

An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna
Department of Education and Skills

Whole School Evaluation
Management, Leadership and Learning

REPORT

Ainm na scoile / School name	Coláiste Éinde
Seoladh na scoile / School address	Threadneedle Road Galway
Uimhir rolla / Roll number	62981P

Date of Evaluation: 25-09-2019



**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 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.
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 meets 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	23-09-2019 to 25-09-2019
Inspection activities undertaken	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting with board of management • Meetings with principal and deputy principals • Meetings with key staff • Review of relevant documents • Student focus-group interview • Meeting with parents 	<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 Éinde is a co-educational, voluntary post-primary school situated in Galway city, that participates in Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools (DEIS), the Department of Education and Skills' action plan for educational inclusion. It operates under the patronage of the Roman Catholic Bishop of Galway. The school is oversubscribed for enrolment with a current enrolment of 792, including students from a range of ethnic, economic and social backgrounds. It offers the Junior Cycle programme, Junior Certificate, Junior Certificate School Programme (JCSP), Leaving Certificate, Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme (LCVP) and an optional Transition Year (TY). Holistic education and inclusivity are central to the school mission; supports include a long-established hearing impairment (HI) class and a more recently established special class for students with autistic spectrum disorders (ASDs).

Summary of main findings and recommendations:

Findings

- Coláiste Éinde is well run with a positive atmosphere of care, support and affirmation for students at its core, where teachers provide an extensive programme of co-curricular and extra-curricular activities to support the holistic development of students.
- While the school curriculum is generally broad and there is good provision overall, some aspects of curriculum planning, provision and timetabling need to be reviewed to better meet the needs of the full cohort of students.
- The senior management team (SMT) works effectively, the board of management has been very effective in developing governance structures, and the overall quality of leadership of management is good; there is scope to improve linkage between the roles and responsibilities of all post holders and the leadership of learning and teaching.

- The overall quality of teaching and of learning is good, including excellent practice observed in some lessons; formative assessment practices and differentiation are areas for improvement.
- There has good progress in the implementation of recommendations from previous evaluations; some recommendations relating to teaching and learning have yet to be embedded.
- The school has very good engagement in school self-evaluation (SSE) and very strong capacity for improvement; further integration with the strategic DEIS plan is needed.

Recommendations

- A review of some aspects of curricular and timetable provision is needed in order to build in greater flexibility to best support the needs of all students.
- The roles and responsibilities of senior and middle management need to be further developed to include increased focus on leading teaching and learning, and the schedule of posts should continue to be reviewed to meet emerging needs of the school.
- Formative assessment and differentiation practices should be further developed and implemented consistently in all lessons, and time allocated for staff to share pedagogical strategies as part of a planned professional development programme.
- The existing strategic DEIS plan should be reviewed to interlink learning and teaching strategies, wellbeing supports, and the plan for digital learning.

DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. QUALITY OF SCHOOL LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The overall quality of leadership and management is good. A very positive culture exists and school values are modelled by management and staff and encouraged in students. This is exemplified by a high level of volunteerism among staff and by the commitment of the SMT to the continuous improvement of the learner experience.

Leading learning and teaching

Coláiste Éinde has experienced a period of progressive development over the past few years due to a number of factors. A high level of staff recruitment over the last six years, when combined with the experience of existing staff, has resulted in a rich blend of skills among staff. Increased enrolment facilitated the appointment of a second deputy principal in 2018, and this facilitated SMT to focus further attention on supporting change, including a building renewal programme. The suspension of industrial action related to Junior Cycle implementation, and the school's review of posts in line with Circular Letter 0003/2018, supported the emergence of a teaching and learning development focus. Good progress has been made to date, with some areas for improvement to be addressed in the coming years.

Very high priority is given by the SMT and all teachers to nurturing positive student-teacher relationships and to the holistic development of students. The quality of the care provided is very good overall. In questionnaire returns, a very high percentage of students and parents indicated that students felt safe and cared for. Weekly care team meetings are a particular strength in this regard.

When issues emerge at these meetings, follow-up action is co-ordinated among year heads, assistant year heads, the chaplain, guidance counsellor, special educational needs co-ordinator, and other relevant staff. Staff are very generous in giving of their non-teaching time to provide for a wide variety of sporting, social and cultural activities as well as additional academic opportunities.

The school is at an initial stage of formulating its wellbeing programme for Junior Cycle students, with classes to support students' digital skills and personal development already in place. Wellbeing planning offers the potential to further develop the role of class tutors. A focus on consistent monitoring of student journals and student academic performance across subjects is advised as part of the wellbeing support provided by the class tutor to students. A working group should be considered to progress this work and develop an associated wellbeing programme.

