

An Roinn Oideachais agus Eolaíochta
Department of Education and Science

Whole-School Evaluation
REPORT

Sandford Park School
Ranelagh, Dublin 6
Roll number: 60640C

Date of inspection: 25 January 2008



AN ROINN OIDEACHAIS
AGUS EOLAÍOCHTA | DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION
AND SCIENCE

WHOLE-SCHOOL EVALUATION

A whole-school evaluation of Sandford Park School was undertaken in January 2008. This report presents the findings of the evaluation and makes recommendations for improvement. During the evaluation, the quality of teaching and learning in three subjects and in the Transition Year programme were evaluated in detail, and separate reports are available on these subjects and programmes. (See section 7 for details). 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.

INTRODUCTION

Sandford Park School is a private, fee-paying, voluntary secondary school for boys. It was founded in 1922, as an alternative to the existing mainstream educational provision. The school seeks to cater for the educational needs of students from a variety of cultures and backgrounds who subscribe to its non-denominational ethos. The school is situated on over six acres of land in the heart of Ranelagh village.

The original school house was built in 1894 as an exclusive private dwelling and was acquired in 1922 to become one of the first non-denominational secondary schools in the country. Fifty-three students enrolled in the school in September 1922. The first principal of the school, Alfred Le Peton set out to create a sense of family and to develop an education system that embraced the whole person. The curriculum of the time provided experiences for the students that would motivate and inspire them to take responsibility for their own lives, and foster a sense of independence of spirit and a strong sense of community.

The school was incorporated as a limited company in 1934. Most members of the board of governors are listed as the directors of the company. The school does not pay dividends, fees or any other form of remuneration to directors or members of the board, and all the income of the school is invested in the school. The physical infrastructure of the school has evolved considerably since its foundation and has undergone several phases of development and re-development. The modern school building dates from the 1950s, a time when Sandford Park was rescued from insolvency by a group of “Old Boys” (past students) who firmly believed in the tradition and values of the school.

The school has a current enrolment of 256 students. The dual factors of small private school and non-denominational ethos results in a student population from a diversity of creeds and cultural backgrounds. Students attending the school come from both the local community and from the greater Dublin and north Wicklow regions. There has been an increase in the student population over the last four years, which is accounted for by the positive economic climate and the school’s proximity to the DART and Sandyford Luas lines. Traditionally, sons of past students and siblings attend the school. A small number of students from abroad also attend the school, usually because their families have moved to Ireland.

1. QUALITY OF SCHOOL MANAGEMENT

1.1 Characteristic spirit of the school

The mission statement commits to educating students in a safe, caring and disciplined environment. It focuses on the provision of high quality teaching to promote a love of learning, respect for cultural diversity and the fostering of strong home-school partnerships.

The core aim of education in Sandford Park is to equip students with the “skills to think creatively, reason critically and communicate effectively”. This vision is shared and supported by all partners of the school community and there was evidence that the school strives to meet the needs of all of their students.

Sandford Park embraces diversity and its strength lies in its sense of community. This was best described by members of the students’ council who stated that “the school lets you be yourself” and “everyone is included”, “knows each other” and “gets along”. There is a strong sense of identity, unity and respect amongst the students and this was highlighted by members of the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) as an integral component of the education received in the school. The affinity and affection past students have for the school is evident in the formation of the Old Boys Union (OBU), which retains strong and active links with the school. There is a palpable sense of community, identity and commitment to the school and its ethos. It was clearly evident that members of the board of governors, PTA, staff and students share in this sense of community.

The relatively small size of the school results in a warm, friendly atmosphere, where staff know all students and share in their welfare. A professional and caring approach was evidenced in all interactions between teachers and their students during the evaluation. Whilst there is a strong focus on academic excellence and achievement, the school also caters very well for students with special educational needs. Both gifted students and those requiring additional educational support were observed to work very well together in all class settings, which is indicative of the inclusive nature of the school. A diverse range of co-curricular and extra-curricular activities further enhances the holistic educational development of the students of Sandford Park.

The pastoral structures established by the school, along with the supports made available for students reflect the ethos of Sandford Park. The values and ideals expressed in the mission statement are lived out through the daily interactions between staff and students and in the implementation of school policies such as the code of behaviour, guidance and anti-bullying policies. The mission of the school is also reflected in special events and activities to celebrate its characteristic spirit and ethos.

1.2 School ownership and management

A board of governors has been in place in the school since its foundation. The present board is composed of eleven members. All members of the board have a direct relationship with the school either as a past student or as a parent of a present or past student. Members are co-opted onto the board and serve as long as they feel they can make a contribution to the running of the school. The system of co-option is viewed by the board as the most effective means of ensuring that the persons nominated onto the board possess the relevant skills to meet the needs of the school at the particular time. The principal, who is not a board member, presents a report to the board on all matters arising from the day-to-day running of the school and advises the board on the future educational and development priorities for the school. The bursar is responsible for the financial management of the school and presents a report to the board at each monthly meeting.

Two members of the board have attended training for boards of management provided by the joint managerial body (JMB), which is commendable. All members of the board are familiar with relevant legislation. They are also provided with copies of circulars and other documents from the Department of Education and Science relevant to the discharge of their duties in the management of the school.

The board meets on eleven occasions per year. The regularity of these meetings is highly commended. The board is exceptionally hard-working and exemplary in the manner in which it identifies and pursues the development priorities for the school. In particular, the board has overseen the recent expansion and renovation of the school's accommodation and is actively pursuing the development of a multi-purpose hall. In addition, the board has recently assisted staff with the purchase and installation of smart-board technology into several classrooms. Some members of the board are involved with sub-committees, or task groups, for the purpose of developing school policies. The board stated that it takes a central role in reviewing and ratifying existing and new policies. Six sub-committees of the board have been established to lead specific areas such as finance, legislation, development project, fundraising and sports. These sub-committees are composed of members with expertise in the area and meet as required. Board members regularly visit the school and attend many school functions. The chairman endeavours to formally meet all members of staff at least once during the school year. There is a high level of informal contact between members of the board and members of the school community, which is commendable.

