

An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna
Department of Education and Skills

Whole School Evaluation
Management, Leadership and Learning

REPORT

Ainm na scoile / School name	Coláiste Bhríde Carnew
Seoladh na scoile / School address	Carnew Arklow Co Wicklow
Uimhir rolla / Roll number	70790E

Date of Evaluation: 09-05-2019



**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 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

Date of inspection	09-05-2019
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	<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

Coláiste Bhríde is a community college under the trusteeship of Kildare and Wicklow Education and Training Board (KWETB). A diverse cohort of students from the surrounding areas of South Wicklow, North Wexford and Carlow attend the school. The school has a current enrolment of 850 male and female students. In addition to the Junior Cycle, the school offers the established Leaving Certificate, the Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme (LCVP), the Leaving Certificate Applied (LCA) and an optional Transition Year (TY) programme. The school also offers Post Leaving Certificate (PLC).

Summary of main findings and recommendations:

Findings

- The quality of leadership and management is good; the board of management and the principal promote an inclusive and caring school community and a culture of continuous improvement for staff and students.
- The quality of care for students is very good; there is a high level of whole-school commitment to the wellbeing of students.
- The board and principal provide a curriculum which is broad and balanced and there is very good provision overall.
- Some areas for development were noted: enhanced tracking and monitoring of student attainment; review of some posts and duties attached to better meet school needs; appropriate allocation of the special education needs (SEN) resource; and more focused strategic planning.
- The overall quality of teaching and learning in the lessons observed was good; in most lessons the quality of teaching and learning ranged from very good to good, while a few lessons were of satisfactory quality.
- The effective implementation of some recommendations made in previous inspection reports is good; there has been limited progress with other recommendations. The level of engagement by the school in the school self-evaluation (SSE) process is good overall. The school's capacity for improvement is good.

Recommendations

- While some very good practices in monitoring student progress have been established, considerable added focus and resources should be assigned to the systematic tracking and

monitoring of students in an effort to ensure that all students are reaching their potential in line with the school's mission and vision.

- School management and the SEN department should work together to ensure that the full teaching allocation to support students with SEN is used solely for its intended purpose and that all practice complies with Circular 14/2017 and the associated *Guidelines for Post-Primary Schools: Supporting Students with SEN in Mainstream Schools*.
- School management and teachers should further review the duties attached to posts so that they better promote leadership of learning, are equitable in terms of responsibilities attached and more fully meet identified and prioritised school needs in line with Circular 3/2018 and 'Looking at Our School 2016'.
- The developmental section of the school plan should include more specific, targeted and time bound strategic planning based on a vision for school development; desired outcomes should be articulated and implementation plans documented.
- Teachers should plan for active student engagement and effective assessment strategies in the classroom which enable students to have greater ownership of learning, to reflect on their progress and to have an increased awareness of how to improve through enhanced feedback and assessment practices.

DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. QUALITY OF SCHOOL LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leading learning and teaching

The quality of leadership and management is good; the board of management and the principal promote an inclusive and caring school community and a culture of continuous improvement for staff and students. Teachers are actively encouraged by school management to collaborate and to share their expertise. Teachers' willingness to participate in initiatives such as the Magenta Principles, Instructional Leadership and assessment for learning projects has led to improved teacher collaborative practices at whole school level.

The board and principal provide a curriculum which is broad and balanced. The school offers students a very wide range of subjects. The broad range of programmes at senior cycle generally supports the diverse cohort of students in the school and contributes to very good retention levels.

Implementation of the new Junior Cycle curriculum is ongoing and includes the provision of short courses and good quality CPD to support a student-centred curriculum. Planning for and provision of the one-hour lessons is working well overall and there has been mostly positive feedback from teachers, students and parents. With less frequent lessons, added focus should be placed on teacher planning for and student recording of homework.