The guidance department works effectively providing information to students and to parents on subject, programme, further education and workplace planning, through information inputs and the careers fair that it organises annually. Responses from the student and parent questionnaires indicate that more support for students around subject choice may be required. The guidance department engages well with student-support meetings, and facilitates a substantial number of one-to-one meetings and personal counselling sessions with students. It has also identified worthwhile priorities for improvement within its own service. In discussion, students were very appreciative of the counselling service.

The school provides a curriculum that is generally broad and balanced. At senior cycle in particular, a wide range of subject choices is offered, across the Leaving Certificate programme and the LCVP, and changes are made annually to meet the needs of students. The TY programme has also been developing in recent years, taking on board student feedback, and now comprises three class groups. Junior-cycle students are provided with a short sampling programme to inform their choice of three subjects in first year, and the JCSP provides additional supports for a small number of students.

Some aspects of curriculum planning now need to be reviewed, in consultation with stakeholders, to help the school continue to meet emerging needs of students. The school should investigate the possibility of offering the Leaving Certificate Applied programme as a support to a small number of senior-cycle students every year, given the learner outcomes being achieved by a small cohort annually. The existing four periods before morning break every day should be reviewed, given feedback gathered from students and staff. The flexibility offered by the Junior Cycle Framework should be considered in relation to the possibility of Level 2 Learning Programmes [L2LPs], the possibility of blending L2LPs and Level 3 junior-cycle subjects or planning combinations of juniorcycle subjects and externally or internally designed short courses. Careful curricular planning will have a direct impact on the motivation, attendance, engagement, and achievement of students.

In keeping with the school commitment to inclusion, a HI class and an ASD class are in place. As appropriate, students attending these settings integrate into mainstream classes where possible. Effective structures are in place to support students with special educational needs (SEN) and the coordinator for SEN provides effective leadership to the specialist core team of teachers involved. A detailed SEN policy is at draft stage and should be ratified as a priority.

The middle management team consists of seven assistant principal one (AP1) posts and nine assistant principal two (AP2) posts. A review of the post structure was completed by the board in 2018 and there was a significant drive to ensure that the assigned duties reflected the changing needs of the school and gave due consideration to duties that would support learning and teaching. Another post

review is planned for January 2020. To further enhance the leadership of learning and teaching, it is recommended that the roles and responsibilities of senior management and of middle management be further developed to include increased focus on leading learning and teaching, and supporting areas such as wellbeing, student leadership and the plan for digital learning. Ideally, SMT should meet with post holders annually to ensure that the posts continue to meet the needs of the school, and that there is work-load equity.

Managing the organisation

The school is managed effectively. Budgets, staff recruitment and the maintenance of the facilities are overseen very effectively by the board and the SMT.

The SMT, consisting of the principal and two deputy principals, oversees the very effective day-to-day running of the school and ensures that the school operates as an orderly, secure and healthy learning environment. The SMT members have agreed duties and work in a collaborative and collegial manner. In addition to their individual roles, they have taken on other roles left vacant after the last AP1 and AP2 post-of-responsibility review. The inclusion of the senior-management roles in the upcoming post review, in addition to the middle-management roles, will provide the opportunity for a restructuring of all posts and an increased focus by the SMT on leading learning and teaching.

The operation of the board of management is very good. It is very supportive of the school and members bring a commendable level of shared expertise to their roles and responsibilities. A structure for policy review has been established. To assist the board in managing the ongoing review of school policies, it is advised that a more systematic approach to policy development and review be established.

The board and principal are aware of their statutory obligations, and work to ensure that all legislative and policy requirements are met. An initial priority should be to examine the school calendar and to confirm annually its compliance with the requirements of Circular M29/95 in relation to number of teaching days available to all classes each year.

Leading school development

The leadership of school development is good. The board and principal are keen to lead and mediate change appropriately and to respond to the evolving needs of students and staff, with a view to ongoing school improvement.

Regular staff meetings, such as year head meetings and pastoral care meetings, are used to support school development. Going forward, senior management should provide an agenda for each meeting, as this would enable staff to prepare and make a more informed contribution. Records of various meetings should be shared routinely with the SMT to further enhance communication and ensure oversight.

Some valuable initiatives help to integrate digital learning technologies into learning and teaching such as the school app, additional computer rooms and upgrading digital technology equipment. As a next step, a Digital Learning Plan should be prepared, as per Circular 11/2018, to outline the targeted, incremental embedding of digital technologies in teaching, learning, and assessment. The plan will need to guide the way in which the *Grant Scheme for ICT Equipment* is used to improve learner outcomes.

