

**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>	Luttrellstown Community College
<b>Seoladh na scoile / School address</b>	Luttrellstown Community College Porterstown Road Clonsilla Dublin 15
<b>Uimhir rolla / Roll number</b>	76130P

**Date of Evaluation: 20-10-2016**

**02-02-2017**



## **WHAT IS A WHOLE-SCHOOL EVALUATION – MANAGEMENT, LEADERSHIP AND LEARNING?**

Whole-School Evaluations – Management, Leadership and Learning report on the quality of teaching and learning and on the quality of management and leadership in a school. They affirm good practice and make 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.

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The board of management 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.

## Whole-School Evaluation – Management, Leadership and Learning

### INSPECTION ACTIVITIES DURING THIS INSPECTION

<b>Date of inspection</b>	20-10-2016
<b>Inspection activities undertaken</b> <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

Luttrelstown Community College opened in 2009 to serve the needs of a large urban area with a rapidly growing young population in Dublin 15. It is a co-educational post-primary school under the trusteeship of the Dublin and Dún Laoghaire Education and Training Board (DDLETB). The student cohort is multicultural and for many students, English is not their first language. The school has a current enrolment of 731 students.

### SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

#### FINDINGS

- Good or very good teaching was observed in most lessons. Of those lessons, some instances of excellent practice were also noted. In other lessons, there was scope for improvement in the teaching and learning approaches utilised.
- Results from teacher, parent and student surveys were generally very positive about the school.
- The board of management provides very good support for the school.
- The senior management team is proactive and ambitious for the school.
- There is significant capacity and enthusiasm among the staff to use reflective practices to achieve ongoing school improvement.
- There was strong evidence of a whole-school ethos in the area of student care. A formalisation of the student support team and its operating procedures would further enhance this area.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

- A review of the student support team is required to address issues such as the development of the co-ordinator's role, referral procedures, regular and documented meetings and recording of agreed follow-up actions.
- An immediate review of Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) policy and Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) policy is recommended including course content, time provision and delivery at both junior and senior cycle.
- The Special Educational Needs (SEN) department should explore the models of provision with a particular focus on the strategic use of team teaching and the review of English as an additional language (EAL) provision in the school.
- To further enrich school self-evaluation (SSE) outcomes, the expansion of the current SSE team to include representatives from across the curriculum and a review of strand 3 of the school's SSE plan to incorporate aspects of teaching and learning is advised.

## DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 1. QUALITY OF SCHOOL MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP

#### 1.1. School ownership and management:

The board of management of the school meets regularly and is highly committed to the school and its development. Currently the board is not fully constituted, a second teacher representative needs to be elected. All board members are appropriately trained and are aware of their responsibilities and have identified, in collaboration with the school community, a range of developmental priorities.

The board reviews the school's admission policy on an annual basis. The board of management has ratified many of the mandatory policies and is in the process of reviewing and ratifying the Social Personal and Health Education policy, the Guidance Policy, the Special Education Needs plan and the Relationship and Sexuality Education policy. The board should now seek to expedite the ratification of these policies.

The board, in conjunction with DDLETB, is supportive of the continuous professional development of in-school management and staff. Commendably, the board is very well informed in relation to curricular matters and student attainment in certificate examinations is reviewed at board meetings.

Confirmation was provided that the board of management has formally adopted the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* without modification and that the school is compliant with the requirements of the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*.

An active parents' council is in place and meetings are held regularly. These are attended by a representative of the senior management team thus providing high-quality, two-way communication between school staff and the parents' council.

Parents' surveys expressed high levels of satisfaction with how the school is run and how their children are progressing. However, parents also indicate that there is scope for the parents' council to improve communication with the wider parent body. The school's communication with parents via the school website is an area that could be developed to ensure greater parental engagement.

#### 1.2 Effectiveness of leadership for learning

The senior management team (SMT), comprising the principal and deputy principal, is pro-active, progressive and ambitious for the school and is committed to its future development. Both the principal and the deputy principal have clearly defined roles and responsibilities and they meet on a daily basis. As a team, they display significant strengths, demonstrate high expectations of their staff and students, and have introduced a range of support structures to progress the school's priorities.

The middle-management team comprises five assistant principals and one special duties teacher. A recent review of the posts of responsibilities was undertaken, providing clarity regarding the roles and responsibilities assigned to each post. A more prominent role for year heads in punctuality and attendance initiatives as-well as academic monitoring is recommended. This will support strategies for improvement already identified by the school.

A key strength of the school is its committed and hardworking staff, among whom an impressive level of volunteerism is evident in the provision of extra-curricular and co-curricular activities for students.

Some devolved leadership opportunities in teaching and learning are available to staff members and this is an area worthy of expansion. One area that would benefit is the development of the current school self-evaluation team to reflect the diversity of the curriculum. The establishment of a sub-committee on positive behavioural management for senior students, as part of the annual review of the behaviour policy, is another means of increasing leadership opportunities among staff.

