An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna

Department of Education and Skills

Follow-Through Inspection

REPORT

Ainm na scoile/ School name	Dundalk Grammar School
Seoladh na scoile/ School address	The Crescent Dundalk County Louth
Uimhir rolla / Roll number	63920A

Date of Evaluation: 12-01-2018

AN ROINN OIDEACHAIS AGUS SCILEANNA | DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND SKILLS

WHAT IS A 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 of the school was given an opportunity to comment on the findings and recommendations of the report; the board chose to accept the report without response.

ORIGINAL INSPECTION DETAILS	FOLLOW-THROUGH INSPECTION DETAILS
Type: WSE-MLL **Date of Inspection:** 5 March 2014 **Report Published:** Yes	**Date of Inspection**: 12 January 2018

Follow-through inspection activities

The following activities took place in the course of the follow-through inspection

- Meeting with the senior management team
- Interview with key staff
- Review of school documentation and records and students' work
- Review of resources and facilities
- Observation of teaching and learning
- Interaction with students

Recommendation in original inspection report	Progress achieved to date on implementation of recommendation
There is a need for a strategic staff-based planning group, within which the areas of literacy, numeracy, junior cycle review and teaching and learning can be addressed.	**Good progress** Although a single staff-based planning group has not been established, there are currently two very active groups of staff involved in strategic planning. One group is focused on the general development of teaching and learning practice. Another group is exploring how information and communication technology (ICT) can be integrated into classroom practice through the upskilling of teachers. Both groups are working well and their work will in time take a more whole-school approach by involving a wider range of staff. In addition, since the WSE-MLL was conducted, staff members have had a significant involvement in the development of a school improvement plan as part of the school's self-evaluation process. Progress of the targets set in the improvement plan is being monitored by senior management. For example, a working group of staff has conducted a planned review of the school's timetable.
Self-evaluation practices should be included in all subject department planning and should focus on a critical appraisal of teaching and learning and improving the learning experience for students.	**Good progress** Since the WSE-MLL, senior management requires all subject departments to review and provide feedback annually on a detailed analysis of students' attainment in the certificate examinations. Senior management also meets with subject departments where necessary to discuss student attainment. Academic tracking of individual student progress is coordinated by the deputy principal, and year heads play a key role in supporting students to achieve their best. It is recommended that baseline data, such as cognitive test results, be included in the information

	considered when student progress is monitored. At present, a number of staff are completing the final year of a Master's programme focused on teaching and learning practices. These teachers present, and lead discussions, on aspects of teaching and learning at regular meetings which are open to all staff. It is envisaged that when the current Master's programme is completed that these teachers will continue to lead teaching and learning developments with other groups of staff.
The intended learning outcomes should determine the range of activities used to engage and challenge students in lessons.	**Good progress** A number of lessons were observed. In most cases, the learning activities incorporated in these lessons supported the intended aim of the lesson effectively. For example, development of laboratory skills was supported by hands-on practical activities. Students' ability to evaluate their own work in sketch mapping was facilitated by the sharing of the relevant success criteria. In another lesson, the ability to research a topic independently was promoted by requiring students to make brief presentations to the rest of the class.
A review of current assessment procedures and the incorporation of a greater variety of modes of assessment and feedback to students are recommended.	**Good progress** The homework policy has been reviewed since the WSE-MLL and, at present, a review of school examinations is underway. Individual subject departments have shared good practice with respect to assessment practices. Development of assessment practices is a significant element of the work led by the group of teachers involved in the Master's programme with Maynooth University.

Summary of findings

It is evident that the board of management, senior management and staff have given serious consideration to the recommendations in the WSE-MLL report. Work on each of the recommendations has progressed well and the school is continuing to pursue improvements across the relevant areas.

Recommendations

- It is recommended that baseline data, such as cognitive test results, be included in the information reviewed when student progress is monitored.

CHILD PROTECTION

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

1. The school principal is aware that revised child protection procedures for primary and post-primary schools came into effect on 11 December 2017 and arrangements are in place to begin the process of implementing these procedures.
2. The name of the designated liaison person for child protection matters was prominently displayed in the school's reception area.
3. The school has a child protection policy in place.
4. All teachers are aware that they are mandated persons and of their responsibilities in that regard.

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

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.

Published March 2018 / Foilsithe Márta 2018