The strategic DEIS plan, which has focused on strategies not explicitly related to learning and teaching, is currently under review. This review should be used as an opportunity to ensure that SMART (specific measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound) targets, based on the analysis of relevant data, are set across the DEIS themes. Measures, including specific in-class learning and teaching strategies, should be agreed, implemented and monitored at a whole-school level. A summary of the DEIS plan should be made available to parents in order to fulfil reporting obligations under Circular 0040/2016.

Very good links are maintained with the community through participation in the School Completion Programme and the work of the home-school-community liaison teacher. The school also has very good links with feeder primary schools as well as partnerships with trustees and local businesses.

Developing leadership capacity

The development of leadership capacity is commendable. The staff shows a strong commitment to student welfare and engages very well with changes introduced to date, such as team teaching and peer observation. The school reported that a *Droichead* system is established and that it provides placements regularly for student teachers. Such engagement in initial teacher education programmes is welcome as it can provide valuable professional benefits for teachers, student teachers, students and the teacher education institution.

The board and the principal provide very good opportunities for teachers' continuing professional development (CPD). Currently, some CPD opportunities are not chosen on the basis of a strategic or streamlined approach to emerging pedagogical priorities. Ideally, an agreed vision of what constitutes good-quality teaching and learning should serve as a basis for choosing relevant CPD opportunities; the school could plan then for the integration of the outcomes of CPD into teaching and learning. There were many examples of excellent teaching and learning practices observed during the evaluation. Going forward, time should be allocated to the sharing of pedagogical strategies during meetings of the collective staff, in conjunction with a planned CPD programme.

Opportunities for student leadership are provided through the student council and a mentoring programme through which first-year students are supported by senior-cycle students. Responses from student questionnaires, and interactions with students during the evaluation, indicate that there is a good atmosphere in the school. They also highlight the need to place increased emphasis on students having a say in how things are done. The school has identified this need and there is potential to include the promotion of student voice within the new post structure.

2. QUALITY OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

Learner outcomes and experiences

The overall quality of learning was good, with practice ranging from very good to satisfactory. Relationships and interactions among students and between students and teachers supported a cooperative, affirming and productive learning environment in all of the lessons observed.

Learning intentions were shared at the outset of most lessons. It is recommended that such learning intentions be expanded to reflect the key concepts and skills taught in lessons and to link them to success criteria. Such an approach would help students to assess their own progress while also provide teachers with a greater insight into areas that require further development.

Teacher-led oral questioning was the dominant assessment strategy. In many instances, student answering was brief, with teachers then expanding on the answers themselves. A greater use of higher-order questions, with appropriate wait time, would develop a differentiated learner experience and should be included in all lessons. In questionnaires, students agreed that teachers encouraged them to do their best, but did not always tell them how they could improve. This highlights the importance of formative assessment and the benefits of teachers providing constructive feedback to students. In a minority of lessons visited, teachers provided regular, constructive developmental written feedback to students on how to improve their work. It is recommended that the provision of such feedback be extended. Students received very good oral feedback on the quality of their work in the majority of lessons. It would be worthwhile for teachers to direct students to take note of this feedback and to follow up on improving their own work.

Best practice in developing skills related to independent learning and critical thinking were noted in a minority of lessons, where key skills such as managing one's own learning, peer evaluation and higher-order reflection were developed. Very effective practice was observed where the success criteria and an assessment rubric were shared with students, and where time was provided for a commendable combination of peer assessment, self-assessment and teacher assessment of student tasks. There is scope to extend this very effective practice throughout the school by formalising the practice of peer observation among teaching colleagues in lessons.

Teachers' individual and collective practice

Teaching was very good or good in almost all of the lessons observed. In the highly effective lessons, teachers' individual practice was characterised by thoughtful selection of activities and the preparation of creative, purposeful and appealing resources. Lesson planning was most effective when activities focused on the intended student learning and when learning intentions were stated in terms of what students should know and be able to do by the end of lessons.

Some classrooms were configured to encourage collaborative learning and these layouts contributed to more active learning, enabling teachers to circulate easily, facilitating learning and offering support to learners. Many classrooms were laid out in a more traditional manner which, in many instances, contributed to a more passive approach to teaching and learning. It is recommended that teachers consider classroom layout and the impact it has on wellbeing, teaching and learning.

