

An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna
Department of Education and Skills

Whole School Evaluation
Management, Leadership and Learning

REPORT

Ainm na scoile / School name	St. Kevin's Community College
Seoladh na scoile / School address	Fonthill Road Clondalkin Dublin 22
Uimhir rolla / Roll number	70042L

Date of Evaluation: 10-05-2017



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

Whole-School Evaluations – Management, Leadership and Learning report on the quality of teaching and learning and on the quality of management and leadership in a school. They affirm good practice and make 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; a response was not received from the board.

Whole-School Evaluation – Management, Leadership and Learning

INSPECTION ACTIVITIES DURING THIS INSPECTION

Dates of inspection	10-05-2017
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">• Meeting with parents• 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

St Kevin's Community College is a co-educational, designated Community College under the trusteeship of the Dublin and Dún Laoghaire Education and Training Board (DDLETB). The current enrolment is 341 with a significant fall in enrolment evident in the current first-year cohort. The school participates in Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools (DEIS), the action plan of the Department of Education and Skills for educational inclusion. The school offers the Junior Certificate, Junior Certificate School Programme (JCSP), the Transition Year (TY) programme, the Leaving Certificate and the Leaving Certificate Applied (LCA).

SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

FINDINGS

- The overall quality of management and leadership in relation to key areas such as timetabling, teacher deployment, allocation of resources and curriculum provision is weak.
- The school is not providing the minimum instruction time of twenty-eight hours as stipulated by CL M29/95 and the overall quality of timetabling is poor.
- The JCSP librarian is providing an excellent service to students and it is evident that great progress has been made in fostering a love of reading among students.
- A well-organised tiered student-support structure is in place in the school.
- The quality of teaching was good or very good in the majority of lessons with satisfactory practice observed in a small number of lessons
- The deputy principal (DP) has effectively led school self-evaluation (SSE) processes in the school and rich data has been gathered from a wide range of sources.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- The board, in conjunction with the DDLETB, needs to take greater oversight of key issues in the school to ensure improvements in timetabling, deployment of staff, curriculum provision and use of resources.
- The board should take greater oversight of all aspects of DEIS action planning for improvement, ensure that this is recorded accurately in minutes of meetings and ratify the DEIS action plan.
- The board should ensure that twenty-eight hours minimum instruction time is provided to students and that the key driver in the timetabling process is an emphasis on optimising student attainment.

- Teachers should work together to raise student expectations, set specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound (SMART) targets for uptake and attainment and implement the most effective teaching methods to ensure the targets are met.
- Teachers should ensure greater consistency in relation to the quality and quantity of homework assigned and should give students more regular written formative feedback on their work.

DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. QUALITY OF SCHOOL MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP

1.1 School ownership and management

The overall quality of school management is weak in relation to key areas that are impacting on the educational provision for students. While the board of management has engaged well in some aspects of governance, greater oversight in regard to significant issues detailed in this report is urgently required.

The board of management is properly constituted and is committed to the school. The board has engaged well in policy development and most mandatory policies are in place. Some policies have yet to be ratified and a *Dignity in the Workplace* policy should be developed. The board should maintain a Policy Review Calendar in line with the ETB Ireland's guide for its Boards of Management.

There is currently no overarching DEIS action plan. It is a requirement of the Department that the board oversees and ratifies the DEIS plan. The board reported that student attainment, which is a key DEIS theme, is reviewed annually. However, in relation to this and other important issues such as records of student suspensions, attendance, falling enrolment, curriculum matters and human resources, the minutes of board meetings reveal insufficient or no detail. Detailed reporting to the board by the principal and accurate minute keeping need to be addressed as a priority. The board, in conjunction with the DDLETB, needs to urgently take greater oversight of these issues which are impacting negatively on the educational provision for the students.