The welfare needs of students are at the heart of Luttrellstown Community College and are regarded as the responsibility of all staff. There is currently a supportive care system in place involving year heads, care leaders, tutors and the SMT. The school journal, the merit system and the school's online administrative platform, all empower teachers, tutors, care leaders and *caomhnóirs*, to promote positive behavioural management in the school.

The establishment of a student-support team is recommended, comprising a management representative, a guidance counsellor, the SEN co-ordinator, year heads, tutors and the SPHE co-ordinator. This team should meet weekly and it is recommended that the structure, focus, and record-keeping procedures of the meetings be audited in relation to the NEPS publication *Student Support Teams in Post-Primary Schools: A Guide to Establishing a Team or Reviewing an Existing Team*. This would ensure that relevant student-support information is shared in a systematic manner and that planned interventions are discussed collaboratively and are undertaken in an appropriately distributed manner.

A review of the timetabling of SPHE, as per circular M11/03, is recommended to ensure that students are receiving sufficient time each week for this subject. A SPHE co-ordinator should be designated to oversee the teaching and learning of SPHE. Also, an immediate review of the provision of RSE at both junior and senior cycle is recommended, to address concerns communicated by both parents and students in questionnaires.

The school plan includes a register of ratification and projected review dates for policies. A focus for the future would be the addition of a developmental section detailing task groups who have worked and who are currently working to develop policy on particular areas of school life over the years.

Subject department planning is well established. Subject and programme plans are all shared on the school's information and communications technology (ICT) platform and formal meetings of subject teams take place regularly. Minutes of these meetings are documented and available. Many subject plans included a detailed SWOT analysis and this is to be commended. Some good examples of planning for cross-curricular and co-curricular activities to support learning were noted in the plans reviewed.

Looking to the further development of subject planning, creating a common template that outlines, in respect of coursework topics, the selected methodologies, resources, learning outcomes and modes of assessment is encouraged. Plans should also include areas for subject improvement and indicate how teachers' reflections on student attainment in both the certificate and house examinations inform subject planning, target setting and pedagogy.

The guidance department offers counselling services and educational guidance to students. Support is offered through information nights and through Transition Year (TY) and senior cycle timetabled

classes to support subject and programme choices. However, there is scope for the guidance department to develop its role in the monitoring and tracking of students in the certificate and house examinations and with regard to student progression, in line with the board of management's identified priority.

A broad and significant range of subjects is offered to students, in addition to the provision of TY and LCVP. The inclusion of Chinese and Coding at junior cycle level is to be commended. The addition of the Leaving Certificate Applied (LCA) programme is planned for 2017-18 after a difficult beginning two years ago. The reintroduction of LCA is most welcome given the key support this programme gives to the cohort of students who are not experiencing success in the Leaving Certificate (Established) programme. The TY plan is to be reviewed and updated this year and a programme co-ordinator is to be appointed. These developments will undoubtedly enhance the TY experience for students in the school.

For the most part, the SMT ensures that the timetable allocation for each subject is in line with syllabus and subject-specific guidelines and that the school's curriculum is implemented in a way that provides valuable learning experiences for students. However, there are some issues that need to be addressed relating to the timetabling of Physical Education (PE) in first year, core subjects appearing twice in the same day at junior level and classes both at senior and junior level with more than one teacher. Encouragingly, some of these areas are currently being addressed.

Currently, a very dedicated approach is taken to securing resources for students with special educational needs (SEN), grounded in consultation with students, their parents and feeder primary schools. It is this good communication with primary schools that ensures early profiling of students with SEN. The school has two teachers with post-graduate qualifications in SEN and they are supported in the delivery of the SEN programme by a committed and enthusiastic special-needs assistant (SNA) team. A student profiling system is currently in its pilot phase.

The establishment of a SEN core team, comprising a SMT representative, the resource and learning support co-ordinators, the EAL co-ordinator, a representative from the guidance team and a representative of the SNA team, is recommended in order to manage and co-ordinate the range of supports being implemented. This team should meet on a weekly basis to aid with the delegation of tasks; with the embedding of skills and knowledge within the team as the school grows; and for the sharing of information and methodologies. A review of the types of SEN provision (as per circular 0070/2014) with a view to expanding and the strategic developing of team teaching and in-class support is also recommended.

In the context of the multi-lingual and multi-cultural nature of the student cohort, a review of the EAL provision is required. The areas of in-class supports, course content and available resources should form part of the review. Teachers should engage in a whole-school approach to ensuring students, whose first language is not English, reach a greater proficiency in English.