The board of governors discharges the functions of a board of management in accordance with section 14.3 of the Education Act, 1998 and this report acknowledges its deep commitment to the school and the considerable range of skills it brings to its duties. However, it differs from a board of management in relation to its membership and term of office. The issue of representation on the board was raised with the inspectors during meetings with the teaching staff and with members of the PTA. The latter were unclear as to how one might become a member of the board. Members of the teaching staff felt that teacher representation on the board would be mutually beneficial and would bring an additional educational perspective to the board's deliberations. It was also noted that there is no agreed report from the board to the staff or parents following board meetings. Consideration should therefore be given to a review of the board's structures in order to address these issues and with a view to enhancing the partnership model which underpins the management structures set out in the Education Act.

1.3 In-school management

The principal and deputy principal are an effective leadership team. They meet daily and are familiar with each other's roles and responsibilities. Effective communication, collaboration and a shared vision for the future of the school characterise these roles. The school operates very effectively and the senior management team maintains a visible and accessible presence in the school.

The principal leads all aspects of the school in partnership with the deputy principal and other staff members. She liaises directly with the board of governors, organises staff meetings, manages the schedule of posts and the duties of post-holders, attends meetings of the PTA, the students' council and the many policy and task groups as well as attending other functions and meetings relevant to the effective management of the school. The principal is a key and available point of contact for students, parents and teachers.

The deputy principal is responsible for the effective running of the school day. He ensures that the support staff is assigned its duties and organises the on-going supervision and substitution roster. He has a key role in the management of students in the event of disciplinary matters being brought to his attention from the junior or senior cycle co-ordinators. The deputy principal in consultation with the principal also designs the timetable.

Both the principal and deputy principal have attended programmes provided by the Leadership Development in Schools (LDS) support service, such as Misneach and Forbairt.

This support has enhanced the leadership style of senior management. Senior management has also attended in-service and undertaken courses related to policy development, inclusion, positive discipline as well as subject-specific in-service. Assistant principals deputise for the principal in the event that both members of senior management are absent. This good practice ensures that there is continuation of leadership through to middle management.

Although the principal is an ex-quota post, she continues to teach her subject to two class groups. The deputy also teaches a substantial number of classes in keeping with the allocation for this position. Both feel that this is a valuable means of maintaining contact with the students, the work in the classroom and their subjects. This is commendable and demonstrates a high level of commitment to the school and the students.

The in-school management structure includes the assistant principals and the special duties teachers. There are currently three assistant principals and four special duties teacher posts. All of the post holders are highly experienced and committed teachers. While these groups of teachers do not meet as a management team, they carry out their assigned duties very effectively and are delegated full areas of responsibilities. The middle management team expressed a shared vision for the school including high standards of achievement by students and the provision and maintenance of a caring, inclusive school community. Duties assigned to post holders involve teachers in both specific tasks appropriate to their skills and also various roles in the pastoral care structure of the school. The assistant principals carry out administrative, disciplinary and pastoral roles and contribute to the development and review of some school policies related to their areas of responsibilities. They have a reduction in timetabled hours to facilitate the execution of their duties. Special duties teachers carry out a varied range of duties, from organisation of examinations, responsibility for school uniforms and lost property to co-ordinating the School Development Planning (SDP) process.

Whilst the duties of the assistant principals play a significant role in the administration, organisation and management of students, it is not clear that holders of these posts regard themselves as part of school management. They see themselves as having a role in assisting management rather than contributing to management. It was clearly evident from the activities and responsibilities performed by these post-holders that they make a significant contribution to the management of students, and their assistance is appreciated by the senior management team. Furthermore, these post-holders were identified by parents, teachers and students as having senior positions within the school. Regular meetings between senior management and assistant principals occurred at one time; however, due to timetabling difficulties these meetings no longer take place. There is some scope for the greater development of the middle management structure in the school. To build on the existing structures and in keeping with the principles of distributed leadership (as outlined in circular PPT29/02) and shared ownership, it is recommended that regular meetings between post holders and senior management take place to further develop the in-school management team. The purpose of these meetings may be part of an advisory and consultative process in the overall management of the school. In this way, issues and concerns facing students, teachers and parents can be discussed collaboratively. As a result, decisions made by senior management will benefit from the wider body of knowledge, experience and commitment of all involved.

There has been some recent review and change in the areas of responsibilities assigned to some post holders and senior management is satisfied that the schedule of posts is now meeting the present needs of the students and the school. There is a clear sense of flexibility and willingness amongst the special duties teachers to expand their professional roles, which is commendable. It is recommended that the responsibilities of the posts be reviewed

regularly in consultation with the post-holders, with a view to the further development of the middle-management team.

There is a strong sense of collegiality and openness amongst teachers. There are good internal communication structures in the school. Each teacher has a personal mail box in the staff room, where all internal or external correspondence may be placed. Teachers are also informed of daily events and items for attention through a staff notice board, and announcements may also be made at break time in the staff room. These structures ensure that teachers are kept informed of all relevant issues.

Staff meetings are held regularly and are well structured. The agenda is set by senior management but staff may also add items for inclusion on the agenda. Most staff meetings are broken into small groups where teachers discuss planning issues, subject department business or other matters as per the agreed agenda. The teachers come together at the end of the meeting for a plenary session. This is good practice as it ensures that the diversity of views on topics and issues can be shared collectively. It was suggested by some members of staff that additional time should be devoted at staff meetings to discussing items of concern, as these can sometimes be overlooked due to time constraints. It is recommended that senior management plan to incorporate more time at some staff meetings for an open forum to discuss identified items. However, it is important for all concerned that the time devoted to both dedicated and open-forum items is constructively used and solution-focused.

The management of new teachers is very effective. The school facilitates graduates who are pursuing the Post-Graduate Diploma in Education and three such teachers are on staff this year. This is viewed as positive as it ensures close links with the teacher training programmes of the host universities as well as gaining from the enthusiasm and innovation of these teachers. Trainee teachers are assigned to master subject-teachers and work closely with them throughout the year, which is good practice. New teachers are given an induction day, prior to the beginning of the school year, to familiarise them with the procedures, policies and geography of the school. A handbook has also been developed for new teachers and the school produces a staff handbook that contains a synopsis of the policies and procedures and highlights the responsibilities for all members of staff in the execution of their duties. New teachers were highly complimentary of senior management and their subject department colleagues for the continuing support they receive during their induction to the school.

