

An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna
Department of Education and Skills

Whole School Evaluation
Management, Leadership and Learning

REPORT

Ainm na scoile / School name	Celbridge Community School
Seoladh na scoile / School address	Moortown Maynooth Road Celbridge
Uimhir rolla / Roll number	91614B

Date of Evaluation: 12-03-2020



**An Roinn Oideachais
agus Scileanna**
Department of
Education and Skills

WHOLE-SCHOOL EVALUATION – MANAGEMENT, LEADERSHIP AND LEARNING

Whole-School Evaluation – Management, Leadership and Learning reports on the quality of teaching and learning and on the quality of management and leadership in a school. It affirms good practice and makes recommendations, where appropriate, to aid the further development of educational provision in the school.

How to read this report

During this inspection, the inspectors evaluated and reported under the following headings or areas of enquiry:

1. Quality of school leadership and management
2. Quality of teaching and learning
3. Implementation of recommendations from previous evaluations
4. The school's self-evaluation process and capacity for school improvement

Inspectors describe the quality of each of these areas using the Inspectorate's quality continuum which is shown on the final page of this report. The quality continuum provides examples of the language used by inspectors when evaluating and describing the quality of the school's provision in each area.

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

CHILD PROTECTION

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

1. The name of the DLP and the Child Safeguarding Statement are prominently displayed near the main entrance to the school.
2. The Child Safeguarding Statement has been ratified by the board and includes an annual review and a risk assessment.
3. All teachers visited reported that they have read the Child Safeguarding Statement and that they are aware of their responsibilities as mandated persons.
4. The Child Safeguarding Statement meets the requirements of the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017.
5. The records of the last three board of management meetings record a child protection oversight report that meet the requirements of the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary schools 2017.
6. The board of management has ensured that arrangements are in place to provide information to all school personnel on the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools, 2017
7. School planning documentation indicates that the school is making full provision for the relevant aspects of the curriculum (SPHE, Stay Safe and RSE).
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	12-03-2020
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

This evaluation was paused due to the school closures arising from the Covid-19 pandemic. While the majority of the inspection activities took place in March 2020, the feedback meetings that are held as part of the evaluation could not be held until September 2020.

School context

Celbridge Community School is a voluntary co-educational school which operates under the patronage of Educate Together and Kildare and Wicklow Education and Training board (KWETB). The school opened in 2015 and has a current enrolment of 655 students. The curriculum includes the Junior Cycle, Transition Year (TY), the established Leaving Certificate, the Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme (LCVP) and the Leaving Certificate Applied (LCA).

Findings

- The overall quality of leadership and management is excellent; the highly effective board of management and senior management team create a culture of collaboration and reflective practice through very well-developed devolved leadership and whole-school structures.
- Learner outcomes and experiences were very good in the vast majority of lessons due to the consistent use of whole school approaches with active learning methodologies.
- School self-evaluation (SSE) processes are used very effectively to manage the school's response to changing needs; they have correctly identified priority areas for development and actioned whole-school responses.
- Very Good student care structures and practices were evident during the evaluation; commendable whole school guidance approaches are in place.
- The overall quality of teaching and learning is very good with many instances of outstanding practice; approaches to differentiation were frequent and varied with scope for development in some lessons.
- The consistent use of whole school systems of learning to learn strategies and the creative use of ICT by teachers is exemplary; this has a significant positive impact on high quality learning.

Recommendations

- The Special Education Teachers (SET) team should extend the very good individualised planning for students with special educational needs (SEN) to all year groups and be further facilitated to share their expertise to support subject teachers in meeting the priority learning needs of students along the *Continuum of Support*.

DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. QUALITY OF SCHOOL LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leading learning and teaching

The leadership of learning and teaching is excellent in the school. The principal is a pro-active leader and successfully engages with all school practices and is valuably supported by a very committed and dedicated deputy principal and board of management.

Members of the current and original board and senior management team (SMT) have highly effectively led and managed the development of this school from a start-up school to become a creative centre of learning. A clear vision for the future development of the school which is underpinned by the values of Educate Together and Kildare and Wicklow education and training board (KWETB) has been established. All practices and values in the school adhere to the vision, aim and ethos to ensure high quality innovative learning through teaching that is student-centred and active. In developing a comprehensive school plan, management undertook a considerable and ongoing consultation process with relevant stakeholders.

The SMT, comprising the principal and deputy principal, recognises its role in leading the school from the developmental to the established phase, and responsively develops whole-school structures to implement their vision. The core values of building learner power, learning to learn, creative ICT use and restorative relationships explicitly underpin all whole-school strategies. Through these excellent systems the principal and other school leaders have fostered a culture in which learning flourishes.