A key strength of the school is its enthusiastic and hardworking staff, among whom a very good level of volunteerism is evident in the provision of high-standard extra-curricular and co-curricular activities for students. These activities allow students to experience opportunities to develop the skills and attitudes necessary for lifelong learning. A range of opportunities is in place to enable students to lead initiatives, for example the student council, the Big Brother/Sister mentor programme and a summer camp for incoming first years. Students also can avail of leadership opportunities in the continued green flag work that promotes environmental responsibility as a key school value.

## 1.2. Management of facilities

Overall maintenance of the school is very good. Classrooms are well equipped and many had displays of students' work and commercially sourced materials. The school's ICT facilities are excellent with interactive whiteboards and data projectors in almost all classrooms. The layout of some classrooms was conducive to collaborative and active learning and a whole-school approach to this is encouraged.

Health and safety matters are a priority in the school, evidenced in the active committee who meet regularly and liaise with relevant outside bodies.

## 2. QUALITY OF LEARNING AND TEACHING

Good or very good teaching was observed in most lessons. In a number of those lessons, instances of excellent practice were noted. There were other lessons that had scope for improvement in the teaching and learning approaches utilised.

In general, lessons were guided by learning intentions that were shared with students. The best lessons referred to the learning intentions as the lesson progressed and reviewed them at the end of the lesson so that learning was consolidated. Extending these good practices to all lessons is recommended.

In the lessons observed, classroom interactions were respectful and students were affirmed and encouraged for their efforts and contributions. Teachers have high expectations of students' work and behaviour and communicate these expectations effectively to students.

The use of ICT in most lessons was effective to support learning and this is supported by the student questionnaires where almost all of the students in the school agreed that ICT was used regularly in lessons. The introduction of tablet devices into the school and the development of an ICT policy was carried out in a considered way, involving collaboration and discussion with all members of the school community. Very good examples of creative and innovative use of digital technology was observed in some lessons. To encourage such creativity in all lessons, the in-school support for e-learning should continue, where teachers' model and report back on various educational applications that enhance learning.

A range of very effective teaching approaches was noted during the evaluation. These included starter activities and extension tasks that supported students' engagement in their learning; teachers' utilisation of educational applications to check for understanding and to communicate with students; and the identification of resources and course materials that are relevant to the students' own lives. All of these strategies facilitated deeper student engagement with lesson content.

In the best lessons effective group work was characterised by carefully planned activities, clear instructions from the teacher, clearly defined roles for students, an identified timeframe for the completion of the assigned task and productive feedback from the students. By doing this, teachers maintained a balance between their own input and productive student participation and response, allowing students to be more autonomous in their learning. The extension of these good practices are encouraged.

In a few classes, teachers strategically selected and used approaches that met the varying learning needs of students, particularly those students whose first language is not English. A review of the whole-school approach to differentiated teaching strategies is needed, especially in an EAL context.

Questions-and-answer sessions were used in most lessons to good effect and a good balance was maintained between global and directed questioning to check student understanding. Some good examples of assessment-for-learning strategies, such as show-me boards and 'three stars and a wish', were also observed. Homework was seen to be regularly set for almost all subjects, from the sample of student journals examined and teacher-led correction of homework questions, with students marking their work, was a feature of many of the lessons observed. Constructive and developmental feedback on students' written tasks was less in evidence. Therefore, more widespread use of formative feedback by teachers on students' homework and on completed in-class tests is recommended.

In a minority of the language lessons observed, very good active use of the target language by students was observed and wider implementation of this good practice is encouraged in language lessons across the school.

The strategy of using key words to explicitly develop students' literacy skills was observed in many lessons which is commendable.

Renewal of the collaborative professional review or peer-to-peer learning is suggested so that teachers can avail of opportunities to discuss and share strategies for teaching, learning and assessment practices. This will teachers to build collective expertise in the skills and approaches necessary to facilitate student learning for the future.

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

Many of the main recommendations in previous subject evaluations have been implemented. However, there were some recommendations that have yet to be implemented. One of these is that teaching and learning matters be on the agendas of subject department meetings. In the sample of lesson plans reviewed, inspectors found that administrative matters were the main preoccupation of subject team meetings. Therefore, a whole-school approach to ensuring that teaching and learning topics form part of every meeting agenda is recommended.

The renewal of the collaborative review in the school was a recommendation of a previous evaluation and, in this evaluation, it is again identified as a worthwhile area for the school to revisit, enabling teachers to share teaching strategies and learn from one another.

The inclusion of differentiated teaching methodologies was a previous recommendations and, in this evaluation, this was also viewed as an important area for development and improvement. The area of developing strategies and supports for teachers to enable them to differentiate content and activities in order to cater for the varying needs and abilities of students is of particular relevance to the school, given the multi-ethnic student population where English is not the language spoken in the home.

Finally, the recommendation highlighting the issue of two teachers sharing a class is a feature of some classes but encouragingly, this area for improvement has already been identified by the school.