Clear systems are in place for the effective management of students in all aspects of their life in the school. Much of this good work takes place under the leadership of the form teachers and the junior and senior cycle co-ordinators. Each class is assigned a form teacher who takes the class from first year through to sixth year. This highly effective system ensures that a respectful rapport is developed between the students and their form teacher as they journey together over the six years. The form teachers are also the Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) teachers for their class group, which further strengthens the relationship between them and their form group. Form teachers take responsibility for recording attendance, disseminating daily announcements and enforcing the school's code of behaviour and other policies relevant to the management of students. This system was observed to be highly effective and efficiently administered. Students were respectful and cordial in their dealings with their form teachers, who work very hard and execute their responsibilities in a professional manner.

Students are enrolled in the school up to two years in advance of their first year. Following enrolment and during the latter half of their sixth class in primary school, students are assessed to assist in identifying those who may benefit from additional educational support

by the school. These students are also invited to attend the school's annual sports day in May, which is good practice as it helps to familiarise them with the school and its environs.

Forty-six boys are admitted to the incoming first-year group each autumn and are divided into two mixed-ability class groups. Incoming first years arrive into school a day before term begins and the full student cohort returns following the summer holidays. This good practice ensures that students have an opportunity to meet their teachers and learn about how the school operates and supports them. A buddy system has been developed where each sixth-year student is assigned to mentor a first-year student throughout his first year in the school. This system was praised by both students and parents for its effectiveness in promoting the school's community spirit and ensuring that first-year students felt secure in meeting the challenges of new classmates, subjects and teachers.

The school has developed a very clear system of recording attendance and monitoring students' punctuality. Following morning registration follow-up phone calls are placed to parents to ensure that all absences are appropriately accounted for and issues regarding punctuality are addressed. This is a commendable system as it ensures that detailed records are maintained and that the required returns to the National Educational Welfare Board (NEWB) are complete and accurate. Records of students' attendance and punctuality are also included in reports to parents.

The school's Code of Behaviour is an exemplary document. Its primary purpose is to empower students to develop positive patterns of behaviour and a clear rationale is given for each of the school's rules. The language and tone of the document is such that it clearly illustrates how each member of the school community can display positive behaviours to ensure adherence to the established code. Breaches of the code of behaviour are dealt with through a clear system of referral. Records indicated that most disciplinary incidents were at very low levels, which are dealt with by the subject teacher. All incidents are recorded and clear sanctions are imposed for repeat offences. There are clear procedures in place to deal with suspensions or expulsions. All teachers displayed a strong awareness of the discipline system and of their role in dealing with incidents. The school operates a discipline committee, which is composed of the deputy principal, cycle co-ordinator and form tutor and assembles when a serious or persistent offender warrants a hearing. The offending student attends this meeting and is also supported by his form teacher. This system is highly commendable as it endeavours to reason with students to bring about behaviour modification rather than the immediate application of more punitive measures. A prefect system operates in sixth year, where students who feel they can display all the attributes of a leader can apply to become a prefect. These students are provided with training and endeavour to uphold the school's Code of Behaviour by actively demonstrating the exemplary standards required. This good practice ensures that younger students have role models with whom they can identify.

Daily observations of students' behaviour throughout the week of the evaluation, in addition to subject inspectors' reports from classroom observations, indicated that students were mature, respectful and orderly throughout the school.

There is an active parent teacher association (PTA) in the school, which is reported to be among the oldest PTAs in the state. Sandford Park PTA meets approximately six times per year. The PTA is a member of the National Association of Compass, which is a constituent body of the National Parents Council (post-primary). Six members, who represent a parent from each year group, are elected at the annual general meeting. The principal and a teacher representative are also members of the committee. The role of the PTA is to promote good relations and a sense of community within Sandford Park. It fulfils this role mainly through the organisation of regular social events and also through its involvement in fundraising. It also plays an active role in supporting the organisation of the many activities of the school,

such as the school play. Furthermore, the PTA has been involved in organising guest speakers to address parents on issues related to adolescents, which is highly commendable. The association is actively involved in the review, development and ratification of relevant school policies. Parents felt very well informed and familiar with all aspects of the school's structures and procedures. They highly praised senior management and the professionalism of the teachers and strongly endorsed the pastoral care, support, guidance and quality of education provided by the school.

Communications with parents is of a very high quality in the school. Parents are regularly informed about school activities and the progress of students through regular principal newsletters, as well as assessment and achievement reports. The student journal is also used as a channel of communication with parents. The school website highlights the ethos and history of the school, its staff, facilities and calendar of events. It is commendable that the school recognises the value of its website and plans to invest in its further development.

Many links have been established with the wider community and outside agencies. These links support school activities and programmes and also assist in the guidance of students from school to work or to further or higher education. The school embarks on regular joint ventures with a neighbouring school, such as school plays and educational tours. Arrangements with local sports providers ensure that students have access to additional training and competition facilities. Links to university programmes provide students with valuable learning experiences. Other external agencies are often availed of by the school to support students with particular educational or personal needs. It is commendable that the school runs a voluntary community care work programme in Transition Year, where students visit members of the nearby community residential homes for senior citizens.

There is a highly commendable culture of self evaluation and review in the school. Review and self evaluation are in evidence throughout the systems in place for the management of the curriculum, the organisation of the timetable, the care for students and support of students with special educational needs and for identifying the professional development needs of the staff. Recent initiatives that look at learning, differentiation and assessment also provide evidence of this reflective practice. The school conducts a thorough evaluation of all examination results, particularly the performance of students in the state exams, which are then reported to the board, staff and parents. Furthermore, the culture of review and evaluation was evident in the process of school development planning and the prioritising of the school's needs in this regard. This culture is welcomed and encouraged as it indicates the level of reflection, commitment and professionalism to all activities undertaken by the school.

Overall the school is well managed, with very good structures and procedures in place to ensure that the school is an effective learning community. Students are well supported in their journey towards mature, active and well-educated citizenship in keeping with the aspirations of Alfred Le Peton.

1.4 Management of resources

In addition to the allocation of teachers received from the Department of Education and Science, the board employs approximately eight whole time teacher equivalents (WTE), and is responsible for the contracts and payment of additional support staff. Employment of additional teaching staff by the board results in lower student-teacher ratios in most classes. This situation ensures that teachers can more readily respond to individual students' needs and also ensures that the school can offer a broad curriculum. Many members of the teaching staff have pursued further post-graduate qualifications. Senior management ensures that teachers are appropriately deployed according to their qualifications and skills.

