of staff feel they are not encouraged to engage with CPD. It was also evident that there is limited opportunity to share good practice from these events. A planned whole-school project on differentiation has the potential to become a good example of shared practice. It is recommended that senior management undertake an audit of staff professional learning requirements and devise a plan to support the identified needs.

There is an induction programme for new teachers and it is highly commendable that the school has signed up to the Droichead process. The school reported that it regularly provides placements for student teachers. Such engagement in initial teacher education programmes is welcome and is included among the standards in the Teaching Council's *Code of Professional Conduct for Teachers* as it can provide valuable professional benefits for teachers, student teachers, students and the teacher education institution. Evidence from teacher questionnaires indicates that there is scope to enhance the range of supports provided for new teachers. As part of a review of this support, the mechanisms used when class groups are transferred to a new member of staff should also be strengthened.

A number of subjects are timetabled to support student wellbeing and it is positive to note that a wellbeing core team has been established. Appropriate timetabled provision is made for Physical Education Relationship Sexuality Education (RSE), Social, Personal Health Education (SPHE) and Civic, Social and Political Education. As an additional support, a timetabled period of Guidance has been introduced for first-year students. Evident weaknesses in planning for teaching and learning for Guidance, SPHE & RSE were noted. The school should consider the provision of a short tutor time

and decouple the role of form tutor from that of teacher of SPHE. This enhancement of tutor provision would be a key support to the care of all students.

Commendably, deliberate efforts are being made by school management to enhance procedures for tracking student attainment. The Academic Support Team is a worthwhile support to sixth-year students. Some good use is made of available data. However, given the profile of the student cohort, there is significant scope to use this data more systematically to provide for highly effective learner outcomes.

The ASD centre, an Crannóg, is evidence of the school's efforts to create an inclusive environment. It is being developed as a vibrant learning space for the students who attend. Some good curriculum development was evident in the provision of short courses for junior cycle students of an Crannóg. However, limited discussions have taken place on the provision of appropriate senior cycle options for students of an Crannóg; this should be addressed as a matter of priority.

While some good practice is apparent in providing for students with SEN, limitations exist in aspects of this provision. Currently access to learning support is very restricted; the majority of students receive support through withdrawal from an optional subject, this is not optimal practice. Provision for English as an additional language students is underdeveloped.

At the time of the evaluation a significant number of the substantial teaching hours allocated by the Department for SEN provision to mainstream students were not being used. As a matter of priority, the overall SEN allocation should be reviewed to ensure compliance with relevant Department of Education and Skills guidelines and regulations and to ensure the SEN students are effectively served.

Managing the organisation

The quality of school governance is satisfactory. The board is properly constituted and members have received training for their role. The board meets regularly and is aware of its statutory obligations and minutes of meetings indicate that Child Protection Oversight Reports have been included in recent meetings. Commendably, an agreed report is produced following every meeting.

All of the mandatory policies are in place and, to date, the board has revised a number of them. A number of policies that support student wellbeing such as the Anti-Bullying, SPHE, RSE, and SEN policies are significantly out of date. Systematic procedures for the development, review and ratification of policies should now be developed; the legislative and regulatory checklist in the SSE report template would be helpful in this respect.

The senior management team strives to create a positive school climate. However, evidence gathered during the evaluation suggests that there is a need to review the effectiveness of communication within the school. Questionnaire data also indicates that staff and student morale is low. Notwithstanding the clear commitment of management and staff to the school, the reasons for this low morale need to be closely examined and strategies implemented to rectify the situation. The implementation of the Code of Behaviour was an area of concern for both staff and students.

Facilities are maintained to a high standard and the construction of the ASD unit and the development of the fitness suite in the gym have been welcome additions to the school. The senior management team is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment. Health and safety routines are well established and a comprehensive Safety Statement has been produced.

There is a finance subcommittee of the Board that reports to all Board meetings. However to date grant monies received for Information Communication Technologies (ICT) have not been spent and

this should be addressed. As a first step, an overall vision for ICT as a teaching and learning tool should be agreed collaboratively to inform the priorities for the use of this grant.

Leading school development

It was clear during the evaluation that all members of the school community were aware of the elements of the ERST charter and the ethos of an ERST school. However, less than half of the staff surveyed agreed that the elements of the ERST charter are being implemented well in the day-to-day life of the school.

While Board minutes indicate that areas related to teaching and learning are discussed at meetings the Board needs to establish procedures in relation to strategic planning for teaching and learning. This should include an oversight role regarding the quality of student learner experiences and learner outcomes.

There are good links between the school and the parent body. Communication systems with parents regarding student attendance and the issuing of detentions are effective. However, responses to parent questionnaires issued as part of the evaluation indicated a desire for greater communication on the work of both the board and the parents association; this merits further investigation.

