

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

**Whole School Evaluation**  
**Management, Leadership and Learning**

**REPORT**

<b>Ainm na scoile / School name</b>	Kishoge Community College
<b>Seoladh na scoile / School address</b>	Ninth Lock Road Lucan
<b>Uimhir rolla / Roll number</b>	76152C

**Date of Evaluation: 04-04-2019**



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An Roinn Oideachais  
agus Scileanna  
Department of  
Education and Skills

## **WHOLE-SCHOOL EVALUATION – MANAGEMENT, LEADERSHIP AND LEARNING**

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

### **How to read this report**

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

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

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

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

### **CHILD PROTECTION**

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

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

At the time of the evaluation the school did not meet the requirements in relation to 7 above and therefore was not fully compliant with the checks undertaken.

## WHOLE-SCHOOL EVALUATION – MANAGEMENT, LEADERSHIP AND LEARNING

Dates of inspection	04-04-2019
Inspection activities undertaken <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meeting with Board of Management</li> <li>• Meetings with principal and deputy principal</li> <li>• Meetings with key staff</li> <li>• Review of relevant documents</li> <li>• Student focus-group interview</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meeting with parents</li> <li>• Analysis of parent, student and teacher questionnaires</li> <li>• Observation of teaching and learning</li> <li>• Examination of students' work</li> <li>• Interaction with students</li> <li>• Feedback to senior management team, board of management and teachers</li> </ul>

### School Context

Kishoge Community College is a co-educational post-primary school under the patronage of Dublin and Dún Laoghaire Education and Training Board (DDLETB) and in partnership with Educate Together. The school, which opened in 2014, has experienced rapid expansion, with a current enrolment of 672. Currently the school has five year groups including Junior Cycle programme, an optional Transition Year (TY), the Leaving Certificate (Established) and the Leaving Certificate Applied (LCA) programme.

### Summary of main findings and recommendations:

#### Findings

- A positive culture exists in Kishoge Community College where the school's values and vision are modelled by staff and encouraged in students and this is strengthened by an exceptional level of volunteerism among staff and of commitment to continuous improvement of the learner experience in the school.
- The overall quality of leadership and management is good in all areas; with commendable practice noted in leading teaching and learning and promoting the vision of the school; the senior management team and the middle-management team were undergoing significant growth and development at the time of the evaluation.
- Admirably, a broad interesting range of curricular, co-curricular and extra-curricular programmes is provided; although current provision for Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) does not meet Department of Education and Skills requirements.
- The board is supportive of the school and committed to its further development; some key policies in the school have yet to be developed and ratified.
- The quality of teaching and learning ranged from good or very good in most lessons, including some instances of excellent practice; to satisfactory in a small minority of lessons; there was scope to improve the differentiation of pace and challenge to suit the learning needs of all students.
- The school's engagement with the school self-evaluation (SSE) process has recently gained momentum but a more strategic approach to target setting is now needed; there is impressive capacity and enthusiasm among the staff at all levels to use reflective practices and measurable targets to achieve on-going school improvement using the SSE process.

#### Recommendations

- The board should prioritise the development and ratification of key policies including special educational needs (SEN) and Guidance and ensure adequate provision for SPHE at junior

cycle in order to meet the requirements of the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary schools 2017*.

- In the context of the recent significant development and growth of the middle-management team, it is now timely that the needs analysis in relation to posts of responsibility be revisited to reflect the evolving developmental priorities of the school.
- Teachers should further integrate differentiated teaching approaches in lessons to ensure all students are appropriately challenged and supported.
- Identified priorities in the SSE process should emphasise target setting that can lead to more measurable improvements.

## **DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **1. QUALITY OF SCHOOL LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

#### **Leading learning and teaching**

The quality of leadership of learning and teaching is good with commendable leadership and management practices evident in these areas. At the time of the evaluation, the senior management team and newly appointed middle-management layer were in a process of transition with significant recruitment and the development of middle-management structures.

The board of management and senior management team promote a positive learning environment, and they have high expectations of both students and staff. The senior management team has successfully initiated developments to improve teaching and learning practices. The Educate Together democratic, child-centred ethos is at the heart of this school and is reflected in all aspects of the school. Commendably, the board monitors teaching and learning through the discussion of certificate examination results, inspection reports and the principal's report. To further develop such discussions, the board should be provided with regular detailed progress reports from subject departments and post holders.

There is a broad and balanced curriculum offered and students' holistic development is supported through a wide range of co-curricular and extra-curricular opportunities. The school has been proactive in seeking to introduce innovative and new subjects such as coding and Chinese. Commendably, suggestions from students have led to subject development in TY and LCA. However, provision of SPHE and CSPE do not meet Department requirements. It is recommended that this be addressed as a matter of priority so that the school is compliant with child protection procedures.