The principal and deputy principal form the senior management team (SMT). Their roles are clearly delineated and in the course of the evaluation, they presented as generally working well together to manage the school on a day to day basis. The middle-management team (MMT) comprising assistant principals, special duties post holders and a programme co-ordinator carries out a wide range of duties to good effect. The SMT liaises frequently with them but there is a need to establish more formal structures. The principal should provide post holders with a job description and the board should seek an annual report from post holders.

There is no parents' association. However, the school endeavours to engage with parents and the home-school-community liaison (HSCL) co-ordinator provides very good support for parents. Good communication is maintained with parents.

1.2. Effectiveness of leadership for learning

The overall quality of leadership for learning is weak in relation to timetabling, deployment of staff and some aspects of curricular and programme provision. The unsatisfactory practices impact significantly on the quality of the students' experience and attainment. It is ultimately the role of the principal supported by the board to ensure that all of the school's resources are deployed to optimal effect for the benefit of the students.

The quality of timetabling is poor. The minimum twenty-eight hours instruction time as per CL 29/95 is not provided. The structure of the school day should be reviewed, as there is currently no scheduled morning break. Instead, on a daily basis a fifteen-minute break is taken from the third class period. In some cases, core subjects incur a loss of up to forty-five minutes tuition time per week. Such a loss results in the time stipulation for delivery of core curriculum not being fulfilled.

A further aspect of poor timetabling is the allocation of triple and double periods to certain subjects. Third-year students have a triple period in Science, Art and Materials Technology Wood. Students have double periods or two separate periods on the one day in core subjects. The result is uneven distribution of class contact time with the subjects. In contrast, subjects which should have a double period such as Physical Education are in some instances allocated single periods.

Analysis of the school's timetable indicates that there are significant restrictions due to arrangements in relation to job sharing and other factors. Substantial blocks of non-teaching time allocated to teachers as part of the school's job-sharing arrangements are contrary to CL 0075/2015 which stipulates that students' educational needs must take precedence. All evidence suggests that facilitating a positive student experience and optimising student attainment are not the key drivers of the timetabling process. A complete review of timetabling in the school is therefore recommended.

The deployment of staff is in some cases poor. Teachers who are not qualified to teach a particular subject have been deployed to teach students up to Leaving Certificate. In some instances two teachers or more of a subject are allocated to one class group. This practice leads to a fragmented experience for students and impacts negatively on student attainment.

Additional areas requiring improvement include the manner in which the significant allocation of twelve hours for programme co-ordination is deployed, the teaching allocation in relation to the DP allowance and the fact that not all teachers availing of the job sharing scheme are timetabled to teach eleven hours as per the *Terms and Conditions of Employment for Registered Teachers (2016)*. A comprehensive review of teacher deployment is needed to ensure that the use of resources is maximised to benefit the students and that teachers are qualified to teach the subjects they are teaching.

A broad and balanced curriculum is offered and the school is commended for the wide range of subjects on offer. The subject-sampling programme in first year provides students with a good opportunity to study optional subjects and to make an informed decision when choosing subjects. It was reported that one of the current second-year support class groups was not provided with a subject-sampling programme when in first year. It is recommended that equal opportunity be given to all first-year students in this regard.

A number of poor practices relating to the quality of provision for Irish and modern foreign languages (MFL) were evident during the evaluation. The support classes, comprising students with special education needs (SEN), are not offered the possibility of studying any language other than English.

However, not all these students have exemptions from Irish. School management is advised to review this in line with the terms of circular letter M10/94.

In spite of a qualified teacher being available on staff, school management without consultation with parents or students, discontinued the provision of Italian for the current senior cycle students who took the subject for Junior Certificate. For the students in question it was the only MFL they had studied in junior cycle and they are now at a significant disadvantage in relation to sitting their Leaving Certificate. Circular letter 38/2014 stipulates that school authorities must ensure the school timetable continues to provide curriculum coverage for students. Such practices should be discontinued and a complete review of the provision of Irish and MFL should take place.

Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) was initially timetabled for all junior cycle students. However, due to changes in the timetable mid-year not all third-year students are currently being taught SPHE. Teacher deployment in relation to SPHE should be reviewed as the team of teachers is very large. The team should be reduced considerably and management should ensure that teachers receive the relevant CPD.

The school provides a good range of curricular programmes. All junior cycle students are registered for JCSP and the school provides a good range of JCSP initiatives. An excellent range of JCSP literacy initiatives is provided. The JCSP librarian is providing an excellent service and it is evident that great progress has been made in fostering a love of reading among students.

TY provides students with good opportunities to sample additional subjects. Nevertheless, the compulsory nature of TY should be reviewed as it was evident that not all students are benefitting optimally from the programme. The practice of continuing the streamed approach to class groupings in TY is not in keeping with the ethos of TY and should cease.

It is appropriate that the LCA is provided. However, the uptake of the programme is low and student attendance is poor. Timetabling and teacher allocation are unsatisfactory as evidenced by the splitting of four periods of Mathematics between three teachers. It is recommended that a complete review of programme implementation takes place with a view to strengthening the provision and maximising attendance and retention of students.

Teachers are provided with good leadership opportunities through DEIS planning structures and a number of teachers lead DEIS teams. There has been good engagement with DEIS action planning for improvement. The DEIS core committee has not met this year and this was reported to be due to industrial action. Consequently there is no overarching DEIS action plan. This should be addressed as soon as possible.

A well-organised tiered student-support structure is in place. The care team meets on a weekly basis to put in place and review care interventions for students. It is recommended that a member of the SMT attend the care team meeting to provide leadership and support to staff. The dedication of the year heads, tutors, guidance counsellor, HSCL co-ordinator, special needs assistants (SNAs) and chaplain to the care of their students was evident. The DP has led good work on strengthening the role of the tutor.

Most of the available resources to support students with special education needs (SEN) are deployed to provide a support class in each year group. Many of the students assigned to the support classes present with complex and varied needs, including autistic spectrum disorders (ASD). The SNAs play an important role in supporting these students. The allocation of the majority of students with SEN to one class group for all subjects should be kept under review and other models of provision such as

team teaching should be considered. Given the expertise on the staff it would be beneficial if peer CPD could be provided more frequently by the SEN department to support subject teachers.

The school only recently acquired additional resources to provide support for students for whom English is an additional language (EAL). As there is a large cohort of such students, provision of EAL support must be kept under review and care should be taken to provide continuity of support.

Student behaviour was very good in the course of the evaluation. The school has additional resources from the National Behaviour Support Service and a number of effective programmes to support positive student behaviour are being implemented by staff.

From 2012 to the beginning of this school year, there was no qualified guidance counsellor and the provision of guidance was very limited. At the beginning of this academic year a qualified guidance counsellor put in place a number of effective measures to provide very good quality guidance service to students, particularly in senior cycle. A guidance plan has been prepared and should now be ratified by the board. The board should ensure continuity of provision of guidance for senior and enhanced provision for junior cycle students.

Good opportunities are available to promote student leadership. A student representative council (SRC) is in place and is consulted on school-related matters. Leadership training should be prioritised for the SRC. The GLUAIS mentoring programme provides students with opportunities for developing leadership skills. Student leadership is fostered through a very good range of co-curricular activities such as sports, music, debating and others.

Confirmation was provided that the board of management has formally adopted the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* without modification. For the most part, the school is compliant with the requirements of the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*. However, SPHE must be provided to all students in junior cycle in order to be fully compliant.

1.3 Management of facilities

The management of facilities is good. The school foyer is a bright and spacious area. Classrooms are well kept and a print-rich environment was evident throughout the school. Specialist rooms are available for the most part and up-to-date information and communications technology (ICT) equipment is provided in the school. The JCSP library is an excellent facility and is maintained to the highest standards.