The school regularly provides placements for student teachers. Such engagement in initial teacher education programmes is welcome, and provides valuable professional benefits for all involved. New staff members are very effectively supported by the staff induction programme, the *Droichead* programme and peer collaboration, peer observation and shadowing programmes for subject co-ordinator roles. The teacher questionnaires and feedback discussions with inspectors indicate the significant strengths of in-school training opportunities and support from colleagues.

A broad and balanced curriculum is in place. Curricular programmes including TY, LCA and LCVP provide students with a range of valuable learning experiences. The TY programme is well planned, and offers very good opportunities for independent, student-led learning through a range of learning experiences, such as the Age Action initiative, the school musical and valuable work and volunteer experiences. TY students' access a range of subjects and learning experiences through modules that rotate three times per year. The TY programme is reviewed annually with input from all stakeholders, improvement actions are identified and actioned. To meet the ongoing needs of the school, LCA was introduced this year and is regularly reviewed and refined as emerging needs are identified. The introduction of new subjects and programmes, such as the level two learning programme (L2LP) is ongoing and has been informed by student, parent and teacher input.

The SMT have appropriate oversight of the quality of teacher created content. Students receive input either from teacher-created curricular content or from appropriate textbooks. It is commendable that subject teams share resources and plan collaboratively to achieve a collective approach to curriculum planning and implementation.

The care of students is very good and is underpinned by highly effective restorative approaches to all interactions and relationships. Weekly support team meetings are facilitated by management and an action plan is developed to progress emerging student needs. A range of initiatives, such as the highly effective induction programme, student mentors, anti-bullying student ambassadors and ICT student mentors support transitions from primary school. Student questionnaires and the student focus group indicated that the majority of students feel safe and cared for in school and feel that they are able to talk to an adult in the school if they are having problems.

The whole-school guidance plan outlines the implementation of all aspects of Guidance, and its links with Wellbeing, SPHE and relevant agencies. There is very good timetabled provision of Guidance in senior cycle and appropriate modules of lessons for junior cycle students.

First-year students are provided with an extensive, year-long subject sampling programme. An excellent system of academic monitoring and tracking operates in the school. All students across all year groups have termly target setting meetings with their class tutor (Caomhnóir). This reflection activity guides students to reflect on prior learning and engage in target setting. Parents are actively involved in target setting and it is highly commendable that students attend parent-teacher meetings. The class tutor continues to monitor the student and takes opportunities to discuss targets and provide some guidance. The outcome of this supports informed subject choice in first year and programme choices for senior cycle. This is a very good example of whole school guidance being provided by staff and it is commendable.

The school has introduced a broad JC wellbeing programme, delivered through other learning experiences (OLE) lessons and pillar subjects of SPHE, CSPE and PE, and the National Educational Psychology Service (NEPS) *My Friends Youth* programme. Commendable work is ongoing to promote positive mental health. Relationships and sexuality (RSE) are taught in modules of learning during OLEs and also during SPHE at junior cycle and as part of the guidance programme in senior cycle.

A special educational needs (SEN) core team, with considerable expertise is in place. A very comprehensive and thorough SEN policy and planning procedures are in place. Distribution of roles and responsibilities within the small core SEN team is strategically aligned to individual expertise, this is very good practice. However, a large number of non-specialist teachers are currently timetabled for SEN teaching. To ensure consistency in provision, the size of the team delivering support should be reduced and their expertise consolidated.

The modes of SEN provision include; in-class support via team-teaching, withdrawal of students for small group support and one to one interventions. There are a wide range of valuable interventions used to identify and support the educational, behavioural and emotional needs of students in these small group settings. Very good individualised planning is in place and under development. Current provision appropriately provides support for many students identified through the SEN register and

NEPS *Continuum of Support*. Further support for identified students who do not have an Irish exemption should be planned for in order to enable more targeted in-class support.

Whole school SEN provision is collectively enhanced through providing in-school CPD delivered by their SEN specialists. These purposeful contributions provide a platform to share learning regarding the use of evidence-based interventions to peers. To further empower and enable subject teachers, senior management should facilitate SEN specialists further in sharing their expertise, through collaborative planning with subject teachers to build on collective support for students along the *Continuum of Support*.

Managing the organisation

The board of management meets very regularly, is strongly committed to the school and is highly effective. There is an agreed agenda for all meetings with learning and teaching valuably at the core of their work. In line with good practice, the board provides an agreed and comprehensive report for stakeholders.