Interesting and innovative LCA and TY programmes are in place. Students have the opportunity to experience learning both in the classroom, and outside, through tours, work experience and community outreach. A subject-sampling programme is provided in first year, ensuring that students' understanding of the nature of different subjects is enhanced, prior to subject choices for junior cycle being made. Staff, parents and the students themselves have indicated high levels of satisfaction with the system.

Innovation and creativity in teaching and learning is encouraged and many students have opportunities to represent the school at national and international events and competitions. The school's diverse student cohort is a positive and intrinsic part of its character and different cultures are celebrated at events such as 'International Day' and at the annual open evening for incoming students and their parents. There is opportunity to further promote the rich tapestry of culture in the everyday classroom.

Management works to promote a culture of learning throughout the school. High expectations are set for students and teachers are encouraged to develop their teaching to ensure that it continues to motivate and engage students. Teachers are encouraged and supported to avail of opportunities for continuing professional development (CPD); collaborative learning at whole-school level is well-established, such as an open-door policy in classrooms, collaborative peer review and the sharing of resources through online sharing platforms. In-house CPD has been prioritised and staff have had the opportunity to deliver inputs on a wide range of teaching and learning methodologies. It is now opportune to develop and measure a strategic and streamlined approach to CPD to meet the emerging pedagogical priorities of the school.

The school reported that it regularly provides placements for student teachers and that a robust Droichead system is established in the school. Such engagement in initial teacher education programmes is welcome and is included among the standards in the *Teaching Council's Code of Professional Conduct* as it can provide valuable benefits for teachers, student teachers and students.

A high priority is given to student care in the school and this was corroborated by feedback from parents and students, both in meetings and through questionnaire data. Year heads play a pivotal role in the student-care structures and are supported by a tutor system. The dedicated care team meets every fortnight and clear referral system is in place. A noticeboard in the staffroom discreetly indicates priority students within the care system. The team could consider more frequent meetings as the school expands. Commendably, anti-bullying measures are prioritised and this is communicated well to the student body. The guidance policy is at a very early stage of development and has yet to be ratified by the board. Worthy programmes such as life skills in first year and scheduled weekly guidance lessons in LCA and TY but Guidance is not currently scheduled weekly on any other student timetable. Provision could be enhanced through rebalancing the focus from individual to regular whole-class contact at critical times.

A range of approaches is in place to support students with special educational needs (SEN), including learning-support classes, small-group mainstream tuition, in-class support and one-to-one sessions. The SEN team have identified co-teaching as a priority and encouragingly, whole-school CPD is ongoing in this area. A very good transition programme is in place for incoming SEN students, facilitated by strong links with parents and feeder schools. Individualised student-support files, and clear lines of communication with staff, support the differing learning needs of SEN students.

Some aspects of SEN are in need of review. The SEN policy is not yet ratified and this should now be prioritised. Teaching resources provided to the school to support students with SEN are being underutilised, mainly due to difficulties in recruitment. This should be addressed as soon as is possible to ensure the best learner outcomes for these students. The SEN team have themselves recognised the need to reduce the large number of teachers currently delivering SEN support in order to facilitate planning meetings and cohesive delivery of the SEN programme as the school expands. Planning is underway to achieve this. Worthy co-curricular and cross-curricular opportunities are in place for very academically capable students offering students opportunities to compete at national and international level.

In keeping with the school's commitment to inclusion, an autistic spectrum disorder (ASD) unit has been established. Students in the unit are integrated into mainstream classes where possible. English as an additional Language (EAL) provision is established in the school, supported by DDLETB, with good systems of testing and identification of EAL needs in place. However, there is scope to develop whole-school in-class support for students whose first language is not English.

Very positive rapport between teachers and students was in evidence throughout the evaluation. Positive student behaviour is celebrated through regular award ceremonies and through the school's online sharing platform. There is scope to further develop the student journal as a means of affirming and encouraging students.

## **Managing the organisation**

The board is very supportive of the school and there is regular communication between it and the principal. An agreed report should be provided for teachers and the parents' association after each board meeting. Commendable efforts are made by the senior management team in prioritising the development of a positive learning organisation that also reflects the vision and ethos of the school. Questionnaire responses from parents and staff expressed high levels of satisfaction with the manner in which the school is run. The vast majority of the staff also reported a high level of morale. The impressive and very well maintained school building further supports the positive school climate.

The school has an open, inclusive admissions policy that due to increasing enrolment has been reviewed regularly, and includes clear criteria for admission. However, policy development is an area for development and it is recommended that the board prioritise the further development and ratification of key policies such as Guidance. In this context, the board should consider adopting a system of rolling review to support a clear system of policy review and ratification.

