

An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna

Department of Education and Skills

**Whole-School Evaluation
REPORT**

**Ó Fiaich College
Dundalk, County Louth
Roll number: 71770D**

Date of inspection: 10 February 2012



**A N R O I N N | D E P A R T M E N T O F
O I D E A C H A I S | E D U C A T I O N
A G U S S C I L E A N N A | A N D S K I L L S**

WHOLE-SCHOOL EVALUATION

A whole-school evaluation of Ó Fiaich College was undertaken in February 2012. This report presents the findings of the evaluation and makes recommendations for improvement. During the evaluation, the quality of teaching and learning in four subjects were evaluated in detail, and separate reports are available on these subjects. The quality of teaching and learning in one additional subject was evaluated prior to the whole-school evaluation. (See section 7 for details). 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.

INTRODUCTION

Ó Fiaich College is a co-educational and multi-denominational post-primary school under the management of County Louth Vocational Education Committee (VEC). There are three elements to its mixed-provision educational service. It is one of seven post-primary schools in Dundalk and participates in Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools (DEIS), the Department's action plan for educational inclusion.

The school traces its origins to Dundalk (Municipal) Technical School, established in 1906. Following relocation to the present site in 1970, it has greatly expanded and diversified the educational services on offer. The Leaving Certificate examination, for example, was first provided by the school in 1983. The new name Ó Fiaich College was adopted in 1990 coinciding with the official opening of the major extension that year.

Ó Fiaich College today is a vibrant, diverse campus that operates three platforms of educational provision under single management and school roll number. The post-primary school is the anchor educational provider and provides all the second-level certificate programmes. The second element in the mixed-provision campus is the Post Leaving Certificate (PLC) or Further Education (FE) school that has been strongly developed and now forms a major part of the College's educational service. Adult Education is the third.

The FE school, while remaining an integral part of Ó Fiaich College, has established its own very strong identity under the Ó Fiaich Institute name. The FE courses have greatly expanded the base from which students are drawn to the campus, beyond Dundalk, and beyond county Louth. Ó Fiaich College is also a long-established provider of Adult Education courses, mainly offered at night time. These self-financing courses have been highly popular and remain in very strong demand.

Combined enrolment for the post-primary school and the FE institute currently stands at close to 1,000 students. On closer examination, the post-primary school accounts for only slightly over one third (355 students) with the FE institute attracting the remaining almost two thirds (614 students). This marks a significant shift in the enrolment profile on campus over the past fifteen years. For example, the post-primary school accounted for 80% of total enrolment in 1996 as against 20% for FE. In that time the marked growth and expansion of FE has absorbed the enrolment decline of the post-primary school.

The College's enrolment projections for the next five years are all positive. The post-primary figure predicts a resurgent 500 students by 2016. This would mark a significant recovery. Projections for the FE institute are buoyant and show the potential to expand to 950 students. The Adult Education projections are equally positive with its current very strong position which has reached over 1,400 in recent times, projected to expand further to a potential 1,700.

The student gender balance at Ó Fiaich College post-primary school shows a two-thirds male to one-third female ratio as a longstanding feature of enrolment. In this context it is noted that gender imbalance ratios are also features of enrolment in other local co-educational schools. Strategic changes in the Art and Home Economics departments are focused on increasing the number of girls at Ó Fiaich College. The school is urged to retain its focus on the achievement of a more balanced gender profile among the student body. Such a balance is evident in the FE institute enrolment with a near parity of male to female students shown against a previous profile where female students were in the majority.

Ó Fiaich College enrolment data, current and projected, have been studied closely at County Louth VEC level. The data have informed the committee's planning for additional future post-primary provision in the North East. These issues are beyond the remit of this report. Regarding the Ó Fiaich College campus record in educational provision to date, however, it is clear that school management, with County Louth VEC support, has been adaptable to the changing demands for educational provision and is a highly subscribed educational provider.

1. QUALITY OF SCHOOL MANAGEMENT

1.1 Characteristic spirit of the school

The school mission statement is inclusive in tone and language. Adopted six years ago, it was reviewed on a whole-school basis in 2009 and retained. It remains relevant. It defines the school as an interdependent community of four named parties, namely students, parents, teachers and non-teaching staff. The mission statement commits the school to accommodate itself to the needs and talents of its community. Summarised as 'Together in pursuit of excellence – Ar scáth a chéile a mhairimid' it expresses well the 'can do' positive approach that informs the management and operation of Ó Fiaich College.

The fuller text of the mission statement explicitly guarantees students that their educational experience at Ó Fiaich College will equip them to take up a responsible role in society by acquiring knowledge, skills and sound principles for living. The entire school community is further guaranteed an atmosphere of learning, safety, co-operation and happiness.

The aspirations of the mission statement transfer well into the policies and procedures by which the school operates. The school atmosphere observed by the evaluation team, in both Ó Fiaich College and Ó Fiaich Institute, was positive among students and teachers both in formal and informal settings. The quality of upkeep and maintenance of the buildings was very apparent and a good learning atmosphere was provided.

Part of the community served by Ó Fiaich College provides challenges for the school to convince parents and students of the value of completing a post-primary education against a background of social and economic disadvantage. The school, in its management and operation, shows a clear commitment to this challenge. The full range of programmes provided, and the strength of the Junior Certificate School Programme (JCSP), special educational needs provision, School Completion Programme (SCP) and Home School Community Liaison (HSCL) supports, among others, combine in helping students to negotiate the second-level curriculum from the outset. These are key supports in promoting learning as the core focus of the school.

The school operates as a fully inclusive educational centre. Traveller and newcomer students are well represented in the post-primary school enrolment profile and together comprise over a quarter of the student body. As a DEIS school, Ó Fiaich College provides the SCP that currently targets supports to some 13% of its post-primary cohort of students.

The school also accommodates a subset of these students through its participation in the inter-agency 'Second Chance Programme'. This programme provides particularly vulnerable students who, in other circumstances, might face exclusion from school, with ongoing access to post-primary education at Ó Fiaich College for two hours daily and off-site for four hours daily. The school also accommodates a large percentage of students with additional educational requirements.

The quality of care for targeted students, provided by a well-focused team, and the awareness among staff generally of challenging circumstances for many students in negotiating post-primary education, are good examples of the mission statement in action. The pastoral care and anti-bullying policies are two policies that illustrate a clear focus on student care and reflect core elements of the mission statement.