The professionalism of teachers and their genuine interest in the education and welfare of their students is seen by senior management as the pivotal aspect in the success of the school. There is an evident commitment and belief in continuing professional development (CPD), with the board and senior management fully supportive of teachers' attendance at relevant in-service and courses. It is clear that many teachers are engaging in professional development which is highly commended, as this enhances their teaching methods and assists them in keeping pace with curricular and syllabus change. The school has also organised external experts to provide appropriate in-service training during staff development days or at staff meetings. It is commendable that teachers are given the opportunity to present to their colleagues on areas of their work at staff meetings. Examples of this good practice include presentations on specific learning disabilities, use of smart-board technology and an LDS middle management project on learning styles. The board also supports the membership of subject departments to their subject associations. The board and senior management are to be commended for the value placed on CPD.

The outdoor facilities of the school include a rugby pitch and an Astroturf pitch. The Astroturf pitch has recently been extended, which has resulted in an improved uptake of extra-curricular sports as students can now train on campus. The building and facilities have recently undergone major expansion and renovation as part of a four phase development project. All of these facilities are well maintained and contain up-to-date technology to support the work of the school.

The school is now at the final phase of its current development programme and aims to replace its old general purpose hall with a new regulation standard facility. This will host the Physical Education programme as well as school events. An extensive fund-raising campaign has been underway since the commencement of the project and great credit is due to all involved for their foresight and commitment to ensuring the quality of educational provision at Sandford Park.

The good condition of the school facilities including classrooms, sports facilities, car park and grounds bear testimony to the hard work of the maintenance and cleaning staff and their commitment to the school ensures that Sandford Park functions as a high quality educational environment.

Teachers are mostly located in their own base rooms, which facilitates the storage, access and display of resources and materials relevant to their subject areas. Teachers have put great efforts into developing their rooms and displaying student-generated work and subject-relevant material to assist students in studying their subjects.

Considerable investment has been made in the provision of high-specification information and communications technology (ICT) facilities in the school. There is clear recognition of the role of ICT in supporting the learning process and the school is striving to position itself to take advantage of this medium. There is one dedicated computer laboratory and computers are available in most classrooms. In addition, computers and peripherals are available in the teachers' resource room and the library to support teachers and students in their work. The library is an excellent facility, which is staffed by a full-time librarian and is stocked with books and reference materials covering a wide range of topics. The school is broadband enabled and all classrooms have access to the school's network and the World Wide Web. Several classrooms have recently been fitted with integrated smart-board technology. This is highly commendable as this technology provides teachers and students with the tools to access electronic resources.

An appropriate policy has been developed for the acceptable usage of the school's ICT facilities. A dedicated ICT department in the school ensure that the school's hardware and software meets the needs of teachers and their students.

The board ensures that there is a nominated health and safety officer who is charged with overseeing the implementation of the school's health and safety policy. There is a very detailed and comprehensive health and safety statement developed for the school. Each area in the school is regularly audited by a member of senior management and the staff health and safety representative. The detail and presentation of this audit is exemplary and clearly shows the efforts that have been made to ensure that all risks are identified and dealt with expediently. Concern was raised during the course of the evaluation regarding the safety of the locker room facilities as they can become quite cluttered and open to unruly conduct. A closed-circuit television system has been fitted in these areas to monitor student safety and they are also targeted as part of the supervision roster. Whilst these measures have been somewhat effective, a review of their operation should take place to address these legitimate concerns, with a view to establishing the best-fit model for the school. This review should include the students' council who may play a pivotal role in any new system.

2. QUALITY OF SCHOOL PLANNING

2.1 The school plan

Whole-school planning is well established in Sandford Park and an exemplary school plan has been developed. Senior management has taken responsibility for the co-ordination of the planning process to date. However, a designated post holder has recently been given responsibility for the continued development of the process. The planning process has been informed by the instruments and guidelines provided by the SDPI and all members of the school community are appropriately engaged in the process, which is good practice and is commended.

The current planning priorities are guided by the direction of the board of governors and also a survey of staff undertaken by the principal. As well as the major structural plans for the school, several areas for development were identified including the need to review and implement policies required by legislation as well as the further development of subject department planning. The planning process involves the establishment of small task groups to review existing policies or address issues that require the development of a new policy. These task groups may consist of members of the board of governors, staff and parent representatives. In addition, staff meetings often involve small-group discussion and review of policy issues. Arising from the process, policy documents are drafted for consultation, which takes place with staff groups, the PTA and the board of governors. In some cases, the students' council is included in the consultative process. Final drafts of policies and procedures are then agreed by the relevant partners and ratified by the board. This consultative process is highly commendable and is in line with recommended best practice.

The result of this process is a comprehensive and well structured school plan. The permanent section of the school plan includes a statement of the mission and aims of the school, a brief history and background of the school and an outline of the school's curriculum, structures and resources. All required policy documents have been developed and adopted. The admissions policy clearly sets out the procedures for enrolment. However, the tone of the admissions policy runs counter to the inclusive ethos, care for students and aims set out in the policy on special educational needs and evident throughout the school. In addition, the admissions policy states that the school provides a Transition Year programme, however it does not clearly specify that this is a compulsory programme for all students. It is recommended that the admissions policy be revisited and revised to

reflect the inclusive practice and caring ethos of the school to clearly indicate that the Transition Year programme is compulsory and to include a statement highlighting the right of parents, or students over the age of eighteen, to appeal the decision of the board of governors to refuse admission under section 29 of the Education Act 1998.

Confirmation was provided that, in compliance with Post-primary Circulars M45/05 and 0062/2006, the board of governors has formally adopted the *Child Protection Guidelines for Post-primary Schools* (Department of Education and Science, September 2004). Confirmation was also provided that these child protection procedures have been brought to the attention of management, school staff and parents; that a copy of the procedures has been provided to all staff (including all new staff); and that management has ensured that all staff are familiar with the procedures to be followed. A designated liaison person (DLP) and a deputy DLP have been appointed in line with the requirements of the guidelines.

Curricular planning meetings at subject department level take place regularly as part of the planning process. It is highly commendable that management has endeavoured to provide a common period on subject teachers' timetables to facilitate the process of collaborative planning. It was reported that these weekly meetings are a valuable resource and fully utilised for the purpose of planning.

The system of policy review is commendable. There are clear timeframes in place for the review and evaluation of the many aspects of the school plan. It is clear that school planning is viewed as an ongoing process of development, implementation and review. A rubric has been developed to monitor policy development, ratification and implementation and also to establish a timeframe for review. This is a well organised system that provides a clear framework to focus planning priorities into the future.