Links are being established with local business, community organisations and educational partners. This should continue as the school becomes more established. The parents' association provides good support to the school and has a dedicated section on the school website. The school should continue to recognise the challenge of ensuring the spectrum of socio-economic and cultural needs of the wider school community are reflected in all aspects of school development.

## **Leading school development**

The senior management team promotes a culture of professional reflection and development by encouraging teachers to develop their teaching, learning and assessment practices, mainly through engagement with in-house sharing of best practice. The school should now devise a strategy to monitor and develop the impact of CPD in the classroom. Management has facilitated peer observation in the school and further developing this professional collaboration model could form an integral part of future school improvement in teaching and learning.

## **Developing leadership capacity**

The willingness of staff to be involved in all aspects of school life and to engage in ongoing school development is a key strength of the school. Management welcomes and encourages suggestions from teachers resulting in a broad range of co-curricular and extra-curricular activities and in subject choice. Questionnaire data from teachers is a testimony to the positive atmosphere of the school. For example, the support given by staff to facilitating students' involvement in a very extensive range of extra-curricular activities is highly commendable and facilitated by the exceptional levels of volunteerism by teachers in the school. High value is placed on in-house expertise for upskilling staff. Commendably, ways in which the energy and vibrancy of a newly developing learning organisation can be nurtured and sustained have already been initiated by the school.

A very strong work ethic was evident among staff. Responsibilities for various aspects of school provision are divided amongst the newly appointed middle-management team. Management and staff are agreed that the development of a cohesive middle-management layer is at a very early stage. It is now opportune to revisit the needs analysis in relation to posts to reflect the evolving developmental priorities of the school and key whole-school management duties.

Student leadership is promoted in many ways, including the democratically elected students' council and the Green Schools initiative. Students have had opportunity to contribute to relevant policy development, to present to subject teams and to the board. It was evident in the data gathered and in the student focus group meeting that the student voice is prioritised and that the school has enabled students to see themselves as stakeholders and feel empowered to initiate change.

## **2. QUALITY OF TEACHING AND LEARNING**

### **Learner outcomes and experiences**

In responding to questionnaires, a high percentage of parents and students reported very positive views about the quality of teaching and learning. The learner experience was good or very good in most of the lessons observed, including some instances of excellent practice. There was a small minority of lessons that were satisfactory. There was scope to enhance the depth of learners' experience through increasing the level of challenge or support in many lessons. To this end, teachers should consider how to further integrate student-centred differentiated tasks and activities when planning for lessons. Particular cognisance should be taken of students whose first language is not English.

In almost all lessons, learning was supported through the use of learning intentions shared at the start of lessons. In the best lessons, time was taken to discuss and reflect on the learning intentions with the students and clear links were made with aspects of prior learning to encourage and support students' engagement in their learning. Enjoyment and motivation among students was very evident when they were actively and purposefully engaged with the lesson content and where a clear learning focus was used to frame the lesson. The differentiation of learning intentions to suit the variety of learning needs of students in the mixed ability setting should be a key focus for the school going forward.

Class teachers' own enthusiasm for their subject motivated students to enjoy their learning. The cluster arrangement of desks evident in many classrooms facilitated student collaboration. In almost all lessons, the relationships between students and their teachers were very positive. Teachers were very affirming and encouraging. Efforts had been made to promote subjects and celebrate students' work by displaying interesting material, adding to the positive learning environment. In all lessons observed, students were provided with opportunities to collaborate using think-pair-share activities or group work. The most effective lessons were characterised by a co-operative approach to group work where groups had been pre-planned, individual roles were assigned and students were given ample opportunity to share and showcase their learning.

Assessment for learning (AfL) strategies have been a focus for the school. This was evident in many lessons where students were afforded opportunities to engage with criteria for success to support them in their learning. The use of 'show-me' boards and targeted questions facilitated teachers in assessing students' understanding. Some very good examples of regular developmental written formative feedback in student copybooks were in evidence. Developing homework policies at team level should support more consistency in this good practice across the school.

In many lessons, students were encouraged to reflect on what they had learned during the lesson through use of exit slips. In the best lessons, where given opportunity, students could offer their own opinions and ask questions and were supported by their teachers to engage in exploratory discussion. This was often achieved by setting aside ample time for student feedback. In these lessons, there was a balance between teacher exposition and student input which has particular relevance in the context of hour-long lessons. More widespread use of facilitating and encouraging student interaction is encouraged across all year groups.

Information and communications technology (ICT) was used to support teaching and learning in most lessons. Slide presentations were used regularly to frame lessons and a range of online resources was used to support learning. Commendably, some teachers disseminated information to students using a shared ICT platform while others facilitated students to use ICT for research purposes. Further ways to facilitate students to use ICT in a creative way, such as creating new knowledge or to self-assess is encouraged.