The board have developed a range of policies that support effective running of the school and policies are reviewed and discussed at all board meetings. The school have all the mandatory policies in place and develop and review new and existing policies responsively in line with their rapidly growing school.

Staff CPD and curricular developments are on the agenda for board meetings. It is very good practice that school improvement planning is incorporated into board meetings and teachers and students regularly present to the board. It is highly commendable that the board engages in analysis of state examination assessment data and review short, medium and long term goal setting for subject departments.

SMT work very well as a team, and the day-to-day running of the school is excellent. The SMT have very well delineated roles and it is notable that the distribution of their responsibilities are aligned with their individual competencies to a very high standard this maximises the complimentary nature of their work. SMT manage human resources very effectively to enhance learner experiences for student learning. Teachers are deployed strategically to make the best use of their specific strengths.

Middle management presented as a highly committed team who contribute significantly to the overall very effective management of the school. It is very positive that the duties aligned with posts of responsibility were designed to reflect the schools needs and vision in line with circular letter (CL) 03/2018. Weekly meetings are convened with SMT and assistant principals (Treoraí) to discuss and progress school priorities.

The class tutors monitor and review attendance, lateness, academic and student goal setting throughout the school year. This is very good practice.

The code of behaviour has been recently updated. A positive behaviour support system was effectively used in lessons. In light of teacher, parent and student questionnaires the school should monitor the consistency of implementation of both the code of behaviour and restorative practices.

Leading school development

The principal proactively encourages and supports staff to maximise their potential. Teachers are provided with very good opportunities to develop leadership roles.

The school's commendable culture of collaborative review, is fostered from senior leadership through middle management and provides opportunities for all staff to maximise their leadership potential. The principal meets with all teachers and subject departments regularly to discuss their work. Commendably, all teachers are members of sub-committees created to develop and review key focus areas resulting in a robust and cohesive approach to learning and teaching, this is very good practice.

Through the school self-evaluation (SSE) process the school have identified appropriate areas for development and have specific school targets informed by available school data. School targets are meaningful and are regularly monitored and reviewed to ensure that planned actions are implemented consistently. Teacher questionnaires indicate that SSE is used to improve student learning.

The SMT together with the board have ensured that the available building resources have been maximised.

The student focus group and parent group indicated that the wide range of non-curricular activities that contribute significantly to students' involvement and leadership. Students are given regular opportunities to present to the board and have been involved in the development of school policies including; code of dress, the use and management of their own resource areas at break times. The student council is democratically organised, is active and meet weekly.

The parents' association is very supportive of the school. Parent questionnaires indicate satisfaction with opportunities to participate in school life, including input to relevant policies. The focus group of parents and responses to questionnaires indicated that they feel very happy with the school, and consider that the school is very well run.

Developing leadership capacity

To enhance teaching, learning and student support teachers are empowered to participate and lead a range of initiative and are facilitated to avail of purposeful continuing professional development (CPD). Senior management supports and encourages staff to develop leadership roles and enables teachers to collaborate and share their expertise. Recent CPD inputs align very closely with the SSE targets and meaningfully inform planning and practices. This is very good practice. The school has developed very close links with other agencies both local and international, through its sharing of innovative its e-learning and teaching approaches.

Student voice and leadership is empowered in many varied and meaningful ways. Students are supported to set up and lead their own clubs, have regular input to programmes and teaching and learning reviews.

2. QUALITY OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

Learner outcomes and experiences

Teaching and learning was very good overall, instances of excellent practice were observed frequently.

In all lessons, learner outcomes and experiences were very positive. Teachers had very good knowledge of their students which supported a positive learning environment.

The whole-school approach to learning in the school focuses on 'learning to learn' and 'building learner power' strategies. Significantly, this was clearly evident in all lessons and students had various opportunities to engage in active methodologies and to reflect and consider their own learning through highly effective assessment of learning (AfL).

The strategic approaches to very successful use of starter tasks, learning intentions, success criteria, placemat, 'show me boards', exit slips, 'three stars and a wish', reflection tasks and online quizzes were evident in all lessons. The consistent use of such student-centred strategies ensured that students were actively engaged and confident in appraising their own progress.

Lesson structure and design was a significant strength across all lessons and impacted on the high quality of student outcomes and experiences.

In the best lessons student contributions, at relevant stages in the lesson, fostered an understanding and willingness amongst students in the value of making mistakes and using them as learning opportunities. There was a clear sense among students that they were making progress. To further extend these very good practices, students should have more opportunities to share and discuss some of their reflections with each other.

Students had ample opportunity to participate in collaborative activities in lessons. Highly effective student engagement in group work was noted when the activity was carefully structured and timed with well-defined student roles.

