



An Roinn Oideachais
agus Óige
Department of Education
and Youth

Follow-through inspection

on progress made by the school since the **Subject
Inspection in Geography** carried out in October 2023

REPORT

Ainm na scoile/School name	Mercy Secondary School
Seoladh na scoile/School address	Thomas Davis Street West Inchicore Dublin 8
Uimhir rolla/Roll number	60872A
Dáta na cigireachta/ Date of evaluation	23/04/2026
Dáta eisiúna na tuairisce/Date of issue of report	02/06/2026

Follow-Through Inspection

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

This inspection followed up on the progress the school made in implementing the main recommendations in the inspection carried out in October 2023: Subject Inspection in Geography. Published school reports can be accessed [here](#).

How to read this report

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

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

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

The report concludes with advice to help the school fully implement the recommendations made in the original inspection, where such advice has been provided to the school. The board of management was given an opportunity to comment in writing on the findings and recommendations of the report; a response was not received from the board.

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

During the inspection visit, the following checks in relation to the school's child protection and anti-bullying procedures were conducted:	
<i>Child Protection</i>	<i>Bí Cineálta</i>
1. The name of the DLP and the Child Safeguarding Statement (CSS) are prominently displayed near the main door of the school / in the reception area. <i>Following the school's adoption of the updated procedures 2025, it is also required to display a student-friendly version incorporating the name of the DLP beside the CSS.</i> 2. The school's child safeguarding statement has been ratified by the board and includes an annual review and a risk assessment. 3. All teachers visited were aware of who to go to if they had a child protection concern.	1. The school has developed an anti-bullying policy using Appendix A of <i>Bí Cineálta</i>, it is reviewed annually (or earlier if required) and includes a student/pupil friendly version that is displayed where students/pupils and the school community can see it. 2. The school's anti-bullying policy is published on its website and/or is readily accessible to board of management members, staff, parents and students/pupils. 3. The board of management minutes record that the principal provides an update to the board at each ordinary board meeting that meets the requirements of <i>Bí Cineálta</i>

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

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

- Meeting with senior leadership team
- Interview with relevant teachers
- Review of school documentation and students' work
- Review of resources and facilities
- Observation of teaching and learning
- Meeting with students

Findings on progress made on recommendations

The questioning strategies used in the majority of lessons were effective, however, teachers should use more higher-order questions, challenging students appropriately to think critically about the subject content.

Good Progress

There was evidence of good progress with this recommendation. There were instances in lessons where teachers used the key geographical questions effectively to promote deeper discussion of topics and a number of students demonstrated very good knowledge. This was welcome as students experienced a strong sense of achievement. These opportunities were not fully exploited however, and there were other instances where students were not challenged to think more critically and reflect on their knowledge and understanding.

To maximise the effectiveness of pair and group work teachers should take a more structured approach; designing and implementing tasks to ensure clear roles and expectations of students to facilitate them in demonstration of their learning.

Partial Progress

The geography department made partial progress with this recommendation. Commendably, students who participated in the focus group stated that they collaborated regularly in lessons with all teachers introducing pair and group tasks. However, where opportunities for group work presented themselves in the lessons observed, they lacked structure and coherence and, in these instances, students were unsure of their roles. Teachers should clarify the rationale and aims of collaborative groups tasks for students and ensure that they clearly understand the task from the outset so all students in the group can achieve.

Map and aerial photograph analysis and interpretation are key geographical skills to be developed by students and teachers should introduce these earlier in the junior cycle to support the study of all aspects of the specification.

Very Good Progress

There was very good progress made in relation to this recommendation. Junior cycle planning provided evidence that there was a more developmental approach to mapwork. Maps and aerial photographs were used regularly and threaded through the units of learning from first year with map skills becoming progressively more difficult and appropriate to the students' stage of development. Students who participated in the focus group affirmed that they worked regularly on maps and photographs of varying scales.

While regular subject department meetings are scheduled, it is recommended that a template is created by senior management to capture the minutes from these meetings that include a note of decisions taken, timelines and actions agreed.

Very Good Progress

The senior management team introduced a meeting template in response to this recommendation. This helped to give subject department meetings greater structure and allowed the management to capture the key decisions and actions agreed across the subject departments very effectively.

The subject department should prioritise the development of junior cycle units of learning to ensure all elements of the Framework for Junior Cycle and the subject specification are met.

Very Good Progress

There was clear evidence that the geography department had considered this recommendation carefully and very good progress had been made. The units of learning were more complete than they were at the time of the previous inspection with stronger links between the strands of the specification evident. This was particularly apparent in the planning for geoliteracy where teachers provided clarity and made connections between the different elements of the specification, adapting the plan in recognition of the school context.

The process of implementing the recommendations

The subject department made progress on each of the recommendations from the original inspection report. A series of meetings were held involving teachers and the senior management team and strategies were agreed and implemented to bring about improvement. In particular very good progress was made in the development of map skills in all year groups, the advancement of junior cycle units of learning and capturing decisions taken at subject meetings. The senior management team were very supportive of the subject department in promoting effective practice and providing teachers with the space to collaboratively plan and amend the subject plan as recommended.

Recommendations

- Teachers should ensure that there is an appropriate level of challenge for all students in lessons that stimulates interest and allows them to think critically about the areas of study.
- Teachers should clarify the individual student roles when introducing collaborative group tasks to ensure that all students participate fully in the activity and are given opportunities to share their learning with others.
- Although very good progress was made, the subject department should keep the units of learning under regular review and be aware of students' previous knowledge and the cross-curricular learning that takes place at junior cycle.

The Quality Continuum for progress made on implementing the recommendations

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

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

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

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