The growth of the FE Institute has provided a route to further study and employment for many students of the post-primary school. The shared staffing arrangement has provided students with reassurance and a good awareness of the FE courses and opportunities in advance of completing the post-primary cycle. An examination of the enrolment for Ó Fiaich Institute FE courses shows an increasing demand from a broader cohort of applicants than before. This includes an increasing profile of mature male students and applicants generally presenting with considerable points from the Leaving Certificate examination. The growth in popularity and appeal of the FE courses is a good development.

County Louth Vocational Education Committee (VEC) is closely involved with the school and provides strong support for all areas of its endeavours, as well as scope to develop initiatives locally. The development of a strong FE identity is an indication of this. VEC support for the continuing professional development (CPD) of staff is particularly apparent.

Arising from the sharing of the main post-primary building for FE courses, it remains a challenging issue to ensure safety and security in the mixed-provision campus. This arrangement involves young post-primary students frequently encountering FE students, many of whom are adult learners, on corridors and stairways. Senior management is alert to these demands and has reviewed security arrangements on campus: the current allocation of resources for caretaking has presented challenges in this regard.

Ensuring appropriate behaviour between the two groups of students and having adequate security arrangements, that are both reasonable and enforceable, in place to prevent intruders entering the complex require the full co-operation of students and staff. In the course of the evaluation the circulation of both sets of students was observed to operate entirely smoothly. The effectiveness of security measures however requires constant vigilance. There is a need to gain a wider acceptance and support for security measures that, of necessity, may intrude on personal freedom and, unless fully supported, could be viewed as an irritation. The school is urged to engage FE students more fully with the need to support personal security arrangements on campus.

1.2 School ownership and management

The current board of management, now two years in office, is properly constituted and the members bring considerable experience and skills sets to the board. It forms an integral part of the VEC structure for managing post-primary schools and operates as a subcommittee of County Louth VEC. Appropriate training in the statutory obligations, role and functions of school boards of management has been provided by the VEC. This has included a presentation and workshop on self-evaluation review measures that challenge the board to make its work central to the management of the school. Close links with Dundalk Institute of Technology (DKIT) and the business community are evident in its composition.

The board meets regularly, attendance at meetings is good, and meetings are chaired by a member well acquainted with issues in education. The board is committed to the school and supportive of the principal in carrying out his management and leadership responsibilities. The board plays an active role in the regular review of policies. Members display a clear awareness of the context in which the school operates and the challenges it faces. Maintaining educational resources in a changed economic climate is a challenge which the current board appreciates and with which it is fully engaged.

The proceedings of board meetings are well recorded. The principal's report is detailed and provides members with a good briefing on the operation and management of the school. Minutes are informative and draft copies are provided to members in advance of meetings. Agreed report-back procedures for representatives of teachers and parents have been adopted. The newly appointed deputy principal has been invited to observe board meetings, a move that improves the link between the senior management team and the board.

The board has taken steps to become more accessible to both the parent and student representative bodies. An annual three-way information exchange between the board, the parents' association (PA) and the student council indicates good lines of communication throughout the school.

Developmental priorities identified by the board were generally supportive of enhancing the school's mixed educational provision and in particular to protect those services from reductions in resources. It is suggested that the board might consider setting an agenda of clear priorities for achievement within a defined period, or adopting areas from the very significant agenda provided in the school plans for particular attention during the lifetime of the board.

1.3 In-school management

The very committed and effective senior management team of principal and deputy principal is a new combination that dates from the start of the current school year, following the appointment of the new deputy principal. Each has different and complementary strengths and the team has the potential to lead Ó Fiaich College towards further success. A key element in this future progress would be the achievement of a broader recognition within the community of the quality of educational provision in the post-primary school.

The principal is very experienced, having filled the role for over a decade. He has very effectively managed the transformation of Ó Fiaich College into a mixed-provision educational campus of almost 1,000 students with accommodation, educational resources, and facilities of excellent quality. Strategic thinking, enterprise, energy, and leadership underlie the achievement of a campus that has provided a FE option for many students of the post-primary school in an integrated setting with which they are familiar. The ongoing expansion of FE courses that has been achieved is indicative of that strong leadership.

The new deputy, to date, has filled the role and duties undertaken by the former deputy, with particular responsibility for the junior cycle in the post-primary school, timetabling and substitution tasks. The new deputy has considerable and recent experience of the post-primary classroom and has strong interpersonal and communication skills to support a capacity to become more directly involved in the development of teaching and learning.

The prospect of resurgent growth in post-primary student numbers presents a challenge and opportunity that the senior management team is well equipped to lead and manage. The principal and deputy principal share a vision of providing the best educational service possible at the Ó Fiaich College campus, of developing both the post-primary school and

the FE institute, of anticipating future needs and resources, and building on efforts to establish a positive learning environment. This includes supporting the aim of raising the educational horizons of students and parents, with the linked steps of raising attendance, performance and attainment. It is recommended that the new senior management team review the roles heretofore assigned to the principal and deputy in order to ensure the best match of capabilities to the achievement of the school's priorities for development. This may include the need in the near future to review the mixed-provision arrangement, should the projected enrolment for the post-primary school be realised.

Senior management has developed a distributed leadership model at middle management level, most clearly at assistant-principal level. The full middle-management team makes a strong contribution to the management of the school. The roles undertaken by assistant principals carry very significant duties and responsibilities. The positions of year heads in the post-primary school, FE director, and adult education directors have very significant portfolios in terms of workload and contribution. Performance of post duties includes accountability to, and support from, senior management. The written self-evaluation submissions to management on the performance of post duties showed a worthwhile process of reflection, review, and focus on continuing professional development needs.

Regular senior management consultation with the middle management team is evident in the weekly timetabled meeting with assistant-principal year heads. This is the sole formal postholders' forum with senior management, although informal meetings take place on a needs basis with assistant-principal and special duties teacher postholders. It is suggested that consideration be given to the further development of the middle management layer by including the full complement of assistant principal postholders in whole-school decision making.

The last two years has seen a contraction in posts and a need for a realignment of duties in line with the school's priorities. The benefits of a whole-school review of the schedule of posts are recommended for consideration. The views of all staff members, and other partners, on the most urgent areas of need would be a worthwhile collaborative exercise. It would ensure that posts of responsibility remain focused on current needs and would encourage the development of capacity among incumbent and potential postholders.

