Report Summary
of the External Review
by the QAD

for

San Anton School Senior Sector
l-Imselliet, limits of Imgarr

External Review carried out between 15\textsuperscript{th} and 19\textsuperscript{th} April 2013

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Contents

Section                                      Pg
1. Introduction                              3
2. The review team                           3
3. The school context                        3
4. Survey responses                          4
5. Executive summary                         5
   Main findings                              5
   Recommendations                            7
6. Next external review                      9
7. Appendices                                 10
   Pre-External Review Parents’ Questionnaire
   Pre-External Review Teachers’ Questionnaire
   Pre-External Review Learning Support Assistants’ Questionnaire
1. **Introduction**

This is a report for the external review carried out at San Anton School Senior Sector, I-Imselliet, limits of Imgarr, between the 15th April 2013 and the 19th April 2013.

2. **The review team**

The review team was composed of the following reviewers:

- Ms Isabelle Ciangura  Education Officer - Review Leader
- Sr Josette Attard  Education Officer
- Ms Denise Gatt  Education Officer
- Mr Sinclair Grima  Education Officer
- Mr Chris Kenely  Education Officer
- Mr David Polidano  Education Officer

3. **School context**

San Anton School (henceforth ‘the school’) is an independent, co-educational, mixed ability school situated in I-Imselliet Valley, limits of Imgarr.

San Anton School was the first school founded by the Parent’s Foundation for Education (PFE) in 1988. The school’s mission is to put the learner at the centre of the educational process and to foster the best environment for the development of the child as a unique person and an active, effective member of society. Today the partnership between educators and parents in the running of the school is still an important characteristic of the school. Furthermore, holistic education, the inclusion of all learners and the drive towards excellence are still central PFE principles followed by the school.

San Anton School is a fee-paying school and a non-profit making organisation. Admission is on a first-come-first-served basis and the school is not intended for any specific group of children.

Dr Joe Gauci (henceforth ‘Head of School’) directs the whole school. The Head of School (HoS) and the Assistant Head for the Senior Sector form the Senior Management Team (SMT) for the Senior Sector. As a Principal, Dr Gauci performs the duties of a Chief Executive Officer (CEO). Prior to being appointed in his current role, Dr Gauci held various positions within the school, including that of the Head of School and the Assistant Head for the Senior Sector. His experience and leadership have contributed significantly to the school’s success in delivering high-quality education to all its students.
post in 2011, Dr Gauci served as an assistant head of the Senior Sector and was also a teacher within the same sector. Dr Gauci also forms part of the School Board and the Senior Leadership Team (SLT).

The School Board is responsible for the strategic direction of the school. The SLT contributes to the school’s strategic planning and target setting. The assistant heads for each sector, the Early Years Coordinator, the Inclusion Coordinator (INCO), the School Counsellor, the Educational Psychologist and the School Administrator also form part of the SLT. The INCO heads the Department for Inclusive Education (DFIE) and the School Counsellor leads the Department for Social and Emotional Literacy (DFSEL). Most of the SLT members also have teaching duties.

The school’s modern premises house the three sectors forming San Anton School. The Senior Sector facilities are separate from the other sectors. The school employs 43 teachers, a Learning Support Assistant (LSA) and 13 Supply Learning Support Assistants (SLSAs).

Learners move into the Senior Sector at Grade 8 aged 11 and finish their compulsory schooling in Grade 12. The school currently caters for 327 learners, with the majority, 187, being boys. The LSAs provide support to 23 learners with a statement of needs. For 40 learners, Maltese is not their first language. The school profile reports that learners hail from all parts of Malta. School documentation provided to reviewers indicates that families who choose San Anton School are generally able and willing to pay to guarantee a private education to their children. However, a good number of parents do so at a significant personal sacrifice. Recent tracer studies indicate that most learners eventually proceed to post-secondary education.

4. Survey responses

A questionnaire prior to the external review was disseminated to all parents of learners attending San Anton School Senior Sector. Of 327 parents’ questionnaires distributed, 138 (42%) were collected. Responses are given in Appendix 1 of the report.

A questionnaire prior to the external review was distributed amongst all teaching staff of San Anton School Senior Sector. Of 43 teachers, 33 (77%) responded. Responses are given in Appendix 2 of the report.

