

An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna
Department of Education and Skills

Whole School Evaluation
Management, Leadership and Learning

REPORT

Ainm na scoile / School name	Rosmini Community School
Seoladh na scoile / School address	All Hallows College Campus DCU Gracepark Road Dublin 9
Uimhir rolla / Roll number	91344V

Date of Evaluation: 04-12-2019



**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 was given an opportunity to comment in writing on the findings and recommendations of the report, and the response of the board will be found in the appendix of this report.

CHILD PROTECTION

During the inspection visit, the following checks in relation to the school's child protection procedures were conducted:

1. The name of the DLP and the Child Safeguarding Statement are prominently displayed near the main entrance to the school.
2. The Child Safeguarding Statement has been ratified by the board and includes an annual review and a risk assessment.
3. All teachers visited reported that they have read the Child Safeguarding Statement and that they are aware of their responsibilities as mandated persons.
4. The Child Safeguarding Statement meets the requirements of the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017.
5. The records of the last three board of management meetings record a child protection oversight report that meet the requirements of the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary schools 2017.
6. The board of management has ensured that arrangements are in place to provide information to all school personnel on the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools, 2017
7. School planning documentation indicates that the school is making full provision for the relevant aspects of the curriculum (SPHE, Stay Safe, RSE, Wellbeing).
8. Child protection records are maintained in a secure location.

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

WHOLE-SCHOOL EVALUATION – MANAGEMENT, LEADERSHIP AND LEARNING

Dates of inspection	02-12-2019- 04-12-2019
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

Rosmini Community School is under the trusteeship of the Rosminian Order and the City of Dublin Education and Training Board (CDETB). Current enrolment is 120 students. The school participates in the Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools (DEIS) action plan for educational inclusion. The Junior Certificate School Programme (JCSP), an optional Transition Year (TY), the Leaving Certificate and the Leaving Certificate Applied programme (LCA) are provided.

Summary of main findings and recommendations:

Findings

- The overall quality of leadership and management is good; while many positive developments were noted, improvement is needed in a few areas including the review and drafting of some policies, the level of consultation with stakeholders in relation to policy development and the deployment of teaching resources for special educational needs (SEN).
- While there are some systems in place to support teachers' collaborative practice, there are no core teams to facilitate collaborative planning for some specific curricular programmes.
- The school prioritises student care; existing systems to support students' pastoral care are very good.
- The overall quality of teaching and learning was good in the majority of lessons observed; the consistency and use of differentiated teaching approaches and formative assessment practices varied.
- Good progress has been made in respect of the implementation of recommendations from previous inspections; school management and staff demonstrate a good capacity for bringing about improvement.
- The quality of school self-evaluation (SSE) is satisfactory; recent positive developments include the establishment of a core DEIS team and the appointment of a co-ordinator, but improvement is needed in DEIS planning.

Recommendations

- Teaching resources for SEN should be deployed for their intended purposes and senior management should ensure that the school is compliant with relevant departmental guidelines and Circular 0014/2017.
- Senior management should ensure that their plans to implement the consultation process with stakeholders for the review and development of school policies is implemented.
- Core teams for TY and LCA should be established to improve teachers' collaborative practice.
- To promote consistent high-quality learner experiences, differentiated teaching approaches and formative assessment practice should be further developed.

- Senior management, in collaboration with the core DEIS team should ensure that a three-year DEIS plan is advanced; the board should oversee and ratify its development as a matter of priority.

DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. QUALITY OF SCHOOL LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The overall quality of leadership and management is good.

Leading learning and teaching

The current senior management team was appointed in 2018 and identified the development of a shared vision and the updating of school policies as areas for development. Appropriately, school management responded to this by immediately developing and reviewing a large number of policies within a short timeframe. The short timeframe, however, has impacted on the drafting and reviewing of some policies and on the extent of the consultation process with stakeholders in relation to policy development. There was evidence that, whilst developing and reviewing policies, not all stakeholders had an input. Furthermore, some of the policies reviewed during the evaluation were not fully reflective of school practice. Action is required to address this finding. It is recommended that the revised school policies completed to date should be revisited to ensure they reflect the school's context. Senior management should ensure that all stakeholders are consulted and have involvement in the review and development of school policies, as relevant.

A post of responsibility review was completed by management, staff and the board. Following this review a working group was established. This is an example of effective leadership by the senior management team and the willingness of all staff members to commit to the school's long-term development.

The school has developed a one-year interim DEIS plan and is about to embark on developing a new three-year plan. As a matter of priority, the board should oversee development and ratification of this new plan. Good structures have been established to support the implementation of DEIS, including the recent appointment of a DEIS co-ordinator. These structures will support this development work.