The management of staff is good and staff-management relations are positive. It was apparent to the evaluation team that staff members were confident about their roles and that staff morale was high. Teachers indicated appreciation of management's affirmation of their involvement in both curricular and extracurricular work. Senior management indicated that strong support was given to staff through providing the best possible classroom resources for teaching and learning. Staff members valued the good interpersonal skills, the open door approach, and the constant willingness to help of the senior management team.

Communications within the school community are effective. Management communication with staff is good and includes the recent provision of a weekly electronic staff newsletter. The high quality staff handbook is an excellent resource and a good indicator of communication with staff on all areas of their professional work. Parent representatives highly commended the accessibility of senior management to parents. Communication with students is managed through year heads, tutors and the student council. The website is a good communications platform for the school community and the inaugural annual report 2010-2011 has brought communications to a new level.

The continuing professional development of staff is strongly supported by senior management and the board. Staff members' CPD profile is very strong and a significant proportion have undertaken masters degrees. In the current school year, 2011/12, whole-staff CPD has focused on core areas that include differentiation in teaching and learning,

effective classroom management, educational disadvantage and the use of graphic organisers. It is recommended that the skills introduced at whole-school CPD be developed for implementation and review at subject department and programme level. As a means of regularly reacquainting staff with child protection procedures it would be prudent to include a copy of the annually ratified Child Protection Guidelines in the staff handbook.

The management of students is a school priority and is effective in most respects. This is well organised in the year head and tutor structure. Inspectors observed that students identified closely with their tutors and year heads. Efforts to support the tutor in managing students were evident in the schemes of work developed to guide the once-weekly tutorial class. In order to increase tutor-student contact points throughout the week, an alternative arrangement (for example, ten-minute tutor-class contact time four times a week) is urged for consideration.

In the course of the evaluation, a positive student behaviour management system was observed by inspectors as the practice both in and out of class. A system of awards and rewards has been introduced. Positive reinforcement measures have been introduced, such as the green card system that balances the yellow and red card responses to misbehaviour. Merit comments have been introduced as part of the student journal. It is critical for the success of measures such as the green card system that they be applied and supported universally.

The inclusion of students is a positive and integral part of school life at Ó Fiaich College. Evidence of the recent week-long celebration of intercultural events, the strong special educational needs supports, home-school-community supports and SCP supports all underline the inclusiveness of Ó Fiaich College.

Ó Fiaich College enrolment policy 2011 is a key policy document in the management of students and should be reviewed. The document should show the date of ratification and review. The positive, welcoming tone of language evident in the admissions policy for FE students should be replicated. The criteria for selection of various programmes should be included. The procedures for transfer applications above the normal first-year intake should also be specified. In the event of the school being oversubscribed, the criteria for admission should be included and clarified down to the allocation of the last available place.

The code of behaviour, even in name, chooses more positive terminology over the punitive term associated with the former 'discipline policy'. The renaming of the 'in-college suspension centre' to the 'self-directed learning environment' is a further example of consciously promoting positive student behaviour. More familiarly known as 'room 3', this facility provides a supportive environment to students with serious challenging behaviour and provides teachers with a remedy in a fraught classroom situation. It is a resource-heavy, supervised environment that indicates the school's support for rehabilitation over exclusion.

The code of behaviour merits review in a number of respects. Chief among these is the requirement that it more closely follow the steps set out in the National Educational Welfare Board (NEWB) school guidelines on developing a code of behaviour. The current code should also show the date of ratification and last review, or the planned date of next review. References to positive behaviour in the current code are understated as indicated by the statement that students who behave responsibly 'may' be rewarded. The green card system of positive behaviour that operates in practice is not flagged in the code of behaviour. Some of the language used in the code could appear convoluted to its primary audience, the students. The use of simple English is urged.

The separate code of behaviour that governs the FE students, known as the 'code of practice', includes some areas for attention. The date of ratification and review should be

recorded on the code. The ladder of referral for breaches of the code that operates in practice should be referenced in the code. The FE policy on plagiarism and the consequent sanctions that may be imposed should be included in the code. These should also be included in the related policies on assignments and examinations. The reference to the disciplinary committee identified in the code should include the powers of sanction that are delegated to this committee, and should include the right to appeal any such sanctions.

A confident student council is in place and is supported by an astute and supportive liaison teacher. The council members were uniformly positive about the school and identified the bond between teachers and students as the most positive aspect of school life. The confidence of the council members was a positive indicator of the school's support for the student voice. The council has its own notice board and section on the school website. The members expressed appreciation of the attention paid to the council by senior management and indicated few inhibitions in raising sensitive issues. Among the successes that it claimed was the agreement of management to avoid negative reinforcement by abandoning the tradition of naming class groups as 1A, 1B, 1C, and 1D.

The pattern of student attendance remains a very significant whole-school issue in the management of students. It is addressed as an area of priority in the current DEIS plan 2009-2012. The HSCL co-ordinator and SCP supports provide key interventions to targeted students. The school has worked closely with the NEWB educational welfare officer to effect improvements. There have been successes and the decrease in the number of suspensions imposed over the last four years is very significant. The scale of the attendance challenge requires that a whole-school focus remain on improving, encouraging, and rewarding attendance. Ó Fiaich College provides a positive experience for students as the student council members themselves declared. It is recommended that all staff in their subject departments and in their personal planning prioritise the whole-school DEIS targets on attendance.

School communication to parents is good and very good networking has been developed with outside agencies. Correspondence records to parents are thorough. The HSCL co-ordinator is very active in home visits to parents. The parents' newsletter issues throughout the year. The school and SCP have organised courses and presentations to parents. Among these are free computer classes, study skills and dance classes. Parents are encouraged to acknowledge and support the students' academic efforts at home. JCSP initiatives are well communicated to parents. Among these are reading challenges and *Mathematics for fun* initiatives. Parents are actively encouraged to come to the club and meet their child's mathematics teacher. These are all positive steps. The parents' association (PA) is an active body that is hugely supportive of the efforts of the school. It has a particular role in fundraising and has contributed to a small amount of whole-school policy review.

1.4 Management of resources

The management of resources is good. With over 80 teaching staff members on the current year timetable, the human resources allocation to Ó Fiaich College is very considerable. Administrative and ancillary staff members make a valuable contribution to the smooth running of the school, as observed by the evaluation team, and this contribution is acknowledged by management.