### **Teachers' individual and collective practice**

A wide variety of teaching approaches was observed in many lessons visited which supported student engagement in their learning. Often, such engagement was accentuated by the vibrancy and energy of teachers. In the most effective lessons, teachers had high expectations of their students and chose learning tasks and activities to suit the learning needs of their students. In some lessons, the relevant life skills were referenced as a further means of motivating student learning. In these lessons there was an appropriate balance between the teacher's voice and student activity with ample time given to active learning and in a few lessons, students were facilitated to move around the classroom to share their learning with their peers. This has particular relevance in the context of hour long lessons. In some lessons the pace and challenge of the lesson was an area for development.

Individual preparation was generally at a high standard and learning environments were student-centred and included colourful and interesting displays that promoted subjects and celebrated student work. The positivity that has been alluded to previously in this report was also present in the classrooms of Kishoge Community College. Teachers' facilitated self-reflection and target setting, using students' journals and exit slips. In many lessons teachers used questioning to good effect, particularly in the area of assessing students understanding. In the best lessons teachers used higher-order questioning techniques to facilitate students' critical thinking skills and supported students in responding to these questions. These good practices should be extended to all lessons.

Some good examples of whole-school literacy initiatives were observed in lessons, most notably in subject specific keywords. This has particular relevance in the context of students whose first language is not English. Some numeracy initiatives were also noted in a few lessons but scope to further develop reinforcement strategies in identified key numeracy strategies is needed.

Strategies to promote a differentiated approach to student learning included circulation around the classroom by teachers to provide individual support and, in a few lessons, some planned differentiated tasks were in evidence. Overall, the further planning for differentiation is recommended, for example through the use of differentiated outcomes, modes of assessment and learning tasks and activities.

Collaboration among staff is very strong and testimony to the collegiality and sense of team that is a significant strength of the school. CPD is valued and prioritised and impressive advances regarding junior cycle curricular reform were in evidence in many subjects, particularly regarding assessment practices. The quality of subject department planning was good. Worthwhile practices included common schemes of work, reflections on past subject inspections and engagement with attainment data. The most effective examples included strategic analysis of this data to inform future planning for improvement. This purposeful use of attainment data should be included in all subject planning.



### **3. IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS FROM PREVIOUS EVALUATIONS**

#### **Teaching and Learning**

The implementation of recommendations from the three previous subject inspection reports was generally good within subject departments and in a whole-school context. An example of this is where all subject plans have a section that reflects on key areas for development raised in previous subject reports. Whole-school literacy interventions, specifically around the area of subject-specific keywords was evident in most lesson. The school has also provided CPD in the area of co-teaching and this is an area prioritised for further development. However, differentiation remains a significant area for development in everyday classroom practice both in terms of challenging better-able students and providing appropriate support for those who struggle. In the context of a significant number of students whose first language is not English, the planning and practice of differentiated tasks and activities has particular resonance. Encouragingly, the school has provided in-house CPD in the area but clear targets both at individual and team level should now be set and identified key areas of differentiation should be embedded at whole-school level.

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

#### **The School's Self-Evaluation Process**

The school's engagement with SSE has been good and many whole-school developments have occurred, most notably in AfL, literacy and numeracy. The SSE process has gained recent momentum and formalisation, particularly in the area of ICT, has occurred. It is now timely to identify SMART targets that meet the evolving needs of the school and to put in place systems that can monitor progress in identified areas. The formation of a core SSE team will support overarching whole-school targets for improvements.

#### **The School's Capacity for Improvement**

The work of the senior management team, supported by a team of teachers who work assiduously and conscientiously, suggests that the collective capacity for improvement is very good.

## 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 Board welcomes the many positive findings in the report particularly in relation to the visibility of the school's values and vision, the quality of teaching and learning, the exceptional volunteerism of staff and the school's commitment to continuous improvement.

The Board welcomes the many positive findings in relation to *Learning* particularly in the context of 22 members of a teaching team of 51 joining the school this school year.

The Board welcomes the many positive findings in relation to *Leadership and Management* particularly in the context of a school of 680 students where 11 members of the management team of 15 were appointed in the course of the current school year. The Board also notes that, because the school is a rapidly-developing school, key resources such as SEN and Guidance provision are based on last year's enrolment of 500 rather than on the current enrolment of 680.

## **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's response to the Report's recommendations:

- The SEN policy has been ratified by the Board. Members of the management team have attended CPD on the development of a school Guidance plan. A committee is in place to work on this plan in the new school year. The deficit in provision for SPHE due to the school's adoption of 60-minute classes will be addressed in next year's timetable.
- The Board will review the use of posts of responsibility in the context of the recent appointment of 11 APs.
- The school will continue its work to develop capacity in relation to differentiation.
- The SSE team will work on developing measurable targets in the coming school year.