Commendably, a teaching and learning committee is in operation. This group has recently been tasked with sharing effective methodologies and classroom practices. Some good use is being made of an online platform to share resources and some subject departments are using peer observation to share best pedagogic practice. These practices should prove very effective in supporting teachers' collaborative practice.

School management is very supportive of continuing professional development (CPD). Teachers have engaged with a commendable range of whole-school and subject specific CPD, including the completion of a Middle Leadership Training Programme by some teachers. It was noted during meetings with staff that teachers delivering some curricular programmes and undertaking leadership roles within the school would benefit from further CPD opportunities. This should be further developed.

A broad range of curriculum programmes is provided for students. Commendably, senior management conducted a curriculum audit with a view to ensuring the range of subjects that could be provided met students' needs. All students now have access to a modern foreign language, and Science is an optional subject at junior cycle.

TY is an optional programme. Good review procedures are evident. Commendably, outcomes from a recent review informed on-going developments in the programme, such as the new assessment procedures.

While LCA is offered in the school, there is no fifth-year LCA class in the current academic year. Senior management outlined its rationale for this decision. An essential element of the vision of the school's future development is that LCA will remain an integral component of the school's senior cycle provision. It is commendable that management is committed to sustaining and developing the LCA programme in the school.

There are no core teams for TY and LCA and this impacts on strengthening collaborative planning for teaching and learning in these programmes. It is recommended that core teams be established to support collaborative practice and on-going curricular developments.

All junior cycle students participate in the JCSP programme. The newly-appointed JCSP co-ordinator is making good progress in extending the range of JCSP initiatives available to students. Plans are in place to provide on-going support to staff in the area of student profiling.

Student wellbeing is very well catered for in the school's curriculum. Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) is timetabled for all students and Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) is delivered as part of the SPHE programme. Provision of RSE is appropriately differentiated for students. Discussions with the student focus group and findings from student questionnaires indicate that there is a lack of awareness as to the provision of RSE. This should be addressed.

The school's senior management team and attendance officer identified student attendance as an area of concern. While student attendance has improved significantly, there remains scope for further improvement. The next iteration of the DEIS plan should explicitly include measures in areas such as co-curricular and cross-curricular provision. The inclusion of teaching and learning strategies in the DEIS plan as a means to further support better attendance would also prove beneficial.

The school is strongly committed to supporting students with SEN and visual impairment. The special education team (SET) comprises three teachers. The work of the team benefits from the support of the deputy principal who also has SEN expertise and experience. Additionally, SEN provision is supported through the work of a large team of SNAs within the school. The development of student support files, as recommended in previous inspections, continues to be progressed. At the time of this evaluation support files for first and second year students had been created using the schools shared online platform.

Aspects of the organisation and operation of SEN provision should continue to be addressed to ensure that the teaching resources for SEN are deployed for their intended purposes and that the school is compliant with relevant departmental guidelines and Circular 0014/2017. The school is in receipt of a significant allocation of teaching resources for SEN. At the time of the evaluation a significant proportion of these resources was not deployed in accordance with the revised resource allocation model. For example some of the resources were being used to provide a range of subject options for students. It is recommended that teaching resources for SEN are deployed for their intended purposes and senior management should ensure that the school is compliant with relevant departmental guidelines and Circular 0014/2017.

The provision of support for SEN in mainstream classes is an area for development. Differentiation of lesson content in the mainstream lessons observed in many cases was less than optimal. The completion of the remaining student support files will further support planning for differentiation. Appropriately, new procedures to formalise the planning and monitoring of outcomes for SEN students in mainstream and support lessons are being developed.

The team of teachers working with students with visual impairment collaborates closely with the SEN team. Findings from the student focus group suggest that there is still a need to ensure that students with a visual impairment are enabled to fully access mainstream lessons. During the evaluation it was identified that additional time is required to support students with Braille. The possibility of introducing junior cycle short courses in Braille and Assistive Technologies should be explored.

The quality of care for students is very good. A key element of the care structure is the tutor and year head system. A student support team is well established and meets weekly. In addition the chaplaincy service plays an essential role in supporting students' specific care needs.

Managing the organisation

Members of the board of management demonstrate a high level of expertise and knowledge. The board has played an active role in the drafting and ratification of policies. There remains a number of policies that require further review and in some cases ratification including the draft whole-school guidance plan and the schools admissions policy. The admissions policy would benefit from updating to include a greater alignment of the criteria for assigning students to the JCSP and inclusion of the selection criteria for entry into the LCA programme.

The senior management team, which comprises principal and deputy principal, collaborates very effectively. Commendably, the team initiated the process of enhancing the role of the middle management team with a recent review of assigned responsibilities. All post holders demonstrate a strong commitment to their roles and appear to be discharging their responsibilities very well.

