

An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna
Department of Education and Skills

Follow-Through Inspection

REPORT

Ainm na scoile/ School name	The Abbey School
Seoladh na scoile/ School address	Station Road Tipperary Town Co. Tipperary
Uimhir rolla / Roll number	65490L

Date of Evaluation: 22-10-2019



FOLLOW-THROUGH INSPECTION

Follow-through inspections evaluate the progress a school has made on implementing main recommendations made in an earlier inspection rather than the overall educational provision that the school makes. Inspectors also advise the school on strategies and actions to enable them to fully address recommendations.

HOW TO READ THIS REPORT

During this inspection, the inspector evaluated the progress the school has made in implementing recommendations made in an earlier inspection under the following headings:

1. Progress achieved to date
2. Findings
3. Recommendations

Inspectors describe the quality of the progress made in each of these areas using the Inspectorate's follow-through quality continuum which is shown on the final page of this report. The follow-through quality continuum explains the terms used by inspectors when evaluating the school's progress in implementing recommendations.

The board of management was given an opportunity to comment in writing on the findings and recommendations of the report; a response was not received from the board.

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.

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

<p>ORIGINAL INSPECTION DETAILS</p> <p>Type: WSE-MLL</p> <p>Date of Inspection: 20-09-2017</p> <p>Report Published? Yes</p>	<p>FOLLOW-THROUGH INSPECTION DETAILS</p> <p>Date of Inspection: 22-10-2019</p>
<p>Follow-through inspection activities</p>	
<p>The following activities took place in the course of the follow-through inspection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting with senior management team • Interview with members of in-school management team and area co-ordinators • Interview with relevant teacher • Review of documentation including school records and students' work • Observation of teaching and learning • Interaction with students 	
<p>Recommendation in original inspection report</p>	<p>Progress achieved to date on implementation of recommendation</p>
<p>Both the board and senior management should take a lead role in whole-school planning for the further enhancement of teaching and learning across the school and this work should be influenced by current DES priorities, informed by teachers' formal reflective enquiry, and supported by a systematic and incremental CPD plan and programme for both management and teachers.</p>	<p>Good progress</p> <p>Arising out of senior management's recent facilitation of a review of the school's posts of responsibilities, a number of posts focused on the leadership and management of teaching and learning have been agreed and created. Over and above the more obvious roles such as junior cycle co-ordinator, the role of senior cycle year heads in promoting and monitoring individual students' learning and achievement has also been strengthened. All of this is very positive as it is promoting both shared and devolved responsibility for this very important aspect of school life, whilst very much supporting whole-school planning for the further enhancement of teaching and learning across the school.</p> <p>In line with current Department of Education and Skills (DES) priorities, work to promote and foster formative assessment in the classroom is underway, with another DES priority, school self-evaluation, being used as a tool to frame and support this valuable work. In the three lessons observed as part of this inspection, teachers' demonstrated very high levels of understanding and application of relevant theory and strategies. There was a sense, however, from meetings held with both management and teachers, that not all teachers are as informed about or practised in the area of formative assessment. Whole-school work in this area will be discussed further in the following section.</p> <p>The senior management team is leading by example with regard to</p>

	<p>participating in continuing professional development opportunities designed to support their work in leading the enhancement of teaching and learning. In addition, senior management has facilitated the Junior Cycle for Teachers (JCT) to provide whole-staff workshops, and teachers are also supported and encouraged to avail of subject-specific JCT workshops, as well as other relevant training. This is positive.</p>
<p>A whole-school approach to the use of formative assessment merits consideration, particularly in light of the Framework for Junior Cycle.</p>	<p>Partial progress</p> <p>It is good to note that formative assessment has been a key focus of whole-staff CPD in recent times. In addition, high levels of teacher collaboration both within and across subject departments, as well as with teachers in other local schools, is proving very valuable in terms of exploring assessment models, including the planning and organisation of Subject Learning and Assessment Review (SLAR) meetings. Simultaneously, the school’s self-evaluation report and school improvement plan indicate that efforts are being made to support all teachers to understand related assessment theory and to embed relevant strategies in their classroom practice. This is all very commendable.</p> <p>It is clear, however, that related School Self-Evaluation (SSE) planning is far too broad and much too ambitious, with work being simultaneously planned in too many aspects. It is therefore recommended that the focus be narrowed, and that a phased and staged approach to whole-staff exploration and implementation of formative assessment be adopted. <i>Focus on Learning</i>, a publication of the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA), would be a valuable support in this regard.</p>
<p>All concerned, both management and teachers, should familiarise themselves with and fully implement current SSE requirements, as set out in <i>Circular 0040/2016 – Continuing Implementation of School Self-Evaluation 2016-2020</i>.</p>	<p>Good progress</p> <p>Significant efforts have been made to increase levels of familiarity with SSE and the related requirements. An SSE advisory visit was availed of, training was undertaken, and additional training for both the principal and the relatively newly appointed SSE co-ordinator is planned. As previously referenced, a SSE report and a School Improvement Plan (SIP) have been compiled, and it is positive to note that these capture the voices of students, teachers and parents.</p> <p>As previously outlined, the current SSE focus needs to be refined to ensure more successful outcomes. In addition, aspects of SSE work that do not directly relate to the development of teachers’ individual classroom practice should be separated from the SSE process. This includes planning for 400 hours of Wellbeing, which is essentially school development planning work as opposed to SSE.</p> <p>Further consideration also needs to be given to target setting in the</p>

	SIP, with a view to ensuring that targets are specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and time bound (SMART).
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Summary of findings

Good progress is evident in relation to whole-school planning for the further enhancement of teaching and learning, which includes a focus on formative assessment. Good progress is also apparent in relation to implementing SSE requirements. Further work is necessary in relation to embedding a whole-school approach to formative assessment.

Recommendations

- The current SSE focus needs to be refined in order to support a phased and staged approach to whole-staff exploration and implementation of the key elements of formative assessment.
- Target setting within SSE should become more focused to ensure greater levels of clarity and to facilitate more accurate tracking of progress.

THE QUALITY CONTINUUM FOR FOLLOW-THROUGH INSPECTIONS

Very good progress indicates that appropriate action has been taken to address the recommendation, and that the action has fully achieved or will achieve the required outcome.

Good progress indicates that appropriate action has been taken to address the recommendation, and that substantial improvement has occurred, although further progress is necessary.

Partial progress indicates that some appropriate action has been taken to address the recommendation, and some improvement has occurred, but considerable further progress is necessary.

No progress indicates that no action has been taken, and that the original recommendation remains to be addressed.