Highly effective enquiry-based approaches to learning were observed in many lessons, where teachers skilfully managed their own input to optimise student participation and response. In these lessons, the pace and pitch of the work were appropriately challenging. Active methodologies and differentiated approaches were used to stimulate student thought and engagement, and to promote student voice. Many students demonstrated high levels of participation in such lessons, contributing their ideas, opinions and experiences to class discussion with confidence and applying their learning to real-life situations. In a significant number of lessons, however, the same content was delivered in the same way for all students. It is recommended that teachers further integrate differentiated, student-centred, active methodologies and formative assessment in lessons to ensure all students are appropriately challenged and supported.

Some teachers expressed a wish to lessen student anxiety about the newly introduced classroom based assessments (CBAs) in Junior Cycle. To assist teachers with this, assessment planning should be enhanced to broaden assessment modes. Instead of having only written examinations in first year, a percentage should be included for other learning such as oral presentations, research skills, folder

presentation and homework. This approach will incrementally develop and support students' learning of skills as well as knowledge.

Highly effective planning for the Junior Cycle was evident in some subject departments. However, a minority of plans were based solely on chapters of text books. It is recommended that subject departments ensure that all curricular plans are comprehensive, active documents designed to support collaborative working and enhance teaching and learning. The development of an electronic platform, currently underway, should prove helpful in encouraging individual teachers and departments to share best practice.

There is need to engage in deeper discussion related to teaching, learning and assessment at subject department level. To promote this, agendas for meetings should be set by senior management to ensure that, as well as discussing logistical issues, formal subject development planning is engaged in and documented. It is advised that minutes of subject department meetings are shared with the SMT, ideally electronically, so that agreed practices and targets can be discussed and shared on a whole-school basis in the future.

3. IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS FROM PREVIOUS EVALUATIONS

Leadership and Management

The school has made very good progress in implementing recommendations from previous evaluations in respect of leadership and management.

Teaching and Learning

Partial progress has been made in relation to the implementation and sharing of previous recommendations related to teaching and learning. It is recommended that opportunities be created for teachers to share the outcomes of inspections with colleagues in other subject areas, with a view to devising action plans for further improvement. Previous reports recommended that all teachers should share effective learning intentions which are linked to success criteria with students, that peer and self-assessment opportunities be introduced, and that strategies to support literacy be developed. As observed in lessons during this evaluation, there is considerable scope to implement these recommendations more widely and to extend such practice to more lessons.

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

The School's Self-Evaluation Process

There has been very good engagement with the SSE process in reviewing aspects of school life such as provision for SEN, TY provision, arrangements for assessment in Junior Cycle, and school library services. The SSE process now needs to be integrated with the strategic DEIS plan and this plan should be reviewed to interlink in-class teaching and learning strategies, wellbeing supports, and the plan for digital learning.

The School's Capacity for Improvement

School capacity for making future improvements is very good. The dedicated leadership of senior management and the board and the commitment of the staff to the students and the school will greatly assist in achieving future improvements.

Appendix

SCHOOL RESPONSE TO THE REPORT

Submitted by the Board of Management

Part A: Observations on the content of the inspection report

The board of management at Coláiste Éinde welcomes the WSE-MLL report and is very pleased to note that it captures some of the excellent holistic education being provided by the school. In particular, the board is pleased to note acknowledgement of the following:

- The quality of the care provided for students is very good overall.
- Staff are very generous in giving of their non-teaching time to provide for a wide variety of curricular and extra-curricular activities.
- The senior management team (SMT) works effectively, the board of management has been very effective in developing governance structures.
- The overall quality of teaching and of learning is good, including many examples of excellent teaching and learning practices observed.
- The school has very good engagement in school self-evaluation and very strong capacity for improvement.
- The school provides a curriculum that is generally broad and balanced.
- Effective structures are in place to support students with special educational needs.
- Budgets, staff recruitment and the maintenance of the facilities are overseen very effectively by the board and the SMT.
- The operation of the board of management is very good.
- The board and principal are aware of their statutory obligations, and work to ensure that all legislative and policy requirements are met.
- The school has very good links with feeder primary schools as well as partnerships with trustees, local businesses and community.
- The development of leadership capacity is commendable.
- The board and the principal provide very good opportunities for teachers' continuing professional development.
- Relationships and interactions among students and between students and teachers is supported by a cooperative, affirming and productive learning environment as observed in all of the lessons.
- The school has made very good progress in implementing recommendations from previous evaluations in respect of leadership and management.
- There has been very good engagement with the SSE process.
- School capacity for making future improvements is very good.

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 board of management of Coláiste Éinde welcomes the recommendations received and is fully committed to continue working in partnership with staff, students, parents/guardians and the wider community to implement the recommendations in this report

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;