



Quality Assurance Department

Record of Outcomes of the Focused One-Day External Review visit carried out by the Education Review Section

Name of School: St Joseph Junior School, Sliema

Head of School: Ms Mariuccia Fenech

Review Team: Ms Mariella Farrugia, Education Officer (Review Leader)
Dr Alexander Cutajar, Education Officer
Ms Bernardette Mercieca, Education Officer

Date of Visit: 26th May 2022

What is the objective of this record of outcomes?

This record of outcomes follows the one day focused external review visit carried by the Quality Assurance Department. Its aim is to give the Head of School and relevant authorities feedback on current practices. The record of outcomes reflects the conclusions made by the visiting team following professional dialogues and classroom observations. It does not purport to be a comprehensive report about the school and, on its own, it does not impinge on any decision to be taken on the school's licence. This record of outcomes will not be placed in the public domain by the Quality Assurance Department. Any data that serves as supporting evidence will be retained by the Quality Assurance Department for a period of two years in accordance to the department's retention policy and in line with the General Data Protection Regulation 2016/679.

School's vision for improvement

Outcomes:

- The Head of School (HoS) is a reflective practitioner and, together with the other members of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT), is aware of the needs of the school and has a clear vision for school improvement. In fact, the school is working on three priority development targets, namely, the introduction of the Learning Outcomes in the upper junior years, improving literacy and giving more exposure to the Maltese language. The current vision was set following the outcomes of one-to-one discussions between the HoS and teachers, a parents' questionnaire and analysis of examination results. Reflections based on these different data sources have enabled the school to select relevant priority targets for school improvement.
- The SLT supports educators through curriculum time sessions, training opportunities, projects and external support with the aim of driving the implementation of the school priorities.
- Interviewed teachers are aware of the identified areas for improvement and it is evident that actions to address these priorities are being implemented both at classroom and school level. Amongst other initiatives, a student group, named *Għaqdina*, has been set up to promote the Maltese language among fellow learners. Apart from encouraging learners' voice, this initiative is contributing towards making learners owners of one of the school priorities.
- It is evident that amongst the SLT and the teaching community, a strong sense of collegiality and collaboration prevails. This not only contributes towards a positive school atmosphere but is also beneficial to the learning and teaching process.

Way Forward:

- The SLT, together with the educators, will maintain the areas for improvement which focus on literacy and a better exposure to the Maltese language. The SLT feels the need to introduce a new area for improvement for next year, that is, strengthening the Catholic ethos of the school. It is being recommended that the SLT finds strategies to share this vision for school improvement with the rest of the school community to ensure ownership. Together with the educators, the SLT is to define a clear path through which the set goals are implemented and achieved.

Learning and teaching

Outcomes:

- During the lessons observed, reviewers noted positive relationships and interactions between the teaching staff and learners. A strong synergy between teachers and learning support educators could be observed and this is leaving a positive impact on the learning and teaching process.
- During most of the lessons observed, teachers made use of a variety of formative assessment strategies. Learning intentions were shared during some of the lessons and reviewers also noted instances where learners' prior knowledge was explored and built upon. Teachers closely monitored learners and gave them immediate feedback, suggesting areas for improvement during assigned tasks. Teachers also asked questions to individual learners, some of which were of a higher order, thus contributing towards enabling learners to think critically.
- Teachers made use of a wide variety of resources and different means of representation. These, alongside instances of successful groupwork and collaborative experiences, as well as varied teaching strategies, contributed towards having learners that, not only were on task, but also actively engaged.
- In the Kinder class observed, the educator demonstrated a good working knowledge of the emergent curriculum approach. Young learners willingly and enthusiastically participated in the activities that were specifically chosen to address their interests. This positively challenged them and enticed them to think critically.

Way Forward:

- The SLT is encouraged to continue to support educators for the benefit of all learners. This would help maintain the good quality inclusive pedagogy that was observed during this visit.

M. Farrugia

Ms Mariella Farrugia (Review Leader)

31st May 2022

What happens next?

Following the receipt of this record of outcomes, the school is encouraged to maintain and strengthen any identified good practices and is encouraged to address any areas for development, particularly those highlighted in the Way Forward.