Management is very aware of the challenges and opportunities facing the school in the near future. These economic, social and curricular challenges are reflected upon and inform the direction of future school planning. The future planning priorities address the ongoing structural developments, administration tasks, supports for students and curricular developments. The development of a critical incidence policy, the appointment and support of a new SPHE and Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) co-ordinator, upgrading the school website and the further development of the students' council are among the very significant priorities listed for development for the current year.

The board, senior management and teachers are to be highly commended for their very effective engagement in the whole school planning process.

3. QUALITY OF CURRICULUM PROVISION

3.1 Curriculum planning and organisation

The school day in Sandford Park begins with a five minute registration period taking place with the form tutor. The school provides twenty-eight hours tuition time in accordance with circular M29/95, and the school also fulfils its obligations in respect of the number of teaching days in the school calendar.

The deployment of teachers on the timetable is the responsibility of the principal, as appropriate. The construction of the timetable is highly commended. Core subjects are timetabled daily in accordance with best practice and concurrency is provided from second year onwards for some core subjects to allow for student mobility. All aspects of the distribution of subjects across the timetable were clearly rationalised against the

complexities of the issues involved, which once again illustrates the reflective nature of the school.

The school offers the Junior Certificate, the Transition Year and the Leaving Certificate programmes. There is a strong academic tradition in the school and there is a desire to ensure that all students reach their maximum potential. The school succeeds in providing a broad and balanced curriculum which meets the needs of its students. Very strong subject departments have developed within the school and the commitment to modern languages, business, science, humanities and the creative arts is highly commendable.

Classes are organised into mixed-ability settings and the school's commitment to this practice is commended as it is seen as a progressive and beneficial arrangement for all students. First-year students are provided with the opportunity to study all of the subjects on offer including the option subjects Art, Business, Music and Spanish. Art, Drama and Information Technology are offered as a three-way programme, with first-year students spending approximately ten weeks studying each subject. The arrangements for first-year students are highly commendable as all students will be familiar with each of the subjects, which place them in an advantageous position to make an informed choice about their subject preferences. At the end of first year, students select their preferred option subjects and choose between Music or Spanish and either Art or Business. Latin is offered as an additional subject for second and third-year students and is provided outside of the regular school day.

The TY programme is compulsory in the school. The programme offers a diverse and innovative curriculum that succeeds in providing for the personal, social, recreational, vocational and academic development of the students. In addition to their scheduled programme, TY students participate in a wide range of co-curricular and extra-curricular activities, including work experience. The TY programme is well planned and organised and makes a very positive contribution to life in Sandford Park. Representatives of both the PTA and students' council were very high in their praise for the quality of the programme.

All core subjects are timetabled concurrently for Leaving Certificate students, with three classes per year group being provided for Maths, English and French. This results in reduced class sizes and enhances the attention each student may receive from his teacher. A best-fit model is used to try and ensure that all students receive their preferred subject options. The guidance counsellor and senior management review the option subject choices and then decide on the appropriate class groups. Student choice is accommodated insofar as possible within the limitations of the resources available and satisfaction with the arrangements to date is reported to be very high. The school also facilitates students who may wish to continue to study Japanese or Russian after TY as a Leaving Certificate subject. These additional arrangements to meet the needs of the students are highly commended.

Curriculum review is an on-going process in the school with subject provision, arrangements for student choice, levels and attainment forming the basis for much of the discussion. Spanish has been introduced to the curriculum recently in response to requests from parents. In addition, the school has made considerable progress in providing curricular Physical Education for junior cycle and TY students. Whilst sport and physical activity play a large role in the school, it is regrettable that Leaving Certificate students do not receive any timetabled Physical Education. It is recommended that the school reflect on its provision as part of the next curriculum review and work towards providing Physical Education for all students, in line with the recommendations of the Department of Education and Science, Rules & Programmes for Secondary Schools.

3.2 Arrangements for students' choice of subjects and programmes

Clear and effective procedures are in place to ensure that students are well informed about the programmes and curriculum provided by the school. Incoming first years and their parents attend an induction evening in May and are provided with information about the curriculum and practices of the school. Guidance is provided to third-year students regarding their subject levels for the Junior Certificate exams. In addition, an information evening outlining the TY programme is held in April for third years and their parents.

An exemplary guidance and support programme is provided during Transition Year, which ensures that students and parents are fully informed of the implications of the subject selection process for the Leaving Certificate programme on future career opportunities. This support includes a module on personal development where students complete two career interest inventories, aptitude testing, attendance at a "careers fair", work experience and an information evening with parents. Both parents and members of the students' council were extremely positive in relation to the range of choices available and to the quality of communication and information made available to inform these choices. The work of the school in this regard is highly commended.

3.3 Co-curricular and extra-curricular provision

The breadth and diversity of co-curricular and extra-curricular activities provided by Sandford Park is highly impressive and is one of the great strengths of the school. Subject departments endeavour to extend learning beyond the classroom and engage students through involvement in projects, competitions and educational tours. Among the co-curricular programmes available are a Science club, TY mini-company, digital photography, a drama and film club as well as the debating club both in English and in Irish. Trips to art galleries, ecology and geography field trips, historical and architectural tours, visits to theatres and outdoor education centres as well as health promotion initiatives and modern languages days are among the range of other co-curricular activities that are organised by the school. Students in Sandford Park also run several fundraising events to support worthy causes and contribute generously to local and international charities. A vast amount of energy, enthusiasm and support is given by students in all of these areas and is highly commended.

Music plays a central role in the life of the school. The school has a long tradition of excellence and performance in both choral and orchestral music. A recent initiative saw the establishment of a "Battle of the Bands" competition, which along with the school play, has now become established as part of the social calendar of the school and the local community. This is an exemplary initiative that complements students' learning, harnesses their creativity and develops their confidence through performing.

The school has experienced much success in a range of competitions. These include the Young Scientist and Technology, Student Enterprise and Feis Ceoil Chamber Choir competitions as well as the Maths Olympiad. During the time of the evaluation, the school had reached the All-Ireland semi-final of the senior Gael Linn debates. The school ranks as one of the most consistent high performing teams in the debating circuit with strong performances in national competitions such as the Concern and Mental Health debates. In addition, the school participates in the Model European Council and Model United Nations. All of these endeavours promote the skills of critical thinking and are of immense educational value.