Some aspects of curriculum planning and provision and timetabling require review. Within the spirit of the Junior Cycle Framework, the formation of mixed ability groups should be maximised. Some current provision and timetabling arrangements for LCVP and LCA should be reviewed. Student access to TY together with the size of TY class groups should be kept under review.

Student achievement in certificate examinations is generally good with a laudable higher-level uptake of some subjects, while in other subjects the uptake of higher level and the level of student attainment merits reflection and review. While some very good practices in monitoring student progress have been established, considerable added focus and resources should be assigned to the systematic tracking and monitoring of students in an effort to ensure that all students are reaching their potential in line with the school's mission and vision.

There is significant acknowledgement, awards and celebration of student achievement and endeavours. There has been increased focus on rewarding positive behaviour since the timely review of the code of behaviour. Students' holistic education is substantially developed through involvement in the wide range of co-curricular and extra-curricular activities.

Guidance provision is delivered at junior and senior cycle and is driven by a good whole-school guidance plan. First-year students are well supported in settling into the school by teachers and student leaders. The wellbeing programme fosters a commitment to inclusion and the holistic development of each student in line with the school's vision, and wellbeing has recently been integrated into subject planning. Counselling is utilised successfully to support students who may be vulnerable or those with behavioural difficulties.

The quality of care for students is very good overall. Dedicated teachers, supported by senior management, demonstrate very high levels of commitment to the care and wellbeing of students. Supervised study after school supports students in their work. The ten minutes of class tutor time each morning facilitates roll call, daily contact with students, supports student wellbeing and delivery of other class tutor duties. Teachers and senior management should continue to develop the role of class tutor and associated activities.

Student support structures are generally well planned, organised and implemented. The care team meets to identify appropriate interventions required for particular students. The learning support team works effectively with the care team, year heads, assistant year heads, class teachers, subject teachers, parents and school management to support students with identified learning needs. Senior management has assigned qualified SEN teachers to look after the needs of each year group. The school aims to meet the varied needs of the student cohort: those with high expectations, together with students requiring additional support or resource teaching. The school links with the Centre for Talented Youth at DCU in order to provide enhanced supports for gifted students.

A large number of teachers provide additional support to students with SEN. This and the type of support provided requires review by school management. There is some individual withdrawal-based support and some limited co-teaching provision. In the first instance, timetabling of student supports should seek to include students in their mainstream classes. Provision of co-teaching or other inclusive forms of support should be further expanded. The allocation of the SEN resource is not applied appropriately in accordance with Circular 14/2017. This resource is not intended to be utilised for mainstream teaching. School management and the SEN department should work together to ensure that the full teaching allocation to support students with SEN, is used solely for its intended purpose and that all practice complies with the Circular and the associated Guidelines for Post-Primary Schools.

Managing the organisation

The board and the principal fulfil their responsibility to create and maintain a climate of security, wellbeing and inclusivity. The code of behaviour has been reviewed in consultation with the education partners and promotes and supports a culture of positive discipline. The school operates a fair system of restorative practice. The board has effectively applied the code of behaviour in handling a small number of student behaviour issues that have come to its attention.

The school plan lists current policies and school custom and practice guidelines with dates when last reviewed. This is very good practice. It is suggested that future review dates be also included in the plan. The board identified key policies that require attention including GDPR, child protection and health and safety. The board is kept very well informed on school business by the principal through the comprehensive principal's report and the board is very supportive of all decisions which are taken in the best interests of all students.

The principal and deputy principals, who constitute the senior leadership team, foster a positive school climate, work effectively together and oversee the smooth day-to-day running of the school. It is suggested that the senior leadership team's shared and delegated responsibilities be clearly outlined in the school plan. The principal and deputy principals manage the school's organisational structures and human resources very well overall.