In most lessons, students made excellent and creative use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) to support their learning. In the best lessons students used ICT independently and cooperatively to research topics related to the lesson, perform inquiry based tasks, reflect on and present their learning.

Students were consistently given opportunities to work independently following group work. This allowed for individualised consolidation of learning. This is very good practice.

Teachers used questioning, targeted and global, to assess students' progress in their learning. Exemplary practice was noted when higher-order questions were utilised by teachers to stimulate student interest and progressively challenge them further.

Homework is set and monitored in all lessons and in the best lessons, teachers regularly gave students' developmental feedback on their written work both in copybooks and on the schools' online learning digital platform. Excellent practice was noted when students and teachers both assessed learning through the use of success criteria.

Classrooms visited displayed attractive learning environments, furniture to support collaborative student work, learning to learn motivational quotes and word walls supporting student literacy. Whole-school literacy interventions, most notably an emphasis on keywords, were observed in most lessons. Overall student behaviour was very good during the evaluation.

A positive reward system devised by the school was used very successfully to affirm and reward students' input and attitudes to learning. This system successfully scaffolded good behaviour in most lessons. Additional learning opportunities were given when teachers used a visual cue on the board to caution students appropriately. The reward system supported learning and allowed students to self-manage and moderate their behaviours in most lessons. In a few lessons this system should be implemented more consistently.

In a few lessons, students' participation waned towards the end of a task and they required a greater challenge or support to keep them active for the lesson's duration. The sharing of best practices among teachers regarding optimising students' participation in lessons should be further developed.

Teachers' Individual and collective practice.

The quality of teaching was very good in the majority of lessons.

Individual teacher planning and preparation was very good in all lessons observed. Class teachers' own enthusiasm motivated students to enjoy their learning and very positive student teacher relationships were evident.

In most lessons there was a very good balance between clear teacher instruction, collaborative learning activities and opportunities for student discussion. In a few lessons a better balance was required as there was an over-reliance on teacher instruction. .

Digital technologies were used regularly to enrich teaching and learning and the school's digital learning platform was used very effectively in lessons. Teachers uploaded their class notes, audio/video clips and presentations for students to consult at home, supporting virtual learning and regular formative feedback. Teachers have impressively engaged with comprehensive CPD in this area and this has resulted in an excellent digital learning framework in the school.

In the best lessons, learning was well differentiated to suit all ability levels through the use of methodologies that offered appropriate levels of challenge, choice and support. In these lessons the planned tasks allowed for students to work at their own pace and teachers demonstrated a very good awareness of the needs of students with SEN. Commendably differentiation is a target in the schools' SSE process.

A strategic and productive culture of collaborative subject and programme planning is well established in the school. The overall quality of teachers' collaborative planning is excellent with integrated learning outcomes explicitly linked to assessment practices and methodologies across all subject plans and year groups.

This consistent approach also included integrated planning for L2LP learning and in line with the school's overall ethos and vision, ethical education is evident in all subjects. It is important that L2LP learning outcomes and lesson methodologies are further integrated into planned lesson approaches to ensure that students following this programme work alongside their typical peers as much as possible.

Subject teams discuss and analyse attainment data in order to inform future planning for improvement in teaching and learning.

3. IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS FROM PREVIOUS EVALUATIONS

Overall very good progress has been made in recommendations from previous inspections.

Teaching and Learning

Very good progress has been made in implementing recommendations on teaching and learning made in previous evaluations. These recommendations focused on subject department consistency of agreed strategies, written formative feedback, colour coding of chemical store and further differentiation with extension tasks. Extension tasks were evident in most lessons, further consideration of how to deepen student responses to and participation in extension tasks is advised.

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

The School's Self-Evaluation Process

SMT and assistant principals use the SSE process very successfully as a means of informing teaching and learning strategies progressively since the schools opening in 2015. Excellent practices are in place to implement the SSE process, including regular meetings of staff teams, administration of questionnaires and focus groups to seek views of parents, staff and students, analysis of data and creation of specific and appropriate targets. The school uses the SSE process to action improvements and regularly reports its findings to the wider school community through the school improvement plan, newsletter and website.

The School's Capacity for Improvement

The school has an excellent capacity for improvement. The SMT is reflective, proactive, promotes a culture of collaboration and innovation and has responsively created the structures needed to actualise the school's vision. Members of the middle-management team are highly dedicated and enthusiastic and teachers are willing and empowered to take on leadership roles.

The Inspectorate's Quality Continuum

Inspectors describe the quality of provision in the school using the Inspectorate's quality continuum which is shown below. The quality continuum provides examples of the language used by inspectors when evaluating and describing the quality of the school's provision of each area.