Considerable effort has been expended on cleaning and refurbishing the pre-fabricated units. During the evaluation, classrooms were well maintained, warm and, in many instances, featured print-rich environments.

Leading school development

School management has a clear vision for the school's development, which centres on strengthening the school's profile, increasing school enrolment and on students reaching their full potential. Appropriately they have identified the ongoing oversight of teaching and learning practices as an area for development. Minutes of recent board meetings indicate that teaching and learning is an agenda item on most but not all board meetings. It is recommended that teaching and learning be included on the agenda of all board meetings.

Commendably, school management is holding a series of *Consensus* workshops, to develop a shared vision for on-going school development. Stakeholders were invited to participate in discussions to inform the progression of an agreed vision for the on-going development of the school. Findings gathered to date outline priority areas for improvement. Responses from questionnaires administered as part of this evaluation indicate that a significant number of students and teachers disagree that they have a say in how things are done or that their views are valued in the decision-making processes in the school. During the evaluation senior management indicated that further *Consensus* workshops were being planned. This good practice should further enhance collaboration within the school.

During the evaluation, students' behaviour was exemplary. A review of the existing code of behaviour is planned. Management is committed to engaging the student body in this review.

Developing leadership capacity

Staff members presented as very dedicated to their work and with highly commendable levels of volunteerism.

There have been significant changes in management in the recent past. Senior management understands the importance of developing leadership amongst staff. During the evaluation a number of teachers reported that this change has facilitated greater distributed leadership and empowerment amongst middle management. Findings from teacher questionnaires indicates that most teachers surveyed agree that the school is well run.

The school provides placements for student teachers. Such engagement in initial teacher education programmes is welcome as it can provide valuable professional benefits for teachers, student teachers, and students.

Good student leadership roles are fostered through the Ember initiative and the student council. Findings from questionnaires indicate that there is a need to consider additional ways to encourage the student voice.

2. QUALITY OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

The overall quality of teaching and learning was good in the majority of lessons observed. While some very good practice was observed; there is scope to enhance the consistency and use of differentiated teaching approaches and formative assessment practices.

Learner outcomes and experiences

Learning intentions and success criteria were shared at the beginning of all lessons. In the best lessons, learning intentions were explored to very good effect. However, there is considerable scope for improvement in how success criteria are used to support learning. In some cases success criteria appeared as lists of topics or curricular content and in the vast majority of cases were predetermined before the lesson began. Ideally, success criteria are discussed with the students in order for the students to determine what success looks like for them, which in turn gives them ownership over their own learning.

Agreed interventions to support students' literacy and numeracy were a feature of a majority of lessons observed. This was evidenced through the very effective display of and repetition of keywords to support students' understanding of lesson content. Some of the interventions however, particularly in the area of numeracy, need improvement. Strategies intended to promote numeracy were not always effective and were often limited to "numeracy moments". Subject teams should develop their collaborative planning to support DEIS targets including the attainment targets, as inconsistent approaches to implementing interventions were noted.

Overall, students made good progress in learning in the majority of lessons. At times teachers provided some very good individualised support. The quality of learner outcomes and experiences was of a high standard in a few instances where teachers had a high level of awareness of individual students' capacities, and adapted teaching approaches accordingly. However, a whole-class approach to teaching and learning prevailed in many lessons, with the same content, tasks and resources delivered to all students. Given the wide range of student abilities, it is recommended that differentiated teaching approaches be developed and integrated into all lessons.

Homework was regularly assigned. Very good practice was noted whereby the homework set was used to challenge students to apply their learning. Subject departments should review the purpose of homework in light of this practice and should consider how the range of homework tasks could be broadened to develop key skills.

Some very good examples of formative feedback were noted in student copybooks. Some assessment procedures in use proved particularly effective in supporting students to reflect on their

learning, however this practice was not consistent. As this is an agreed action in the current DEIS plan, teachers should be mindful that implementation of agreed interventions should be consistently used to support student learning.

Teachers' individual and collective practice

Overall, planning and preparation for lessons was very good. In a number of the highly effective lessons, content was pitched at a level appropriate to students' needs and suitably paced. A good focus on contextualisation in these lessons ensured content was meaningful for learners.

The quality of in-class assessment was good although possibilities for improvement exist. Teachers used directed and global questioning effectively to monitor students' overall understanding. Where questioning was very effective it stimulated and encouraged student enquiry. More variation of questioning strategies, to include higher-order questions that actively engage and challenge students, is recommended.