The school calendar is compliant with regard to providing the minimum number of teaching days. Teachers' timetables are in almost all cases timetabled to the maximum. Reductions in instruction time are applied in the case of middle management personnel who have significant post-of-responsibility duties. The entitlement of students to 28 hours' instruction time per week is close to being fully achieved.

An excellent quality staffing database, that provides a clear picture of staff members' qualifications, chronological appointments, and CPD record, is maintained. The timetable shows that teaching staff members are deployed consistent with their qualifications. The staffing schedule shows a good blend of experienced personnel and more recently appointed members. A significant number of staff members have been appointed within the tenure of the current principal and have been adaptable in their assignment between teaching duties in the post-primary school and the FE institute.

There is an approximate three-way assignment of staff, with one third of all staff members assigned duties exclusively to the post-primary school, another third exclusively to the FE institute and one third of teachers who combine teaching duties in the post-primary school and in the FE institute. The staff at Ó Fiaich College has gained a rich variety of teaching experience ranging from typically twelve-year old first-year students in the post-primary school to full adult learners in the FE institute. An induction programme is provided to all new staff members and the annually updated staffing handbook complements this support. Job-sharing and secondment positions are available to staff on application and a total of four teachers have been approved for these categories of appointment in the current year. It is recommended that the college consider adopting a job-sharing policy that is guided by appropriate criteria for the approval of applications. This would be helpful in the event that a high number of applications were received in a particular year.

The integration of information and communications technology (ICT) resources at Ó Fiaich College is very well advanced. The campus is equipped with ten computer laboratories. The modern printing facilities are reflected in the high-quality school publications. The e-learning plan 2011-2016, which describes e-learning as a right for students, is a very ambitious programme for the next stage of developing ICT resources for student learning. FE students have access to a laptop loan scheme while in the post-primary school a number of Kindle readers are provided to encourage reading.

Complementing these electronic resources, a JCSP-led initiative has seen the enhancement of the store of books in the small school library. A reading-initiative awards ceremony for junior cycle students that coincided with the evaluation saw the promotion of literacy and the enjoyment of reading, and was well received and supported by students. Appropriately, this ceremony was held in the library.

The on-campus accommodation and buildings are very well maintained with very high quality teaching and learning resources provided to both the post-primary school and FE institute. The suitability of the off-site FE facility that currently accommodates approximately 15% of FE students should be reviewed. Areas to be considered should include access, commute time, security, supervision, attendance and punctuality.

The college health and safety policy 2011 is a draft document and awaits independent expert scrutiny before ratification. This is a prudent move. Commendably, staff members were involved in hazard identification, risk assessment and risk control. An assistant safety officer has been appointed as part of post-of-responsibility duties. Good records of evacuation drills were available, including the times recorded to evacuate the on-campus buildings. It is recommended that the Health and Safety draft policy be ratified as soon as reasonably possible and that the off-site FE accommodation facility be included in evacuation records and in the hazard-identification inventory.

Ó Fiaich College promotes environmental awareness, and a waste watchers group, that competes in the ECO UNESCO all-Ireland environmental competition, is long established. The Ó Fiaich College group won the junior section award in 2009. The importance of trees in biodiversity is the current focus for this group and a link has been established with DKIT

Green Campus. The Green Schools Programme would provide a related area for future cross-curricular focus.

2. QUALITY OF SCHOOL PLANNING

The school planning process is well established at Ó Fiaich College and has been led by the principal with great commitment and energy since first commenced in 2004. A postholder has since provided considerable assistance to the process. The approach to whole-school planning has been detailed and incremental. The permanent section of the plan was targeted initially with a focus on the main whole-school policies such as enrolment, behaviour, homework, anti-bullying and JCSP. Direction for subject planning was commenced in early 2005 with subject plans produced for the first time later that year. Much good work has been achieved in planning with over twenty whole-school policies developed, excluding subject department plans and the whole-school plans.

The quality of subject department planning is predominantly good. It has involved work among and across subject departments, with the best examples focusing on learners. Some are particularly good at identifying specific learning outcomes. The planning of some departments involves a lot of duplication of work. A common template would help to standardise the work involved and provide a common perspective on approaches to planning. The best quality plans pay due attention to course outline, timeframes, topics, learning outcomes, lesson activities, resources, methodologies, links, assessment, attainment patterns, review and action plans. The FE planning documentation examined showed well-developed programmes with varying quality regarding learning outcomes. Plans for assignment and assessment were good.

Programme plans are of high quality and provide good detail of all aspects of programme organisation as undertaken by the co-ordinators. Good review sections were noted at the conclusion of the year's work, with a profile of students, attainment data, and achievements. The JCSP plan, in particular, operates as a working document with excellently maintained current-year statement records completed for all JCSP students in all of their subjects. The Transition Year programme is now managed by a new co-ordinator who is developing capacity in the role in preparation for review and development of the programme plan.

In addition to the subject and programme plans, three very substantial whole-school planning documents have been developed that are produced to a very high quality. The first two of these have been published, namely O'Fiaich College and Institute of Further Education Whole-School Plan 2009-2010 and O'Fiaich College: an Action Plan for Educational Inclusion 2009-2012. The latter is the school's DEIS action plan that is focused on the seven priority areas of DEIS – retention, attendance, literacy, numeracy, examination attainment, educational progression and partnership with parents and others. The third planning document, O'Fiaich College and Institute of Further Education Whole-School Plan 2010-2015 is a draft document.

The draft plan lists ten key areas, eight of which are common to the original 2009-10 plan and are further developed. They comprise planning, the curriculum, teaching and learning, learner support, management structures, partners in learning, staff welfare, co-curricular and extracurricular activities. The two additional key areas are e-learning and a positive learning environment. The planning documents are time bound and staff members were involved in their development.

The DEIS plan in particular shows evidence of collaborative effort in its development. Led by a steering committee of teacher volunteers, the parties consulted also included the SCP team, the HSCL co-ordinator, the traveller liaison teacher, the parents and the students.

Parent representatives have had a degree of input into whole-school planning, principally in the code of behaviour and school uniform areas. Student representatives were consulted on the code of behaviour. The board of management has considered and ratified two of the

whole-school plans. By any measure these are very substantial planning documents that provide for self-reflection on all areas of the operation and management of the school as well as a clear roadmap for school improvement.