Educational tours are organised to complement and enhance students learning and this year the school is planning a trip to Italy. The school has a strong relationship with another

school and organises several collaborative ventures in both music and drama. This year choir students from both schools plan to visit Washington D.C. USA, to perform in several venues.

Sport and physical activity play a significant role in the life of the school and photographs of past and present teams and individuals that have represented the school are prominently displayed throughout the school. The sports provided include rugby, hockey, cricket, Gaelic football, badminton and tennis. The achievements of the school across most of these activities are to a very high standard, with past students having gone on to represent their province and country. In addition a “keep-fit” class for students is run twice per week by a member of staff. This is commendable practice as it ensures that all students have regular opportunities to participate in some physical activity, whether it is at a competitive or recreational level, team-based or individual. A sports committee has been established by the school and is composed of board, staff, parent and student representatives. This committee has produced a draft sports policy that aims to improve the participation levels, provision and coaching provided. The pursuit of quality provision to further enhance performance and enjoyment is highly commendable.

Clear guidelines and procedures have been developed to ensure that all co-curricular and extra-curricular activities follow best practice. The school operates a very clear policy to maximise students’ tuition time and organises many of the co-curricular and extra-curricular activities after-school, on Wednesday afternoons or on Saturday mornings. It was reported that practically all of the students are involved in some activity and many students are involved in several. This is a great testament to the school as involvement across the range of activities provided ensures that students develop in a holistic manner, as is the philosophy of the school.

As the school has such a wonderful array of activities and programmes in place which are excellently organised and run, it is recommended that consideration be given to applying for the environmental “Green Flag” award as well as the “Health Promoting School” initiative.

4. QUALITY OF LEARNING AND TEACHING IN SUBJECTS

4.1 Planning and preparation

Subject departments have traditionally been a strong feature of the school and subject department planning is ongoing within the context of school development planning. In the subjects and programme evaluated, co-ordinators are in place, written plans have been drawn up and regular meetings of the teaching teams are held. This is commended as good practice. The facilitation of good planning practices through the timetabling of subject department meetings is especially commended.

The Transition Year co-ordinator holds the post of programme co-ordinator within the school and the duties attached to this post are carried out very effectively. Subject co-ordination is undertaken on a voluntary basis within each subject area, and the established practice has been that the role is undertaken by the longest-serving teacher. During the evaluation, inspectors noted and commended the commitment of the subject co-ordinators to the development of their subject areas, and their work has ensured a firm foundation for subject planning. However, the rotation of the co-ordinator role should now be considered, as it would give all teachers an additional level of professional experience, and would promote a sense of collective ownership of, and responsibility for the process of subject department planning.

The written plans presented during the evaluation were detailed and specific, setting out course content with a commendable emphasis on skills development and methodologies, and outlining procedures in relation to assessment, record-keeping and reporting. In general, year plans are adhered to, although there is appropriate flexibility where the needs of a particular class group require a different approach or sequence. However, some aspects of the TY plan require review in order to ensure that the planned programme accurately reflects the taught programme. Subject departments should use a common template and work collaboratively in drawing up TY plans. It is recommended that they refer to the Department's booklet, *Writing the Transition Year Programme* and also consult the TY area of the Second Level Support Service web site (www.slss.ie).

A growing emphasis on collaboration and a collective approach to subject development in the school was noted and commended. Practices to promote the sharing of expertise were observed in the course of the evaluation, including meetings between teachers with previous experience of teaching specific courses or programmes and teachers new to these areas. This is highly commended and could serve as a model for the dissemination of good teaching and learning practices.

A high level of individual planning and preparation was evident in most of the lessons observed and in the individual plans made available to the inspectors. Preparation of lessons was for the most part very thorough, although in the case of practical work planned, it is prudent practice to ensure that all preparation with implications for safety has been completed prior to the lesson.

4.2 Learning and teaching

The learning environment for students was characteristically supportive and affirming, and students were generally highly engaged and enjoying their work. In most cases, lessons observed were well paced and well structured. Good links were established with prior learning, and the necessary groundwork for new learning was managed effectively, for example through pre-reading exercises and clear instructions. Best practice was observed where the purpose of the lesson was shared with students at the outset, so that all students had a sense of what they should be able to do by the end of the lesson. An increased focus on planning and stating the desired learning outcomes is recommended, and it is particularly important with a mixed-ability class to establish the purpose of the lesson at the beginning.

Active learning methods were employed in a number of the lessons observed. For example, an investigative approach was taken where appropriate in the science subjects, and students were able to experience in a concrete way the distinction between narrative and chronological sequence in an English lesson. The use of active and participative approaches is to be encouraged, and subject departments should place a particular emphasis on extending active learning methods such as task-based learning and group work, bearing in mind the range of learning styles to be found in any class group.

Good links were made between lesson topics and real life situations. In this regard, the presence of authentic materials in the modern language classroom was noted with approval, and the greatest possible use of the target language is recommended.

Some good practices to facilitate differentiated learning were noted and commended by the inspectors, including the use of differentiated resources and assessments in the science classroom and the self-directed approach to the European Computer Driving Licence (ECDL) programme for Transition Year students. Where class discussion is the predominant methodology, there is a danger that less able students may have some difficulty in following the discourse. It is therefore recommended that strategies such as

'think, pair, share' be regularly used, so that each student has an opportunity to engage with the topic and articulate a response to it prior to any whole-class discussion.

Teaching and learning resources were well chosen and carefully prepared. Of particular note was the integration of ICT into classroom activity. This was observed to motivate students and to hold their attention, and was of particular benefit to visual learners as a means of engagement and reinforcement. ICT also extended the range of reference made by teachers during class discussion and students were directed towards useful online resources, thus promoting the concept of independent learning. Given the commitment of the school management to extending the very good ICT facilities available, the familiarity and expertise with ICT demonstrated by many of the teaching staff could be usefully shared with colleagues, in keeping with the very good upskilling practices which the school has initiated in-house.

Interactions between students and teachers were characteristically friendly, reflecting the fact that the school is a close-knit community. Students were confident in expressing views and in asking questions or requesting help, and teachers were encouraging and supportive, while also challenging students where necessary. There was a worthy emphasis on the development of higher-order skills of analysis and judgement, and teachers' expectations in relation to students' engagement and competence were appropriately high. Classroom management was generally effective, and students interacted very well with each other in class discussion and activity.