Subject department planning is well established. There was considerable variation in the quality of the subject and programme plans reviewed, ranging from fair to very good. The most effective plans were aligned to the Junior Cycle Framework and subject specifications. All of the planning folders included outdated information which should be archived. DEIS planning is evident in only a few subject departments plans. Additionally, a few examples of very good practice were noted where subject departments had developed subject-specific action plans. The majority of subject department plans contained appropriate analysis of attainment in certificate examinations. The analysis completed by subject departments should be used to inform target setting and action planning for the subject and aligned with whole-school DEIS targets on attainment.

The centrality of JCSP informing planning for the new junior cycle was not evident in the majority of plans reviewed. Subject departments should ensure that planning for JCSP is reflected in units of learning.

It is good practice that some subject departments share resources using an online platform and other departments have begun to discuss and plan peer observation. This good practice should be progressed.

3. IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS FROM PREVIOUS EVALUATIONS

Overall, good quality progress has been made in respect of implementation of previous recommendations.

Leadership and Management

The level of follow-through by the school on a variety of recommendations from previous inspection reports is good. For example, the school re-assigned a fully-qualified teacher of the visually impaired to the area of visual impairment. A health and safety audit was completed and necessary work was undertaken.

Teaching and Learning

Overall, good progress has been made in the implementation of recommendations in respect of teaching and learning. For example, strategies have been established to provide constructive written feedback on key pieces of students' work. A school improvement plan was revised and actions were agreed for implementation at whole-school level. There is scope to further progress the actions relating to teaching and learning in this plan.

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

While a number of positive developments relating to the SSE process were noted during the evaluation the overall quality of the school's self-evaluation process is satisfactory.

The School's Self-Evaluation Process

The school has identified improvement targets in its current one year DEIS plan. A few of these targets are specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-bound (SMART). Other targets require development. The self-evaluation process should be used to support the identification of SMART targets in future plans. Very good baseline data has been gathered. The core DEIS team and co-ordinator have begun to use this data to explore and establish appropriate targets and actions for the next DEIS plan.

The School's Capacity for Improvement

The school demonstrates good capacity for school improvement. In recent times senior management has explored methods to support on-going development of teaching and learning; the completion of a teaching and learning audit provided the focus of in-house CPD. This is good practice.

Both management and staff demonstrate a commitment to the school and a desire to create a welcoming and positive learning community. The areas highlighted in this report should be the immediate priority for school improvement. Senior management should continue to improve consultation with all stakeholders, and focus on grounding teaching and learning practice across the school within the DEIS plan.

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 of Rosmini Community School is pleased with the inspection report and welcomes the advice offered for school improvement. Rosmini is committed to providing high quality educational opportunities for students with SEN and a visual impairment. The school has been in temporary accommodation since 2012 which has had a direct impact on enrolments. At the beginning of the 2018-2019 academic year, there were serious shortfalls in relation to the Legislative and Statutory Checklist. There were shortfalls in communication structures between the school and its stakeholders. The Parents' Association was not operating and relationships with local schools required improvement. A POR review was urgently required, and a significant number of policies required renewing or development. Like the existing policies, the last iteration of the DEIS plan was 2012. The Board of Management would like to acknowledge the distance travelled over an 18-month period under the new, highly effective Senior Management Team and the Board of Management, given the situation that the school is in. There has been significant improvement in classroom conditions, relationships with outside agencies and local schools. A POR review has taken place and an effective leadership structure is operating. An interim one-year DEIS plan is in place and work in this area has become a school focus.

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 school continues to address the issue regarding the use of SEN hours for the purpose for which they were intended. This work began in the last academic year and will continue. The school needs to be cognisant that it is not possible to take subjects off the curriculum without careful consideration of the impact on our students. We continue to work towards compliance.
- The school continues to progress the consultation processes of the school with all its stakeholders. A plan is to be presented at the next Board of Management meeting to outline a schedule for a high level review of existing policies which will then be adopted as an Action Plan.
- Already work has begun to form LCA and TY core teams. These teachers will be primarily deployed in the teaching of LCA and TY.
- As part of the ACCS Middle Leadership Training Programme, school reports for parents and students are currently being developed to reflect formative assessment practices. The March 2020 reports were the first new set of reports and these will be reviewed before the Summer reports. The schedule for CPD for the next academic year will reflect the need to strive towards high quality teaching through differentiation, formative feedback, effective questioning, sharing of the learning intention and success criteria, literacy, numeracy, reflective practice, active teaching methodologies and of course, collaborative subject planning. Teaching & Learning will continue to be a consistent item on the agenda of all Board of Management meetings.
- At present, the school has developed and continues to develop an interim 'one-year DEIS plan' as advised by the PDST. Work is already beginning on the three-year DEIS plan for 2020 – 2023 and an advisor from the PDST is working closely with the DEIS team. DEIS will continue to be a consistent item on the agenda of all Board of Management meetings.

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;