Teachers and school management have reviewed posts of responsibilities and this work is ongoing. Teachers have demonstrated flexibility and commitment to meeting school needs and to embracing change. School management and teachers should further review the duties attached to posts so that they better promote leadership of learning, are equitable in terms of responsibilities attached, and more fully meet identified and prioritised school needs in line with Circular 3/2018 and *Looking at Our School 2016*. The principal meets post holders to review and reflect on their role and duties. Following the review, agreed roles and responsibilities should be fully documented. Within the growing school culture of collaborative review, it is suggested that the principal meet all teachers annually to discuss their work and delegated responsibilities.

The principal provides high quality educational leadership, empowers staff to take on leadership roles, communicates effectively with staff and the education partners, successfully delegates appropriate responsibilities, encourages collaborative practice by facilitating staff to work in teams and is aware of the school's changing and emerging needs. The deputy principals effectively support the principal on an ongoing basis, carry out many duties including having delegated respective responsibilities for particular year groups, liaise with teachers, year heads, co-ordinators, class tutors and parents and are leaders of teaching and learning.

The board of management maintains the school buildings and grounds to a very good standard. Classrooms and specialist rooms are well maintained and provide good physical learning environments. The board of management in collaboration with KWETB has applied to the Department for a major extension and is currently progressing this matter.

Leading school development

The trustees, board and principal are proactive in promoting and maintaining the guiding vision for the school, based on the principles of caring, challenging and achieving together. The school's mission statement was recently reviewed and updated in consultation with the education partners. The challenge is to put strategic measures in place to ensure that the mission statement and guiding vision are lived out in everyday practice. Consideration should be given by the board to benchmarking current practice against the guiding vision.

The board has overseen the development of the school plan which contains reference to all current policies and a school development section. There is commendable focus on SSE and on maximising input from in-house expertise as a basis for school development. Teacher involvement and commitment to school development is very good. Areas currently prioritised include wellbeing, assessment for learning, healthy eating, the Junior Cycle Framework and literacy and numeracy. The school plan should be further developed to include more specific, targeted and time bound strategic planning based on a vision for school development; desired outcomes should be articulated and implementation plans documented.

School leaders are aware of educational developments and use the SSE process with increasing effectiveness as a means of supporting curricular programmes and managing change. The school improvement plan (SIP) commendably focuses on ongoing implementation of the Junior Cycle Framework with an increased emphasis on formative assessment practice, development of classroom practice to improve student wellbeing and the further development of inquiry-based learning and student engagement. There is collaborative focus on the increased effective use of student-based digital technology in the classroom. Widespread consultation on key changes and

initiatives, for example the introduction of one-hour lessons, and feedback from teachers, students and parents has led to positive outcomes for all.

The board and principal value and support partnership and good relationships and communication with parents as a means of supporting student learning and wellbeing. The parents' association is actively involved in supporting the school. Many parents regularly attend school meetings and events, and there is ongoing communication with school management. Third year, TY and senior students attend meetings with their parents and teachers. Enhanced comment-based reporting for parents has been successfully introduced as part of the added focus on assessment for learning.

The principal and other school leaders are building good relationships with other schools and with the wider community to extend students' learning experiences beyond the curriculum. The school handbook outlines the numerous links that support community volunteerism including music, performance and art, science, sport, school tours, language exchanges, debating, Green Schools. TY students experience enhanced opportunities to be involved in outside activities, competitions and events. Several students have achieved awards and scholarships for outstanding successes.

Developing leadership capacity

Staff engage in regular professional dialogue in order to develop their practice. There is an increasing culture of self-reflection among staff and a willingness to work individually and collaboratively on areas of practice that require improvement. School leaders, including the board, the senior management team and teachers, have availed of professional development and training. Expertise is shared; teachers who are involved in various initiatives, programmes, CPD activities and working groups present to their peers. New members of staff are well supported through peer mentoring. Professional Masters of Education (PME) students are facilitated with school placements and are supported by co-operating teachers; newly-qualified teachers (NQTs) are supported through the Droichead process. Year heads monitor student progress, attendance and punctuality, communicate with parents, and effectively oversee the welfare of their year groups. They feel very well supported in this regard by the senior leadership team.

