



An Roinn Oideachais
Department of Education

Follow-through inspection

on progress made by the school since the **Whole School Evaluation – Management, Leadership and Learning** carried out in April 2021

Report

REPORT

Ainm na scoile/School name	Sancta Maria College
Seoladh na scoile/School address	Ballyroan Crescent Rathfarnham Dublin 16
Uimhir rolla/Roll number	60341P
Dáta na cigireachta/ Date of evaluation	12-05-2023
Dáta eisiúna na tuairisce/ Date of issue of report	05/10/2023

Follow-Through Inspection

Follow-Through inspections evaluate the progress a school has made on implementing recommendations made in an earlier inspection. During a Follow-Through inspection, inspectors may also advise the school on what other actions they can take to fully implement these recommendations.

This inspection followed up on the progress the school made in implementing the main recommendations in the inspection carried out in April 2021: Whole School Evaluation – Management, Leadership and Learning. Published school reports can be accessed [here](#).

How to read this report

The first part of the report describes what the inspector did during this Follow-Through inspection.

The main section of the report describes the progress the school has made in implementing each of the main recommendations made in the original inspection. Inspectors use one of the following terms in describing this progress: very good, good, partial or no progress. These terms are explained on the last page of the report.

The report then briefly describes the process school leaders used to implement the recommendations. School leaders includes the principal, the deputy principal and assistant principals. It also includes teachers with posts of responsibility and any member of the school community who has undertaken roles related to the school's priorities.

The report concludes with advice to help the school fully implement the recommendations made in the original inspection, where such advice has been provided to the school.

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.

Actions of the school to safeguard children and prevent and tackle bullying

During the inspection visit, the following checks in relation to the school's child protection and anti-bullying procedures were conducted:	
Child Protection	Anti-bullying
<ol style="list-style-type: none">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.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The school has developed an anti-bullying policy that meets the requirements of the <i>Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (2013)</i> and this policy is reviewed annually.2. The board of management minutes record that the principal provides a report to the board at least once a term on the overall number of bullying cases reported (by means of the bullying recording template provided in the <i>Procedures</i>) since the previous report to the board.3. The school's anti-bullying policy is published on its website and/or is readily accessible to board of management members, teachers, parents and pupils.

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

The following activities took place during the Follow-Through inspection:

- Meeting with senior leadership team
- Interview with members of in-school leadership team
- Interview with relevant teachers
- Review of school documentation and records
- Review of resources and facilities
- Observation of teaching and learning
- Interaction/meeting with students
- Communication with chairperson of board of management

Findings on progress made on recommendations

With the assistance of the trustees of the school, the board of management, the senior management team and the teaching staff should work together on the actions necessary to address poor communication and relationships, as a priority; this should include accessing external support, facilitation, and advice, as necessary.

Very Good Progress

All aspects of this recommendation had been addressed. The school had accessed external support, with the assistance of the trustees. This external support had resulted in a substantial action plan which was being progressed in a highly effective manner. Communication and relationships throughout the school community were observed to be very good.

It was to the very great credit of the board of management, the senior leadership team, and members of staff that very significant advances had been achieved across these challenging areas of school culture in such a short period of time.

The board is advised to explore purposeful actions or initiatives which it can take forward, towards restoring a positive and collaborative whole-school culture, based on trust and mutual respect, among all parties in the school community; establishing effective school self-evaluation (SSE) processes across the administrative and pedagogical work of the school, with the students at the centre, can provide an inclusive mechanism for whole-school improvement and renewal.

Very Good Progress

The school had established very effective processes to support collaboration, planning, administration, and pedagogy across the school community. These incorporated the development of SSE processes which will inform work going forward. A wide range of staff committees had been established, with the support and encouragement of senior management. Members of staff met with during the evaluation spoke of feeling empowered, trusted, enabled and respected in their work.

There was a clear sense of positive energy and renewal across the school community, incorporating both the physical environment and actions undertaken by members of staff. It was evident during lessons observed by inspectors that students were placed at the centre of the learning experience, in warm and caring lessons.

Action should be taken to address key areas for improvement including the students' experiences of the school, the operation of the board, quality assurance, and the embedding of school self-evaluation (SSE) across all learning and teaching settings to enable thorough and ongoing review of the school's administrative and curricular policies.

Very Good Progress

All areas of this recommendation were being addressed. In particular, it was evident to inspectors that the student experience in the school was very good. Students themselves noted that they were happy

and showed a clear awareness and appreciation for care structures which were available to them. In addition, students universally displayed clarity with regard to the structures which underpinned student voice within the school.

Students met during a focus group spoke confidently with regard to what they liked about the school and also, as might be expected, areas they would like to be further developed. This speaks to the manner in which the school was incorporating student participation around key decisions. Students were very appreciative of their teachers and senior leadership team during discussions with inspectors.

The board of management, together with the senior management team, should ensure that the full teacher allocation for special educational needs (SEN) is used solely for its intended purpose, as stipulated in Circular 0014/2017. The school's leadership team should seek to improve the continuity of teaching supports for students by adopting a more coherent and less fragmented approach to timetabling, along with a reduction in the high number of individual teachers currently providing the supports.

Very Good Progress

It was clear that the school had adopted a strategic approach to the deployment of the teacher allocation for SEN. This included some adjustments to the school organisation, along with the very effective practice of incorporating expertise in SEN into the timetabling process at an early stage each year.

Beyond this, a core team had been identified and established and was responsible for the delivery of a substantial portion of SEN hours. Hours were apportioned on the basis of student need and it was very positive to note that team-teaching had become an established practice, thus enhancing capacity with regard to the effective inclusion of all students. The school was aware of the need to continue to reduce the number of teachers assigned to the delivery of resource hours and was taking steps to address this.

The process of implementing the recommendations

The trustees and the board had supported the senior leadership team and the staff in implementing a range of actions to address the recommendations from the WSE MLL report. These actions had included: the appointment of an external facilitator; improved mechanisms for communication; very good consultation with the partners in the school community; the development of a medium-term strategic plan; the review and ratification of a number of school policies; the development of improved consultation with the student body; the involvement of the SEN co-ordinator in the timetabling process; and the development of a core team to support students with SEN. These actions are very positive.

Recommendations

- No further recommendations arise in relation to the recommendations in the original report.

The Quality Continuum for progress made on implementing the recommendations

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

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

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

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