Developing leadership capacity

A review of the existing post of responsibilities is currently underway. Very good practice was evident in the collaborative review process undertaken. Responses to staff surveys indicated that a majority of staff believe that the current in-school management system is not effective. Further whole-school discussion around middle management structures and their effectiveness is required and it is essential that the new roles and responsibilities sufficiently meet the needs of the school as per Circular 03/2018. In addition, the board should review the proposed schedule of duties to ensure that they address the current and future needs of the school.

Year heads play a pivotal role in supporting students in their care in the school. They have been facilitated in developing their leadership role in the school through attendance at role-specific CPD; this is praiseworthy practice. While the senior management team has participated in some CPD, they need to engage in further leadership training to support their strategic leadership function in supporting teaching and learning in the school.

Some good efforts have been made to provide leadership opportunities for students. Commendably, a number of students were consulted as part of the development of the student charter. Other leadership opportunities are provided through student engagement with the school's sporting extra-curricular programme, involvement with the student council and, in 2017, the school introduced a prefect system to assist with mentoring first-year students; the student voice was also consulted during previous SSE processes. Notwithstanding this good work, it was apparent from evidence gathered during the evaluation that there is a significant level of student disengagement with the life of the school. Students expressed concerns that their views are not being considered in key decisions affecting their school experience. School management should establish further structures to support the facilitation of student leadership and the promotion of student voice.

2. QUALITY OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

The overall quality of teaching and learning in the lessons observed was satisfactory; the quality varied significantly between individual lessons. Good and some exemplary practices were noted in a significant minority of lessons. There is scope to extend the range of teaching and assessment

approaches used in lessons to provide for learner outcomes and experiences that are of a consistent high quality.

Learner outcomes and experiences

High quality learner outcomes were noted when students had a clear sense of attainable learning outcomes. Almost all lessons had a clear focus. Where highly effective practice was apparent, learning intentions, which focused on the knowledge and skills which students should acquire, were shared from the outset of the lesson. In many lessons it was unclear what specific learning students had to achieve by the end of the lesson. This led to lessons being overly focused on the delivery of content by the teacher. Teachers should share clear learning intentions which are revisited during lessons to assess progress.

Very high levels of student motivation were apparent when the learning intentions were co-created with students and were appropriately differentiated to support the full range of abilities in the classroom. In a small number of lessons observed, students were engaged in completing practical course work projects. The subsequent teaching strategies adopted challenged students to take responsibility for their work whilst ensuring that they also had sufficient knowledge and skills to complete the work to a high standard. Observation and interaction with students in these lessons indicated that they were highly motivated and had a significant sense of pride in completing high quality work. Further use of these strategies is recommended.

The quality of lesson structure and design impacted on students' outcomes and experiences in the classrooms visited. When lessons were clearly linked to students' prior knowledge and sufficiently scaffolded to support students' acquisition of new content, this provided for highly effective learning. The most effective lessons were suitably paced and material was pitched at a level appropriate to students' needs or syllabus requirements. In other lessons there was scope to enhance the quality of learning through greater planning for differentiation and greater use of student-led activities.

In some classrooms, students' work was exhibited prominently and purposefully; this helps to give ownership to students of the learning space. There is scope to develop this practice throughout the school and on school corridors to help students develop a sense of ownership of their own environment. Further consideration could also be given to the layout of classroom furniture to support collaborative learning.

Teachers' individual and collective practice

While there was evidence of advance planning for all of the lessons observed, the quality of short-term planning varied significantly. Highly effective practice was evident when the teaching approaches supported developmental and incremental learning and students had to actively process and apply their learning. Where learning was less successful, lessons were characterised by a more teacher-centred approach; consequently students were less actively engaged in their learning.

The quality of formative assessment practice varied significantly across the range of lessons observed. Teacher-led hands-up questioning was the dominant assessment strategy noted. This led to many students being overly passive and disengaged. Where exemplary formative practice was evident teachers used a range of peer and self-assessment practices which enabled students to reflect on their own progress and that of their peers. Questioning, in these very good lessons, was higher-order, probing and challenging. In a small number of lessons formative assessment practice was unsatisfactory.

Some exemplary formative feedback was provided in students' copybooks. There is scope to extend this good practice. Student questionnaire data indicates that there is a need to review the

effectiveness of formative assessment practices currently in use. Fewer than half of students surveyed agreed that they are told how to improve their learning.

There was some good use of immersion practices in the language lessons observed. Strategies that ensure extensive use of the target language are recommended for all language lessons. In accordance with past SSE priorities the correct use of and understanding of subject-specific terminology was well supported in most lessons.

Systematic procedures that facilitate the sharing of effective teaching and learning strategies should be implemented. During the evaluation, school management and staff recognised the benefits of establishing a teaching and learning committee to support the sharing of effective methodologies and good classroom practice; this would be a worthwhile initiative. The potential of the SSE process in supporting this work should be fully realised.