Benefits are evident from the experience to date of school development planning at Ó Fiaich College. There is a raised awareness of personal and collective accountability. Target setting has been linked to gathering reliable baseline data. Supports for staff have been identified in CPD delivery. A current example is the planned staff development day on mixed-ability teaching. The DEIS plan has focused attention on the school's central concern to help the most disadvantaged students make an educational breakthrough and to measure the success in achieving that goal. Commendably the guidance department has followed up on the DEIS plan with its own action plan for closer monitoring, encouragement and supports for a targeted fifth-year group of students with identified potential to do well in the Leaving Certificate examination and progress to third level.

There are some areas of the planning work that require attention. While five of the policies examined showed dates of ratification as well as the next planned review date, many did not show the former and the next planned review date was in most cases not included. It is recommended that the contents of the permanent section of the whole-school plan be reviewed to include the complete list of school policies, each showing its date of ratification and next review date.

Of more concern was the apparent lack of broad ownership of the whole-school plans that appear to have been driven primarily by senior management. This concern does not apply to the DEIS plan where a more collaborative involvement was evident in its development. While the evaluation team was satisfied that the priorities identified in the draft whole-school plan 2010-2015 followed on from the receipt of submissions from staff, this did not appear to transfer into a broad ownership of the plan among staff. In the interest of wider ownership of whole-school plans, it is recommended that the whole-school planning process be consolidated, that the progress to date be reviewed, and that staff members become more meaningfully engaged in priority setting for the whole-school plan.

The most critical part of the whole-school plans is the impact they have on school improvement. There is a need to re-engage staff with whole-school planning in preparation for the implementation of the draft whole-school plan 2010-2015. The future targets contained in the DEIS action plan should be expressed in more specific terms that are measurable, attainable, relevant and time-bound (SMART). The baseline data used should be more comprehensive. For example the evidence of retention data included would usefully cover a longer timeframe than shown in the plan. The scale of improvement achieved in this critical area merits fuller illustration.

The initiative of the guidance department in developing its own plan as part of the DEIS plan provides a lead in adapting areas of the DEIS plan into subject department and individual teacher planning.

Confirmation was provided that the board of management has formally adopted the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* without modification and that the school is compliant with the requirements of the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*.

3. QUALITY OF CURRICULUM PROVISION

3.1 Curriculum planning and organisation

A broad and balanced post-primary curriculum is provided at Ó Fiaich College. All the post-primary programmes have been added since the first major curriculum expansion saw the adoption of the Leaving Certificate in the early 1980s. The curriculum provided today comprises the full range: Junior Certificate (JC); Junior Certificate School Programme (JCSP); an optional Transition Year (TY); Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme (LCVP); Leaving Certificate Applied (LCA) programme as well as the established Leaving Certificate. Experienced programme co-ordinators are in place for JCSP, LCVP and LCA and new capacity is being developed for TY. The curriculum provided at the FE institute has been significantly developed.

As an inclusive school, Ó Fiaich College post-primary school is committed to a mixed-ability teaching culture and this is the experience for most students. There are, however, some restrictions to the universal application of mixed-ability class formations and access to a fuller curriculum. On entry to first year, students are divided into ability bands, with JCSP provided as a separate band for students identified as in need of significant supports.

This arrangement is continued in second and third years. The placing of a modern language and Science in options settings restricts the availability of these subjects from an early stage and both are noticeably absent from the current year TY curriculum. Students in JCSP classes may be offered a more restricted curriculum with extra provision made in English and Mathematics. Parents are properly advised in advance of these arrangements.

The accompanying inspection report for English recommends that a fuller mixed-ability experience of the subject be provided for students in the junior cycle through concurrent timetabling. A similar recommendation was made in a previous subject inspection report for Mathematics. The school response indicated support for this recommendation which should now be implemented. The success of a move to a fuller mixed-ability arrangement in these core subjects should be monitored and reviewed in due course.

JCSP has a high profile and is a strong element of provision for students in the school. The programme is very well co-ordinated, record keeping of students' learning is of a high quality and students' achievements are well celebrated and publicised. There is a strong focus on maintaining and developing contact and links with parents. SCP and HSCL initiatives complement these efforts. Literacy and numeracy strategies are integral to the programme and are broadly disseminated among the teaching staff. This familiarity and expertise in JCSP approaches to teaching and learning has been developed through CPD. The development of the DEIS plan has also broadened the focus of literacy and numeracy into a whole-school context.

Teachers' familiarity with JCSP methodologies is a positive development, and supports teaching and learning generally throughout the school. A further support for JCSP has been introduced through the timetabling of Guidance for all JCSP classes from first year to third year. It is reported that regular meetings of key personnel in JCSP are difficult to arrange due to timetabling constraints. Nevertheless it is recommended that provision be made for such meetings in JCSP, subject to the demands of the timetable.

The optional TY programme had been promoted over the years as a support programme for those students most in danger of early school leaving, as a bridge to reaching the minimum school leaving age. It is to be welcomed that the school has changed direction for TY within the past three years with a focus on TY as contemplated by the programme designers. Design of the TY curriculum shows innovation with a theme approach adopted

each year that has strong cross-curricular linkages. Recent reviews of the programme by the students show a positive connection with the learning opportunities provided on the programme. This ongoing development of the TY programme is commended.

LCVP is a very popular programme that attracts almost universal uptake among Leaving Certificate students. The guidance counsellors are centrally involved in the delivery of the enterprise education and preparation for the world of work elements of the programme. The LCA programme has a well established core team: it is well subscribed and a third of all Leaving Certificate students currently follow the programme. It was indicated that there is the potential to establish a second LCA group in each year. Records shared with the evaluation team showed that success in LCVP was a significant support to students in progressing to FE and higher education and that LCA students also have a good track record of progression to FE courses.

The FE curriculum currently offers twenty-two full-time courses. These comprise the four main areas of ICT, nursing and childcare, art, graphic design and photographic studies as well as service courses in engineering, travel and tourism and sport, health and fitness studies. Almost a fifth of FE students are pursuing Level 6 programmes of study. This provides students with progression to year two degree programmes at Dundalk Institute of Technology (DKIT). It is a good indicator of FE curriculum development at Ó Fiaich FE Institute that a number of staff members have been involved in programme development.

The adult education curriculum provides a very diverse and comprehensive list of courses that are offered on a self-financing basis. The popularity and demand for these courses among the public remains very high.