4.3 Assessment

A very good level and variety of assessment practices are in place in the school. In all the areas evaluated a commendable emphasis was placed on formative assessment, so that students received detailed and constructive feedback on their work, affirming its strengths and pointing out ways of improving it. This is exemplary practice.

Questioning and observation of students' participation were used to monitor students' progress and teachers regularly gave assistance where necessary. Homework was regularly assigned and there was a strong emphasis on improvement in both the oral and written feedback given to students. Homework assignments were constructive and appropriate, and best practice was seen where they were given in good time so that they could be discussed and explained in class. Differentiation of classwork and homework tasks was observed in a number of cases and is commended. Self-assessment is an integral part of TY practices; to complement this, it is recommended that a portfolio interview form part of students' end-of-year assessment.

Summative assessment forms part of subject department planning. Class tests to consolidate and assess learning are set regularly. Formal house examinations are held twice yearly, and the criteria of assessment are shared with students so that the tests help them to develop the necessary skills. In most cases, the modes of assessment used tested the full range of skills and competences: for example, oral, aural and written skills in modern languages. It is recommended that students be given credit for laboratory and fieldwork tasks and task reports completed.

5. QUALITY OF SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS

5.1 Inclusion of students with additional educational needs

The arrangements and supports for gifted students or those with specific learning difficulties, are highly commended. The school has developed policies on admissions and

participation of students with special educational needs (SEN), which have been discussed earlier in this report. A comprehensive programme is in place for identifying students with SEN and for allocating appropriate support to these students. All students are assessed as part of the enrolment process, which takes the form of standardised tests and a review of any psychological reports received. Additionally, subject teachers may also identify students who have difficulties with particular aspects of their learning and refer these students to the learning support department.

The school has established appropriate links with the local Special Educational Needs Organiser (SENO) to support its work. Support for students with SEN is organised by a dedicated and committed core learning support team who are all qualified in this area. The core team is highly committed to continuous professional development and has pursued additional qualifications to enhance its knowledge and skills in this area. The school has a current allocation of 0.5 WTE for remedial provision, 2.39 WTE for special needs and there is also a full-time special needs assistant (SNA) allocated to the school. Support for students with SEN is underpinned by a school policy document that focuses on valuing the uniqueness, diversity and dignity of each student. It is the belief and practice of the school to ensure that each student receives the opportunities necessary to fulfil his academic and social potential.

A good knowledge of students' backgrounds, abilities and needs, together with some good use of differentiated practice and co-operative learning strategies ensures that students are well supported in their learning. Support for students is facilitated by the concurrent timetabling of core subjects, which allows for the creation of an additional class in some cases, and also allows class groups to follow different levels in these subjects. Students with SEN are withdrawn from Gaeilge, if they have an exemption, which is organised following consultation with parents and teachers. The model of support provided including individual, small-group and in-class support is in line with current best practice. The in-class support, which may include team-teaching, is of great benefit to all students and the subject teacher, and the further development of this strategy is to be encouraged. Individual Education Plans (IEP) have been developed for students as appropriate and the learning support team maintains regular contact with each subject teacher, which is good practice. The organisation and administration of these supports are highly effective and professionally delivered.

Regular meetings of the core team take place, both formally and informally, to review students' progress and to reflect on the strategies used to support students. Reports on students' progress are sent to parents at regular intervals. The commitment of the learning support team has facilitated a whole-school approach to the inclusion of students with SEN. Presentations have been made at whole-staff meetings to familiarise all teachers with the possible range of learning disabilities and the most successful approaches to ensuring that students with these additional needs are fully included in the learning process. Management and members of the learning support team are to be highly commended for their commitment to and on-going development of this very significant aspect of the educational provision in the school.

Students who display interests and talents in any subject area are afforded additional opportunities to develop these talents fully. Much of this good work takes place as part of the co-curricular programmes. Appropriate supports have been facilitated for gifted students including access to summer courses at the Irish Centre for Talented Youth in Dublin City University. In addition, the school facilitates a music programme, where students wishing to attain formal musical awards are accommodated within the school. Consideration should be given, within the framework of special educational needs, to the inclusion of an overall policy for gifted students.

The school is a multi-cultural and inclusive school that embraces and celebrates diversity. Many school policies refer to the respect for the diversity of traditions and backgrounds of its students and their families.

5.2 Guidance and student support in the whole-school context

The school has an allocation of eleven hours ex-quota for the purpose of guidance and counselling. These hours are being used efficiently and effectively. The school has one qualified guidance counsellor, who plays an integral part in many aspects of school life including pastoral care, curriculum and support for students. A dedicated office is used for the purpose of individual guidance and counselling and is fully equipped with the necessary resources to fully support the work of the guidance counsellor.

The guidance counsellor has conducted a survey of all teachers to determine the extent to which each subject department provides some form of guidance. This may take the form of identifying possible options arising from studying the subject such as access to further and third-level education or career prospects linked to the subject. Additionally, SPHE is timetabled for all students and important topics are covered such as homework and study skills, decision making, bullying and friendship. There was clear evidence that all teachers take responsibility to implement supports and policies in each of the relevant areas. In this way a whole school approach has been adopted to the guidance programme, which is highly commendable.

An exemplary whole-school guidance and student support plan ensures students are provided with appropriate educational, vocational and personal guidance. There is a good balance between the time allocated for guidance and counselling. The programme documentation shows guidance activities for all year groups and programmes with appropriate inputs in all cases. The programme is well supported by senior management and the board. Various policies have been developed and ratified that are directly relevant to the school's guidance services such as substance use, RSE, SPHE, anti-bullying and pastoral care. Student supports include supervised study, the buddy system for incoming students as well as positive approaches to student behaviour.

The guidance counsellor plays an integral role in the induction of incoming first-years through the administration of standardised tests, brief one-to-one sessions with each student and assistance with subject choices at the end of the year. TY students are timetabled for a personal development module. All TY students are afforded the opportunity to engage in a series of Career Interest Inventories and Differential Aptitude Tests (DATs). The results of these tests are discussed individually to help students reflect on their preferred career direction. Guidance is timetabled for fifth-year students to help them with their educational and vocational decision making. One-to-one guidance takes place at sixth-year to help students in all aspects of their preparation for the Leaving Certificate exams, CAO applications, further education or career placement. Parents of present and past students were particularly complimentary of this work and good practice.