Opportunities are provided for students to assume leadership roles and to support and mentor other students such as through the representative student council, the fifth year prefect system or as sixth year Meitheal leaders. School management and teachers value students' views and support students' involvement in the operation of the school, for example, on occasion, the student council is invited to address the board or the parents association on relevant areas.

2. QUALITY OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

The overall quality of teaching and learning was good. In most lessons the quality of teaching and learning ranged from very good to good. In a few lessons teacher instruction prevailed and the methodologies and activities used did not fully promote active student engagement and incremental learning. Overall, students demonstrated good interest and engagement in their learning.

Learner outcomes and experiences

Student learning was most effective in lessons that were well planned and where teachers used a range of appropriate methodologies, including dynamic use of ICT, purposeful class discussions and structured co-operative learning tasks. Tablet devices are used by almost all students; the school has established the use of technology in the classroom as a learning, investigating and recording tool. The virtual learning environment facilitates communication between teachers and students to assign and receive homework and to share lesson resources.

Teacher and student interactions were respectful and inclusive in all lessons and students were affirmed and encouraged for their efforts and contributions in most lessons. Teachers generally circulated well in lessons to check on student progress and provide support where required. In most lessons, the student voice was a strong feature as students had opportunities to present their homework and to express their knowledge and the outcomes of co-operative learning activities.

In most lessons, students were given opportunities to collaborate in their learning through activities and group tasks. In many instances activities were well planned and encouraged students to think, discuss and develop learning and key skills as they presented elements of their work to their peers and incorporated peer review into the process. In a small number of lessons greater attention was required by teachers in planning of co-operative learning tasks.

Teachers' individual and collective practice

Teachers' individual practice was generally characterised by effective lesson planning that supported students' attainment of the intended learning. In highly effective lessons there were very good links with and reflection on prior learning and the range of tasks provided ensured that students were well supported and challenged in their learning.

Almost all lessons commenced with sharing learning intentions. In some lessons there was very effective use of this strategy but in many instances the learning intentions did not explicitly state what students would learn. As most lessons concluded there was some assessment of student attainment. It is recommended that in line with formative assessment practices, learning intentions should clearly articulate what students should know, understand and be able to do by the end of the lesson, and be revisited to assess their attainment.

In most junior cycle lessons teachers provided learning activities which developed subject-specific knowledge and skills and supported the development of many key skills. In some lessons success criteria were used to determine the quality of assigned homework tasks. Their use linked to learning intentions should be developed to help teachers and students make judgements about learning.

A range of resources was used very effectively to support learning in almost all lessons. Effective strategies were used in some lessons to develop students' literacy and numeracy skills. Best practice was when teachers ensured that students understood and used the relevant key terminology in classroom discussions and when aspects of numeracy were incorporated into learning tasks. This practice should be expanded. In language lessons best practice was observed where there was an integrated approach to the development of the skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing and the experience of language immersion helped students to express themselves in the target language. This good practice should be adopted in all language lessons. Differentiation was mostly achieved by teachers evaluating the work of individual students and supporting them as necessary. In some lessons there was scope to extend differentiation techniques such as differentiation of learning intentions, questioning and tasks to cater for the varied needs of students.

The overall quality of assessment was satisfactory. In general students showed a good level of engagement in answering questions. There were instances where students should have been provided with more time and encouragement to develop and expand on their answers. In some lessons, very good student-targeted questions were used rather than the global questions used in many lessons and resulting in some students having low levels of engagement in learning. Where teachers used effective questioning in lessons the strategies promoted higher-order critical-thinking skills and encouraged learner autonomy. All teachers are encouraged to share best practices in relation to questioning strategies.

The review of a sample of student journals and copybooks from most lessons indicated variation in the quantity, regularity and recording of assigned homework. There was evidence of corrections of

students' work in some copybooks and workbooks, while in others it was unclear that homework was being checked. In most lessons students received oral feedback on their work and in a minority of lessons written formative feedback was observed on some student work. It is advisable that teachers encourage students to take note of suggestions and to follow-up on improving their work. The school should develop a whole-school approach to the management of students' written work; this should incorporate guidelines relating to the organisation and monitoring of students' written work.