3.2 Arrangements for students' choice of subjects and programmes

Information to parents on the curriculum provided by the school is well managed. Programme brochures have been developed alongside the separate high-quality prospectuses for each of the school's three elements of educational provision. Presentations to parents at each of the transition points provide detailed relevant information. Programme co-ordinators are centrally involved. Information sheets on subjects have been developed. Guidance teachers are centrally involved at the senior cycle decision points. The quality of presentations provided to the evaluation team was of a high standard. Detailed information on FE courses is provided on the FE institute website. All applicants for FE courses are interviewed to ensure awareness of and suitability for the selected courses.

In the post-primary school it is noted that optional subjects are selected by incoming first-year students before the start of the school year. While the school makes provision for changing options subjects, a sampling programme of subjects should be considered in order to give students an authentic rather than a received experience of subjects that are new to them. The case for wider availability of Science in the junior cycle is made in the accompanying subject report.

There are some anomalies apparent in the current provision of subjects. A number of students remarked with regret on the absence of Music from the curriculum. Provision for Religious Education (RE) in senior cycle is low and Physical Education (PE) is an optional subject at senior cycle. This should be viewed in the context of the increased drop-out rates from physical activity among people in their late teens both nationally and internationally. The Department-recommended timetabled PE allocation is two hours per student, per week. It is suggested that consideration be given to the health benefits that would follow from having timetabled provision in Physical Education for all senior cycle students.

The whole-school plan 2009-2010 appropriately involved a review of the curriculum offered by the school and the 2010-15 plan contains a commitment to the ongoing review of the curriculum. The establishment of a curriculum review committee or a board of studies to advise on the relevance of the curriculum and subject choice offered would ensure ongoing attention to students' choices in learning.

3.3 Co-curricular and extracurricular provision

Provision for students to experience learning in co-curricular and extracurricular settings is good and continues to improve. This involves the voluntary participation by a significant proportion of staff members, many of whom have been recently appointed. Participation in sports is prominent, with recent success achieved in Gaelic football. Soccer and tennis also feature and sporting endeavours include representation at FE level.

Among the activities with widest involvement are the intercultural week, literacy week, the Ó Fiaich factor talent show and school tours. The popularity of the school talent show was particularly highlighted by student representatives. Recently introduced opportunities for students include the school choir, drama in TY, and a mid-term Gaeltacht visit. Other activities provided to students are the waste watchers group, the canteen and breakfast clubs, field trips as part of courses of study, debating, homework and study clubs, the JCSP reading initiatives and involvement in the cross-border KEY programme. Pride in the school's engineering department achievement of reaching the 2011 Formula 1 project world finals in Singapore was apparent throughout the school.

The benefits of such provision are self-evident in the positive impact they have on student-teacher relations. The above examples, though incomplete, provide further evidence of the mission statement transferring into practice at Ó Fiaich College.

4. QUALITY OF LEARNING AND TEACHING IN SUBJECTS

4.1 Planning and preparation

Subject department planning is well established in the school. Management facilitates subject department meetings and minutes are recorded. In the majority of subject areas, a subject coordinator has been appointed and this position is rotated on an annual basis. A subject coordinator should be appointed in all subject departments in order to further enhance collaborative planning, promote leadership and aid capacity building.

Subject department plans were observed which provided an outline of how the subject is organised in the school. Planning documentation also included programmes of study within appropriate timeframes. A number of programmes of study linked topics to the learning outcomes for students. This is good practice and all programmes of study would benefit from the inclusion of learning outcomes. A range of good quality resources has been developed by many subject departments and these should also be referenced in the programmes of study. In some subject areas the inclusion of modes of assessment was also recommended.

In some subject areas a detailed analysis of students' outcomes in certificate examinations is provided and best practice was observed where this was used to inform future planning. It is good to note that a review and evaluation of the programmes of study takes place at the end of the year in many subject departments and this was documented in the planning documents. Building on this good practice, each subject department should now engage in a more focused process of self-evaluation. This process could focus on uptake of the subject,

a critical appraisal of teaching and learning or the sharing of practices to improve the learning experience for students.

The SEN department facilitates subject departments to plan for students' learning by providing profiles on all students with SEN. However, where mainstream students have more complex needs, a greater degree of collaborative planning is advised.

4.2 Learning and teaching

The quality of teaching and learning ranged from good to excellent in almost all lessons observed but with some areas for development identified in a few lessons. Teachers were very well prepared for lessons and a wide range of resources was used to vary classroom activity, keep students attentive and support learning. These included worksheets, handouts, past papers and quizzes, as well as concrete resources, visual materials and 3D models. ICT was used well in almost all lessons visited. It was especially effective in creating links with the outside world for students and for putting learning in context. More use of *SolidWorks* to model solutions to questions and to use models to support and reinforce learning in junior as well as senior cycle is recommended.

The aim of each lesson was clearly articulated from the start and, in many instances, learning outcomes were reinforced during the lesson and revisited at the end. Lessons typically featured strong links with prior learning. Concepts were explained with clarity and teachers moved around the classroom which helped to keep students on task and informed the pace of the lesson for the teacher. All lessons observed were delivered in a structured manner and were well managed from start to finish. Students received appropriate individual tuition where required.

Teachers' classroom management techniques were very effective. Activities were varied, lessons were well structured, logical and purposeful and teachers maintained positive classroom relations throughout. They were caring, patient and supportive of students. Collaborative student work and good management of peer activities were in evidence, which led to good student participation in lessons. Co-operative teaching was observed in mainstream classes and, as a result, students benefited from increased individualised support. The school is encouraged to create opportunities for those involved in team-teaching to share their experiences with colleagues.

Effective differentiated questioning techniques were practised by many teachers, which kept all students involved and learning. In many lessons, teachers asked a combination of global and directed questions, taking care to involve as many students as possible. Some teachers tended to ask questions globally of the entire class as opposed to naming individuals to answer questions. It is recommended that all teachers adopt the practice of asking directed questions. Many teachers asked a range of lower and higher-order questions which was effective in challenging and engaging the better able students. Judicious use of wait time was observed in many cases and particularly when higher-order questions were opened up to the class. Such differentiation strategies should be widely disseminated among all staff.