The guidance counsellor plays an integral role in the discipline and pastoral care work of the school. An appointment system is in place to ensure that referrals to the guidance counsellor are well structured. Suitable links have been established with a range of external professional services.

The students' council is in existence in the school since 1998. It is appropriately constituted and is representative of all form groups in the school. The students' council meets regularly and acts as an important conduit of communications between the general student body and senior management. Members of the students' council were very positive about their teachers and opportunities provided for them by the school. The activities of the students'

council include a campaign to highlight the dangers of bullying and fundraising for a range of worthy charities. At present the students' council is involved in the very important task of developing a school motto that reflects the ethos of Sandford Park. This involves a whole-school collaborative effort and one that the students' council has fully embraced and is leading with enthusiasm. It is senior management's intention to attend in-service for student councils and it is recommended that the teacher with responsibility for the council also attend. The present council has not received any training and this is an area that should be addressed for incoming councils at the beginning of the school year. A member of the Citizenship Education Support Team has a specific remit to support the development of student councils and further information can be obtained on the Civic Social and Political Education website www.cspe.slss.ie

A prefect system operates in the school whereby any fifth-form boy may apply to become a prefect. Students decide if they have the commitment and desire to become role models for the other students in the school. This is commendable practice as students are encouraged to reflect on the attributes of leadership and self-discipline. Training is provided for those students who wish to become prefects, which is also good practice.

An annual awards night is organised to recognise students' achievements and to celebrate the school's success. This is recognised as a very positive and empowering evening, with a guest speaker invited to address the school community.

The structures in place and the commitment of all involved to support students in the provision of high quality education in Sandford Park are highly commended.

6. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER DEVELOPMENT

The following are the main strengths identified in the evaluation:

- Sandford Park School is an inclusive educational community, which embraces diversity and where all partners become involved in the many areas of school activity and in promoting the values of the school.
- The board of governors discharges the functions of a board of management in accordance with the Education Act, 1998. It is a hard-working and committed body and is actively engaged in the life of the school.
- The principal and deputy principal are an effective leadership team. Good communication, collaboration and a shared vision for the future of the school characterise their roles.
- Post-holders form the in-school management team and administer their duties effectively.
- Clear systems are in place for the effective management of students who were respectful and cordial in all their interactions, and whose conduct is informed by an exemplary code of behaviour.
- All buildings and facilities are very well maintained and there are excellent resources, including ICT, available in the school to support teaching and learning.
- Teachers are appropriately deployed according to their qualifications and skills. There is a strong commitment and belief in continuing professional development which is fully promoted and supported by the school.
- New staff members are effectively inducted into the life and ethos of the school.
- There is a good culture of self-evaluation and reflective practice in the school.
- Whole-school planning is well established in the school and an exemplary school plan has been developed. All members of the school community are appropriately engaged in the planning process of development, implementation and review.

- The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum to meet the needs of its students.
- Student involvement in co-curricular and extra-curricular activities is actively fostered and the breadth and diversity of these activities is one of the great strengths of the school.
- A good sense of collegiality and co-operation was evident in all subject departments, who meet regularly and have produced comprehensive written plans.
- There was a good standard of teaching and learning observed in Sandford Park, where students were actively engaged through a range of authoritative and innovative teaching methods.
- Students were observed to be advancing well in their studies, were appropriately challenged and are educated in a positive and affirming environment.
- A highly committed and well qualified team caters for students with additional educational needs. All students are encouraged and supported to reach their highest attainable level.
- There is an exemplary guidance programme in place in the school that ensures students are provided with educational, vocational and personal guidance if required.
- The pastoral care of students is exemplary and reflects the supportive and caring environment in which students are educated.
- The school has an active and articulate students' council which is appropriately representative of the general student body.
- There is a dynamic and proactive parent teacher association, which makes a valuable contribution towards supporting the school. Communication with the wider parent body is of a very high quality.

As a means of building on these strengths and to address areas for development, the following key recommendations are made:

- A review of the present structure of the board of governors should be considered, with a view to enhancing the partnership model which underpins the management structures set out in the Education Act.
- It is recommended that regular meetings between post holders and senior management take place to further develop the in-school management team.
- It is recommended that time be given at some staff meetings for an open forum to discuss identified items in a constructive and solution-focused manner.
- It is recommended that the admissions policy be revisited and revised to reflect the inclusive practice and caring ethos of the school, to clearly indicate that the Transition Year programme is compulsory and to include a statement highlighting the right of parents, or students over the age of eighteen, to appeal a decision of the board of governors to refuse admission under section 29 of the Education Act 1998.
- It is recommended that the timetable arrangements for Physical Education be reviewed to provide access to the subject for all students in line with the DES Rules and Programmes for Secondary Schools.
- The rotation of the subject co-ordinator role should be considered and an agreed system put in place for all subject departments.

Post-evaluation meetings were held with the staff and board of governors when the draft findings and recommendations of the evaluation were presented and discussed.

7. RELATED SUBJECT INSPECTION REPORTS

The following related Subject Inspection reports are available:

- Subject Inspection of English – 28 January 2008
- Subject Inspection of German – 21 January 2008
- Subject Inspection of Science and Biology– 24 January 2008
- Programme Inspection of Transition Year – 24 January 2008

Published September 2008

Appendix

SCHOOL RESPONSE TO THE REPORT

Submitted by the Board of Management

Area 1 Observations on the content of the inspection report

The Board of Governors of Sandford Park School, Dublin 6, welcomes the Whole School Evaluation report. The WSE process was a very positive and affirming experience for all members of the Sandford community. The Board is very pleased that the report acknowledges the provision of a very high quality, all round education to our students in a caring and safe environment. The report identifies the unique features and strengths of the school as well as the many good practices which lead to high standards of teaching and learning in the school. It highlighted our extensive extra and co-curricular programme. The Board wishes to thank the Inspectorate for the professional and sensitive manner in which the evaluation was conducted.

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 of Governors of Sandford Park School is committed to maintaining the status of the school as a centre of excellence where all students are encouraged to fulfil their potential. There is a strong track record of review and development in the school. The WSE report will be an important resource for the short and medium term planning for the school. In addition, it will serve as a guide towards the strategic development of the school.

The school has already taken steps to implement a number of the recommendations. The Board of Governors is considering how to take up other recommendations made in the light of the needs of the whole school and as part of the school's ongoing development.