There are no facilities for students with complex special educational needs. This should be reviewed. At lunchtime there are limited facilities available for students and there is no canteen. For some students it is not possible to return home during the hour long lunch break, therefore resources permitting, a review of facilities is required to accommodate these students.

2. QUALITY OF LEARNING AND TEACHING

The quality of teaching was good or very good in the majority of lessons with satisfactory practice observed in a small number of lessons. Where best practice was noted, lessons were well planned in terms of clear learning outcomes, active teaching methodologies, appropriate content and resources.

A variety of good teaching approaches such as group and pair work was evident in many lessons. These methods were most effective where students received well-structured tasks and where student roles in the group were clear.

In the most effective lessons, a very good balance between the teacher input and student activity was observed. Students were most engaged when they had opportunities to present their work to peers or to engage in meaningful learning activities. In a minority of lessons the tasks assigned were not adequately differentiated which resulted in student disengagement.

Classroom management was very good in all lessons observed during the evaluation. An excellent rapport between the teachers and students was observed in the majority of lessons. Teachers appropriately affirmed students' inputs and in most lessons circulated to offer support to students.

Many subject base classrooms contain effective displays and the physical learning environment supports student collaborative work. However, students in support classes are confined to one classroom for subjects other than options. These students can not avail of the subject-specific print rich environment in subject base classrooms and have little opportunity to move around the school in between lessons. In the interests of equality, the arrangement of confining students with SEN to a student base classroom should be reviewed.

A range of effective resources was used in lessons. Teachers used ICT to support learning in some lessons. To cater for the diverse range of student abilities, teachers should ensure greater use of visual aids and differentiated worksheets.

Assessment for learning (AfL) strategies were used to very good effect in many lessons, including the use of randomisers to select students, mini white boards and effective questioning strategies. In most lessons homework was assigned, but the amount requested of students and the quality of work were in many instances satisfactory to fair. Where effective assessment practice was noted, teachers provided written constructive feedback. Teachers should provide more consistent support for students' learning through regular written formative feedback.

Overall student attainment across many subjects is a cause of concern. A current third-year class group was advised not to sit a particular subject in the Junior Certificate due their poor performance in the mock examinations. This unsatisfactory practice creates low expectations and senior management should ensure that it does not recur.

In a small number of subjects, improvements in student attainment and in the uptake of higher level in the certificate examinations were evident. In these departments, teachers had performed very good analyses of student achievement in the certificate examinations. Teachers attributed improved attainment to greater collaborative practices among members in their subject department.

In order to improve student attainment, an integral component of DEIS action planning should include emphasis on increased collaboration within subject departments. Teachers should work together to raise student expectations, set SMART targets for uptake and attainment and implement the most effective teaching methods to ensure the targets are met.

3. IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS FROM PREVIOUS EVALUATIONS

3.1 Management

School management has overseen the implementation of a number of recommendations in relation to previous evaluations. However, the recommendation in relation to providing twenty-eight hours

tuition made in the last WSE-MLL (2012) is outstanding. The issues relating to unsatisfactory timetabling highlighted in the subject inspection in Mathematics (2015) have not been addressed.

It is recommended that these be resolved for the next academic year.

3.2 Learning and teaching

Good progress has been made in relation to recommendations regarding teaching and learning. The DP has successfully led initiatives to promote AfL strategies and teachers are implementing these on a more consistent basis.

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

The DP has effectively led SSE processes. Teachers have worked hard to ensure improvements in literacy, one of the main SSE themes. Further work needs to be done in numeracy to ensure a more whole-school approach and the school improvement plan should be integrated into the DEIS plan.

Staff demonstrated good commitment to students. However, there is a need to build the capacity of management and staff to ensure significant school improvement. The DDLETB and board need to address the recommendations in this report and take greater oversight of the school improvement process as a priority to ensure overall better provision for students.

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	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 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	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 pupils' 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;