There were good practices in place to develop students' literacy skills, such as a focus on key words, pre-teaching key vocabulary, putting learning in context for students, use of classroom displays, and hosting of reading classes. While there was good use of subject-specific terminology in most subject areas, there is scope for students to use notebooks in order to build up a glossary of subject-specific terms in practical subjects. Practice observed during some classroom visits indicates a need for teacher support and training for explicit instruction on word attack and spelling techniques. The school has developed a whole-school policy on literacy. This policy supports the literacy targets in the school's DEIS

action plan in its promotion of literacy developments in all mainstream classes. In this regard, the targets in the DEIS plan in relation to literacy could be more measurable.

Subject departments conduct an analysis of results in state examinations on an annual basis and teachers should continue to work towards increasing the number of students taking higher or ordinary level in state examinations. It is recommended that the school utilise the data acquired from student assessment on entry to target and inform whole-school policy on advancing educational attainment in all subject disciplines.

There was inconsistent practice among subject departments and teachers in relation to the assignment of homework. In some subjects it was assigned in all lessons and it was noteworthy that it was assigned in good time for all students to record it in their journals. However, this was not the practice in all subjects. Homework supports the work students do in school and is an important part of the learning process. It is recommended that homework should be assigned to all year groups and to students studying the subject at all levels on a regular basis.

In almost all lessons, students generally received good written feedback on their written work, which identified strengths and areas for improvement. However some portfolios contained a significant number of incorrect and incomplete drawings as well as untidy and poorly drafted work. It is recommended that written feedback be given to all students on a regular basis and that teachers encourage students to follow up on this feedback and complete corrections as a matter of course.

4.3 Assessment

Internal school examinations are held for all class groups at Christmas and mock certificate examinations are held for third-year and sixth-year students in the spring. Summer examinations are held for all non-certificate exam classes. Reports are issued following all assessments. Parents have the opportunity to meet teachers at parent-teacher meetings.

In most subjects evaluated, homework is being assigned on a regular basis. This is good practice. In one subject, the inspector commented favourably on the practice whereby marking criteria were being shared with students. All subjects should implement this assessment strategy. It is good to note that, where appropriate, common assessments are being set by teachers.

Some subjects require students to maintain practical notebooks and in Science it is good that a percentage of the final grade is allocated to the maintenance of students' practical books.

All subject departments have developed modes of assessment which are used to determine students' learning. However, the level of information, when available, regarding these assessment procedures in planning documents varied. All subject departments should ensure that assessment policies are developed and contain all of the various modes that are being used by teachers. Subject departments should also ensure that these are being implemented consistently.

5. QUALITY OF SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS

5.1 Inclusion of students with additional educational needs

A significant proportion of students have identified special educational needs. There is an evident commitment among management and staff to provide an appropriate education and

support for these students. The school's admissions policy provides formal evidence of the inclusive school ethos and practices on the ground confirm that this.

The school has a special educational needs co-ordinator and a support team of eight resource teachers. The school has developed a special educational needs policy that is well communicated to the whole staff. Supports are now being developed for exceptionally able students. The achievements of special educational needs students are celebrated within the school and records show progression to further education and higher education for these students.

Communication of special educational needs issues is good among members of the team, mainstream teachers and parents. The co-ordinator maintains close contact with subject departments. All staff meetings provide an input on special educational needs and an information pack on special educational needs is provided to all new teachers. A special educational needs folder is provided to staff on the main school server. The co-ordinator briefs the resource teachers and the five special educational needs assistants (SNAs) on the students they support. The accompanying subject inspection report on special educational needs endorses the teaching and learning in the lessons observed as high quality. Learning support is continued into senior cycle where needed.

The inclusion of students from disadvantaged and minority groups, and for those for whom English is a second language, is an integral part of the work of the school. Over twenty nationalities and eight religious denominations are represented within the student body. Traveller students are well represented in the enrolment. HSCL provides close links to parents and to the feeder primary schools on all of these matters. CPD has been provided to staff, from appropriate external personnel, and this has included a specific focus on the special educational needs student, differentiation of learning, and the inclusion of students with English as an additional language (EAL). Newcomer students are integrated into mainstream classes, the school has an intercultural policy and an EAL co-ordinator. A designated room is provided for language support for EAL students.

5.2 Guidance and student support in the whole-school context

The school allocation of 1.5 wholetime teacher equivalents for Guidance is fully used for its intended purpose. Two fully qualified personnel operate the guidance service that covers both the post-primary school and FE institute. Management support is evident in the quality of resources provided for Guidance. The guidance programme provided combines a balance of educational, personal and vocational guidance.

Support for students is particularly strong in senior cycle and in the involvement of both guidance personnel in delivering the LCVP link modules. Guidance is timetabled in all senior classes. Within the junior cycle the students with most need of support have been provided with a timetabled weekly class of Guidance. This reflects well on the care of the school for its weakest members. The guidance team has a major input into programme and subject choices, particularly at transition to senior cycle.

A whole-school guidance plan has been developed. On its own initiative the guidance department has developed an action plan to support identified senior cycle students to realise their potential for advancement to further and higher education, with ongoing advice on study and encouragement. This initiative was prompted as the department's response to one of the areas of the DEIS whole-school plan.

The guidance department maintains excellent quality data records of student attainment in the certificate examinations, as well as tracking records of student destinations post Ó Fiaich College. The department is keen to see the introduction of more progressive testing

instruments than those currently operated, along with more tests in second year. It is recommended that proposals regarding the school's use of standardised norm-reference tests be submitted for consideration by the special educational needs department and management.

The student support system is a major strength of Ó Fiaich College. Students in greatest need receive first call on resources. The pastoral care team was formed to that end and currently targets some 13% of the entire student body. This grouping includes all JCSP students but includes students beyond this group. The twelve students involved in the 'second chance' or 'house' project described earlier in this report are not included in the pastoral care team's remit as separate interventions and supports are provided to them through the inter-agency initiative provided at the separate Cox's Demesne facility. These two groups provide an indication of the level of support Ó Fiaich College provides to the most vulnerable students.

The pastoral care team comprises personnel from HSCL, SCP, Guidance and SPHE in addition to the year heads. The team is provided with a weekly timetabled slot. A post of responsibility for the co-ordination of pastoral care indicates the importance attached to student care in the school. The aim of the team is to help students at greatest risk reach their potential. Management allows the team to make interventions and supports available as needed and is kept closely informed of progress. A critical incident policy has been developed and has been activated in the current school year. The deputy principal keeps a particularly close link with the work of the team. HSCL and Guidance are both provided with a slot at the end of each staff meeting to maintain disadvantage awareness. This is a further indicator of the school's mission statement operating as an integral part of Ó Fiaich College life. It is suggested that a senior management team member consider joining the pastoral care team to underline management support for its valuable work.