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



The school has developed some good SSE practices and there is significant capacity and enthusiasm among the staff to use reflective practices to achieve ongoing school improvement. Good data analysis, gathering of feedback and action planning for improvement have been noted. Commendably, the effective use of keywords to improve literacy has been observed in the majority of lessons. However, the promotion of students' numeracy skills outside of Mathematics lessons was less evident. Ensuring the SSE team includes teachers from across the curriculum is encouraged. This will bolster the efforts of the team to develop SSE initiatives to improve teaching and learning on a whole-school basis, rather than this being the remit of particular departments.

Strand 3 of the school's self-improvement plan, which is the area of punctuality and attendance, should incorporate an aspect of teaching and learning, as per circular 0040/2012, and so is in need of review. One suggestion is the inclusion of student engagement in learning in the improvement initiatives.

To further enrich SSE outcomes, the inclusion of a plan to develop a library is suggested as this would support the school's literacy initiatives and the motto 'Luttrellstown Loves to Read'. Incorporating additional strategies into SSE planning and practice to support the needs of learners with EAL is also encouraged.

## **Appendix**

**School response to the report**

**Submitted by the Board of Management**

## **Part A: Observations on the content of the inspection report**

The Board welcomes the Inspectors' report affirming the quality standards the school has achieved since its establishment in 2009. The report affirms that LCC is committed to providing the highest standard of education and the good governance by the Board supports this work. Good, very good and excellent teaching practices were noted that affirm good practice in LCC.

The Board welcomes the Inspectors' observation that key strengths of LCC include our 'committed and hardworking staff' led by a senior management team of considerable strengths. We agree that there is 'an impressive level of staff volunteerism' and we see this in action regularly. We are also aware of the 'parental satisfaction' with the good management of LCC and we know that "the welfare needs of students are at the heart of Luttrellstown Community College".

## **Part B: Follow-up actions planned or undertaken since the completion of the inspection activity to implement the findings and recommendations of the inspection**

### **1. Care Team**

- A multi-disciplinary Care Team has been set up. The first meeting will be held on February 28 2017. The members are:
- Príomhoide (Co-Ordinator)
- Príomhoide Tánaisteach
- Guidance Counsellor
- Learning Support/EAL
- Lead SNA
- Caomhnóirí and the SNA attached to the appropriate year group will rotate in throughout the year.

### **2. Provision of SPHE/RSE**

The PDST provided training in SPHE and RSE to 22 tutors on February 9<sup>th</sup>. Consultation has started on adjustments to the school timetable that will accommodate SPHE class periods.

### **3. SEN**

The Use of Team Teaching is being expanded in the school, in consultation with students who have RTH allocation. Planning for our new SNU will begin in the 2017/18 academic year.

### **4. EAL**

The support offered to EAL students is under-going a comprehensive review. On February 8<sup>th</sup> the DDLETB ESOL Development Officer tested the EAL cohort. The tests revealed that 11 students have high needs and the SEN department is drawing up plans to address those individual needs. On a whole school basis, EAL strategies are being incorporated into the LLN initiative. This area will be addressed at future staff meetings and CPD will be provided to support staff development.

Sample strategies of EAL pedagogy:

- a) Use of: Visuals ; Graphic organisers; Collaborative activities; Language drills.
- b) Engaging with: Modelling, Drama and role play
- c) Utilising learners's first language ability.
- d) Scaffolding through key phrases and structures as well as key words.

5. **SSE**

The SSE team is being expanded to include teachers with a more varied range of subjects. Strand 3 of the SSE plan is being developed to make an explicit link with teaching and learning. Students with particular difficulties in the areas of Attendance and Punctuality have been identified and a targeted programme is being put in place to support improvements in that area. Our Comhairle Baiunistíochta will develop a more prominent role for Careteams with regard to punctuality and attendance initiatives.

6. **Policy Development**

Collaboration with our three partner school councils will continue with regard to policy development as evidenced by our recently revised Mission Statement which was a dynamic community experience.

7. **ICT Support**

Collaborative planning was evident in ICT policy making. ICT support in the school is commendable, very good examples of creative and innovative use of digital technology was observed. This work will be continued and expanded.

8. **Academic Monitoring**

We aim to develop guidelines for Careteams with regard to academic monitoring as recommended. This will support strategies for improvement already identified by the school.

## 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 the school's provision of each area.

Level	Description	Example of descriptive terms
<b>Very Good</b>	<b>Very good</b> 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 <b>outstanding</b> 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
<b>Good</b>	<b>Good</b> 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
<b>Satisfactory</b>	<b>Satisfactory</b> applies where the quality of provision is adequate. Overall, learners have access to a basic level of provision. 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
<b>Fair</b>	<b>Fair</b> 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
<b>Weak</b>	<b>Weak</b> 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;