Opportunities to enhance teachers' collaborative practice at subject department level are required. Agendas for meetings need to be more succinct and aligned to a tighter set of key teaching and learning priorities. Meetings should be scheduled in a manner that optimises attendance. Team meetings for teachers of SPHE, CSPE, and teachers of TY need to be scheduled.

It is good practice that subject teams review student attainment data. However, with the exception of a small number of departments, there is an absence of action planning for teaching and learning. There is significant scope to use student attainment data to inform key pedagogic practice and to inform subject-specific targets and actions to support student learning. Where exemplary planning practice is apparent very positive trends in student attainment were noted.

There was significant variation in the quality of programme planning for teaching and learning in the subject plans reviewed during the evaluation. Where exemplary practice was apparent, programme plans detailed a sequence of learning activities that demonstrated incremental and developmental learning, with assessment and teaching approaches well thought out. A number of plans were underdeveloped and outdated. No collaborative plans were available for SPHE, CSPE and there was no overarching TY plan. All subject areas need to prioritise the development of collaborative subject plans to facilitate a cohesive approach to students' learning.

3. IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS FROM PREVIOUS EVALUATIONS

The level of engagement with implementing the recommendations from previous evaluation reports is satisfactory.

Leadership and Management

Some work has been advanced in relation to addressing the recommendations in previous inspection reports, for example all students in junior cycle have access to one class of SPHE per week in line with the requirements of Circular M11/03. However, similar themes are emerging during this evaluation that were highlighted in the previous WSE. There is significant scope to enhance the strategic manner in which recommendations are followed up. The board should maintain an oversight role in ensuring recommendations are followed up in a more systematic manner.

Teaching and Learning

Subject departments have addressed some recommendations relating to teaching and learning. For example the Materials Technology (Wood) department has placed a greater emphasis on the design process beginning in first-year in students' work. However the recommendations from the previous

WSE regarding collaborative planning and the use of assessment for learning and those from the recent Science inspection relating to planning and the use of active learning methodologies have not been adequately addressed.

4. THE SCHOOL'S SELF-EVALUATION PROCESS AND CAPACITY FOR SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

The School's Self-Evaluation Process

The SSE process has been used previously to develop a whole-school strategy in literacy, numeracy and ICT and most recently to develop the student charter. Data was gathered from a number of sources with good practice evident regarding the consultation of teachers, students and parents. However, there was limited evidence that these whole-school strategies had been embedded in school practice and there was an acknowledgement that the SSE process in the school has stalled. To date the process has not been fully realised in the school as a means of supporting improvements in teaching and learning.

The School's Capacity for Improvement

Weaknesses currently exist in both the structures and processes in place to support SSE in the school. The absence of a strategic plan and the absence of key structures are limiting factors that are impacting on the school's current capacity for improvement. These areas will need to be addressed as a matter of priority.

During the evaluation it was evident from meetings that there is an openness to change, and discussions held during the evaluation were very reflective and open; this should bode well for the school going forward. The school needs to establish in-school structures to support the internal review and action planning for improvement. The development of a strategic plan and related structures are needed to ensure change can be advanced.

Appendix

School response to the report

Submitted by the Board of Management

Part A: Observations on the content of the inspection report

The Board accepts the general thrust of the report as representing a fair assessment of our school at this time. The Board, as a matter of urgency, will address issues highlighted in the detailed draft with the teachers, students and parent's bodies.

The Board wishes to draw your attention to the following:-

Quality of School Leadership and Management – paragraph 2:

There was no TY Programme Co-Ordinator due to the moratorium of posts of responsibility since the school year 2016/2017. The post was recently re-instated and had been advertised at the time of the inspection.

Quality of School Leadership and Management – paragraph 4:

The Board encourages professional development as outlined in our Professional Development Policy. Management has provided 5 hours of Croke Park hours to be used for CPD undertaken outside of the school day.

Managing the Organisation – paragraph 2:

The Board wishes to point out the anti-bullying and SEN policy was ratified in 2014.

Management and Board would concur with the vision of ICT as a teaching & learning tool as outlined by the inspectors. Collaborative discussions, at staff level, had begun and it was agreed to use PDST support prior to spending the grant. One session was conducted. Management and the Board take on board the view of the inspectorate and will move this process on promptly.

Part B: Follow-up actions planned or undertaken since the completion of the inspection activity to implement the findings and recommendations of the inspection

Management has complied with Circular 14/207 and is now optimising the appropriate use of all the resources allocated due to the re appointment of a Resource Teacher.

An Advisory Board of studies has just been re-established at a recent Staff meeting.

The core Wellbeing team is now examining, by questionnaire and focus group, and through the Student Council, students' perception of the learning student experience in the school. And the first steps have been taken in restructuring tutor support system at staff level.

At the time of the MLL, interviews were taking place for Leadership and Management roles. This resulted in a priority role given to a staff member of Leadership & School Planning and, as a priority taking on the advice of the inspectorate; one role will oversee the weaknesses pointed out in both the structures and processes in place to support SSE in the school.

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;