Among the host of supports provided by the pastoral care team is a close monitoring of attendance, the early morning breakfast club, the after-school homework club, HSCL home visits, the encouragement of parents to attend parent-teacher meetings and to identify with school through participation in subsidised practical and recreational courses, as well as ICT and literacy programmes.

On a broader front, the student-support system is structured around the year head and class tutors. The once weekly tutor-contact period has been supported by a structured programme of student care. Further supports for the care of students are provided in external professional counselling support, anger management programmes, the previously referenced KEY programme, drugs education, bullying awareness week and a recently developed study skills guide for parents.

The report has earlier described the school's response to incidents of serious behavioural incidents through the 'room 3' arrangement. The school, while showing its disapproval of such incidents, concentrates on maintaining students in a learning environment wherever possible. This tolerance best exemplifies the true care for students provided by Ó Fiaich College.

6. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER DEVELOPMENT

The following are the main strengths identified in the evaluation:

- Ó Fiaich College has adapted to the changing demands for educational provision with a current combined enrolment of almost 1,000 between post-primary and FE students. The school's enrolment projections are all positive.

- The aspirations of the mission statement transfer well into the policies and procedures by which the school operates. The school atmosphere observed by the evaluation team in both Ó Fiaich College and Ó Fiaich Institute was positive among students and teachers in both formal and informal settings.
- The school in its management and operation shows a clear commitment to the challenge of convincing parents and students of the value of completing a post-primary education against a background of social and economic disadvantage
- The board of management is properly constituted and plays an active role in the regular review of school policies. Members display a clear awareness of the context in which the school operates and the challenges it faces.
- The very committed and effective senior management team of principal and deputy principal has the potential to lead Ó Fiaich College towards further success.
- Senior management has developed distributed leadership at middle management level, most clearly at assistant-principal level. The full middle-management team makes a strong contribution to the management of the school. The roles undertaken by assistant principals carry very significant duties and responsibilities.
- The school planning process is well established and much good work has been achieved. It has been led by the principal with great commitment and energy and a postholder has since provided considerable assistance.
- The quality of subject department planning is predominantly good and programme plans are of high quality.
- Three very substantial whole-school planning documents have been produced to a very high quality. They provide evidence of self-reflection on all areas of the operation of the school and a roadmap for improvement. The whole-school DEIS plan in particular shows evidence of collaborative effort in its development.
- A broad and balanced post-primary curriculum is provided at Ó Fiaich College. All the post-primary programmes are provided.
- JCSP has a high profile and is a strong element of provision for students in the school. Teachers' familiarity with JCSP methodologies is a positive development and supports teaching and learning generally throughout the school.
- In some subject areas a detailed analysis of students' outcomes in certificate examinations is provided and best practice was observed where this was used to inform future planning.
- The quality of teaching and learning ranged from good to excellent in almost all lessons observed. Teachers were very well prepared for lessons and a wide range of resources was used to vary classroom activity, keep students attentive and support learning.
- ICT was used well in almost all lessons visited. It was especially effective in creating links with the outside world for students and for putting learning in context.
- There is an evident commitment among management and staff to the significant proportion of students with special educational needs.

As a means of building on these strengths and to address areas for development, the following key recommendations are made:

- It is recommended that the new senior management team review the roles heretofore assigned to the principal and deputy to ensure the best match of capabilities to the achievement of the school's priorities for development.
- It is critical for the success of positive behaviour measures such as the green card system that they be applied and supported universally.
- The scale of the attendance challenge evident from the data requires that a whole-school focus remain on improving, encouraging, and rewarding attendance. It is recommended that all staff in their subject departments and in their personal planning prioritise the whole-school DEIS targets on attendance.

- The suitability of the off-site facility that currently accommodates a proportion of students should be reviewed. Areas to be considered should include access, commute time, security, supervision, attendance and punctuality.
- In the interest of wider ownership of whole-school plans, it is recommended that the whole-school planning process be consolidated and that staff members become more meaningfully engaged in whole-school plan priority setting. This has particular relevance for the draft 2010-2015 whole-school plan. Future targets contained in the DEIS action plan should be expressed in more specific terms that are measurable, attainable, relevant and time-bound (SMART).
- The success of a move to a fuller mixed-ability arrangement in the junior cycle for the core subjects of English and Mathematics, once implemented, should be monitored and reviewed in due course.

Post-evaluation meetings were held with the staff and board of management when the draft findings and recommendations of the evaluation were presented and discussed.

7. RELATED SUBJECT INSPECTION REPORTS

The following related Subject Inspection reports are available:

- Subject Inspection of English – 7 February 2012
- Subject Inspection of Science, Biology, Anatomy and Physiology – 9 February 2012
- Subject Inspection of Social, Personal and Health Education – 10 February 2012
- Special Educational Needs – 7 February 2012
- Technical Graphics, Design and Communication Graphics – 2 March 2011

Appendix

SCHOOL RESPONSE TO THE REPORT

Submitted by the Board of Management

Area 1: Observations on the content of the inspection report

The Management and Staff of O’Fiaich College thank the inspection team for their courtesy, professionalism and high level of interest and commitment they demonstrated in getting to know all aspects of our large and multi-faceted school.

To say that the inspection was thorough would be an understatement. Having recovered from the intensity of the process, we are happy that as much of the good work done in our school which could be uncovered in two weeks, was identified by the inspectors.

As a school community, we have already taken on board almost all of the recommendations. It is positive and reaffirming to have a team of professional experts visit and critique what we do.

The Management of O’Fiaich College thank the staff of the college, the students, parents, Board of Management for their energy and co-operation during the evaluation

Area 2: Follow-up actions planned or undertaken since the completion of the inspection activity to implement the findings and recommendations of the inspection

The following have been implemented following recommendations from WSE Inspection:

- Deputy Principal has joined the Pastoral Care Team meetings
- Admission Policy for post-primary and code of behaviour are currently being reviewed.
- Attendance has been identified as a priority for this school year. New DEIS targets are being identified. The school has established a team to focus on an attendance campaign called “every day counts”. This campaign began after the WSE Inspection and ran for six weeks. During this time attendance improved by 6% on the same period last year.
- All policies are being reviewed to include their dates of ratification and review.
- Subject sampling has been implemented with this year’s first years