Level	Description	Example of descriptive terms
Very Good	<i>Very good</i> applies where the quality of the areas evaluated is of a very high standard. The very few areas for improvement that exist do not significantly impact on the overall quality of provision. For some schools in this category the quality of what is evaluated is <i>outstanding</i> and provides an example for other schools of exceptionally high standards of provision.	Very good; of a very high quality; very effective practice; highly commendable; very successful; few areas for improvement; notable; of a very high standard. Excellent; outstanding; exceptionally high standard, with very significant strengths; exemplary
Good	<i>Good</i> applies where the strengths in the areas evaluated clearly outweigh the areas in need of improvement. The areas requiring improvement impact on the quality of pupils' learning. The school needs to build on its strengths and take action to address the areas identified as requiring improvement in order to achieve a <i>very good</i> standard.	Good; good quality; valuable; effective practice; competent; useful; commendable; good standard; some areas for improvement
Satisfactory	<i>Satisfactory</i> applies where the quality of provision is adequate. The strengths in what is being evaluated just outweigh the shortcomings. While the shortcomings do not have a significant negative impact they constrain the quality of the learning experiences and should be addressed in order to achieve a better standard.	Satisfactory; adequate; appropriate provision although some possibilities for improvement exist; acceptable level of quality; improvement needed in some areas
Fair	<i>Fair</i> applies where, although there are some strengths in the areas evaluated, deficiencies or shortcomings that outweigh those strengths also exist. The school will have to address certain deficiencies without delay in order to ensure that provision is satisfactory or better.	Fair; evident weaknesses that are impacting on pupils' learning; less than satisfactory; experiencing difficulty; must improve in specified areas; action required to improve
Weak	<i>Weak</i> applies where there are serious deficiencies in the areas evaluated. Immediate and coordinated whole-school action is required to address the areas of concern. In some cases, the intervention of other agencies may be required to support improvements.	Weak; unsatisfactory; insufficient; ineffective; poor; requiring significant change, development or improvement; experiencing significant difficulties;

Appendix

SCHOOL RESPONSE TO THE REPORT

Submitted by the Board of Management

Area 1 Observations on the content of the inspection report

The school community were delighted to read this very positive report which provides a picture of a thriving, innovative and inclusive school.

In particular, the inspectorate's observations that:

- The overall quality of leadership and management is excellent; the highly effective board of management and senior management team create a culture of collaboration and reflective practice through very well-developed devolved leadership and whole-school structures.
- Very Good student care structures and practices were evident during the evaluation; commendable whole school guidance approaches are in place.
- In line with the school's overall ethos and vision, ethical education is evident in all subjects.
- The consistent use of whole school systems of learning to learn strategies and the creative use of ICT by teachers is exemplary; this has a significant positive impact on high quality learning.

We are proud this progress has been achieved while facing the challenges involved in operating in temporary accommodation.

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 Board acknowledges the Report's recommendation and will support the work of the SET team to extend the very good individualised planning for students with special educational needs (SEN) to all year groups and support the SET team to further facilitate the sharing of their expertise to subject teachers. Work on this recommendation has already commenced and will continue to be prioritised. Our current SSE actions are being reviewed to take this recommendation into consideration.

Celbridge Community School will continue to prioritise the effective practices, systems and structures we have in place and which have been recognised in this report, to ensure our school continues to provide an inclusive learning environment for all our students including students with additional educational needs. The establishment of high quality and collaborative approach to learning and teaching has been a key priority since the school's inception in 2015, particularly through the utilisation of innovative and active learning and teaching methodologies along with professional collaboration. These strengths, along with our current SSE focus on teachers responding to individual learning needs and differentiating teaching and learning activities as necessary, are being currently used and will continue to be used, to implement this report's recommendation. Opportunities for internal and external CPD in key areas of SEN are being planned to address identified areas of support for staff for the current academic year. We also regularly facilitate and promote a culture of collaboration and sharing of expertise among staff and our SEN team is currently being and will continue to be facilitated to share their expertise with subject teachers through professional collaboration, planning meetings, reflective practice opportunities and through CPD. As a school, we will continue to engage in a process of robust self-evaluation to review our progress in this area and to implement further steps as they are identified.

The board recognises that our school is currently at a key juncture as we transition from a start-up phase to that of an established school and we thank the Inspectorate for conducting an informative and positive inspection in Celbridge Community School. We will continue to strive to ensure that the core principles upon which the school has been established, as set out in the vision, aim and ethos of the school and which are commended in this report are consolidated and enhanced further.