The subject department plans for most subjects have been developed to a high standard. Programmes are well planned overall. Senior management and teachers have prioritised the progression to active digital plans for all subject departments. The active teaching plans in many instances displayed good engagement with planning for the implementation of the new Junior Cycle curriculum. Many plans had a clear focus on learning outcomes that were inclusive of the knowledge, skills and values that teachers want to instil in student learning. Examples of specific links to the wellbeing indicators were noted as very good practice in some subject plans. It is suggested that subject plans could also make reference to the key skills, as appropriate.

3. IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS FROM PREVIOUS EVALUATIONS

Leadership and Management

Some recommendations made in previous inspection reports have been implemented effectively; there has been limited progress with other recommendations. School management has overseen significant curricular reform, post review and policy development. Subject department collaboration regarding planning and development of schemes of work has improved. SSE has been well integrated into this process.

Teaching and Learning

Very good teaching and learning practice was observed in many lessons. The seamless integration of digital technology into student learning has improved. Co-operative learning to include pair and group work was present in most lessons. Increased student-centred learning and activity would have led to improved ownership of learning in some lessons. Other teaching and learning areas still require development: improved assessment practices to include provision of written formative feedback; improved homework assignment; and higher-order questioning

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

The School's Self-Evaluation Process

Engagement by school management and teachers in SSE is good. There is effective commitment to the SSE process. Literacy and numeracy actions at whole-school level have been ongoing, but these actions should be more visible in classroom practice. *Looking at Our School 2016* has been largely integrated into SSE planning. Recent SSE has commendably focused on formative assessment, wellbeing, student engagement, integration of student-based digital technology into learning, the development of one-hour lessons, and literacy and numeracy. Overarching areas that support SSE include ongoing and extensive management support for teacher professional development, increased participation in assessment for learning strategies, developing success criteria linked to learning intentions and the student positive rewards initiative.

The School's Capacity for Improvement

The school's capacity for improvement is very good. Staff involvement in CPD and sharing of expertise is of a very high standard. There is good awareness of the school's changing needs and a strong commitment by school management and teachers to respond to these changes. Capacity building and empowerment among school management and teachers is good. A self-reflective culture of review has been established 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;

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 and school community welcomes this exceptionally positive report. The Board of Management is pleased to note that recognition is given to the high standard of care, inclusion and wellbeing of students across the school. We are pleased that the effective quality of learning and teaching was highlighted in the report, in addition to a broad and balanced curriculum. It has been equally affirmative that the report recognized that the Board of Management, in union with Senior Management, provides highly effective leadership and management. The Board welcomes the fact that a self-reflective culture has been established in the school and that the school has excellent potential to improve further.

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

1. Monitoring Student Progress

In line with the recommendation to review duties attached to posts, senior management has allocated the responsibility of tracking student academic progress to an Assistant Principal 1 position. It is envisaged that this person will work closely with our SEN and Pastoral Care teams. Furthermore, we engaged with an external service provider who specializes in the area of academic tracking

2. Review Of SEN hours and Resource

Comprehensive review of the allocation of SEN teaching hours has taken place. Members of the SEN teaching team have an increase in the allocation of SEN hours on their current timetables. Individual student plans are being developed to focus on Numeracy and Literacy improvement across all subjects.

3. Review of Duties attached to posts

Extensive review and evaluation of middle management positions continues to be undertaken. Duties are being assigned in line with circular 03/2018 and 'Looking at our Schools 2016'.

4. Developmental Section of the School Plan

The developmental section Of the School Plan will be reviewed to include specific, targeted and time-bound plans.

5. Active student engagement and assessment practices

Active learning initiatives and effective AFL strategies continue to be a part Of Our SSE process. In-house collaboration is well-embedded in the school