Another questionnaire prior to the external review was conducted with all the Learning Support Assistant (LSA) and Supply Learning Support Assistants (SLSAs) of San Anton School Senior Sector. Of 14 LSAs, 13 (93%) responded. Responses are given in Appendix 3 of the report.
5. Executive summary

Main findings – Educational Leadership and School Management

- The Senior Leadership Team aims to effectively target the school’s identified key areas for improvement.
- The Head of School is leading the development of learning goals and strategies so as to ensure effective teaching and learning processes.
- The curricular changes being implemented reflect external developments in education and follow national curricular policies.
- The Senior Management Team is addressing the necessary alignment to the school’s vision through continuous professional development and the new performance appraisal programme.
- The Senior Management Team generally uses various formal and informal channels to communicate with the staff.
- The Senior Management Team considers open dialogue across all levels an important aspect of change management. There is a perceived need for furthering this dialogue at all levels.
- A high level of collegiality exists amongst teachers. The sense of belonging of Learning Support Assistants is improving.

Main findings – School Development Plan

- The improvement priorities and action plans, mainly identified by the Senior Leadership Team, target school improvement areas.
- The School Development Plan outlines the school’s strengths and future action points. There is room for improvement in the formulation of the report and action plans.

Main findings – School Ethos

- The school caters for the spiritual needs of learners.
- The school provides a generally safe environment for learners.
- San Anton School values the nurturing of confident learners in a co-educational and inclusive system.
- The school is taking a positive approach towards discipline.
- The learners’ high sense of belonging and their positive relationships with teachers characterise the school atmosphere.

Main findings – Curriculum

- The school provides a wide curriculum to cater for the holistic development of its learners.
- Curricular allocation arrangements for languages are particular to the school.
• The school seeks to adapt its curricular provision to address the diverse needs of the learners.

Main findings – Learning and Teaching
• The school exposes learners to a wide range of stimulating learning experiences.
• A school strategy is in place to improve the quality of planning for effective learning and teaching.
• Teachers are exploring strategies to cater further for the specific needs of different learners.
• Learning and teaching is being increasingly supported by information and communication technology.

Main findings – Achievement and Assessment
• There is regular monitoring and record-keeping of learners’ achievement and attainment. The school aims to further improve its assessment procedures.
• The school is satisfied with the learners’ attainment at the end of secondary education.

Main findings – Support for Learners
• The school fosters a culture of assistance and inclusion.
• Transition across grades is well-supported.
• The Department for Social and Emotional Literacy coordinates with the teaching staff to provide effective pastoral care to learners.
• The school identifies and supports learners with individual needs. The Department for Inclusive Education and teachers work collegially for the benefit of these learners.

Main findings – Parental Involvement
• There are different levels at which parents are involved at San Anton School.
• The school has various communication channels for parents.

Main findings – Management of Resources
• The school has a full complement of staff with clearly defined roles.
• The school structure contributes towards a stimulating learning atmosphere.
• The school invests in material resources for learning and teaching.
Recommendations – Educational Leadership and School Management

- The HoS and the working group set to support the implementation of success criteria are encouraged to continue following the plans, for which the working group was set up.
- Taking into account the findings of the pre-review teachers’ questionnaires, the SMT and staff should evaluate the effectiveness of the internal communication channels utilised and the teachers’ involvement in the shared decision-making process.
- The school can explore more ways of integrating LSAs in the life of the school.

Recommendations – School Development Plan

- The school should ensure the stakeholders’ full understanding of the consultative aim of school development planning and to involve all stakeholders in this process.
- The school is encouraged to seek the support from the assistant director in charge of school improvement within the Quality Assurance Department regarding school development planning.

Recommendations – School Ethos

- The school should review the implementation of the attendance procedure to ensure immediate accurate information about the learners attending school on the day.
- Parents should be informed on the day about their child’s absence from school.
- The school is encouraged to follow its plan to review and update the behaviour policy as stipulated in the School Development Plan.

Recommendations – Curriculum

- The school is to ensure that the entitlement of Grade 12 learners for core Physical Education is provided for.
- The school may consider looking up further work experience opportunities in diverse areas of interest for all Grade 11 learners.
- Taking into account the views of the different stakeholders, the school should follow up its plans to review the present curricular time allocation in view of the National Curriculum Framework and its own particular context.
- The school should continue to regularly monitor and assess the effectiveness of setting in the different subjects where it is implemented and to review provision accordingly.
• The HoS is to better ensure that learners who opt out of subjects are gainfully engaged in work related to the curriculum during their freed up time.

Recommendations – Learning and Teaching

• The school is encouraged to respond to the teachers’ request for further training in differentiation, as identified in the School Development Plan internal evaluation.
• The school can create more opportunities for teachers to share existing good practice in the use of success criteria in planning, in differentiation and in Assessment for Learning strategies. This may occur also across departments.
• Teachers are encouraged to continue enhancing their use of the interactive whiteboard.
• Teachers should provide more opportunities for learners to become active users of the interactive whiteboard.
• The school is encouraged to carry out its action plan regarding the introduction of an e-Learning platform.

Recommendations – Achievement and Assessment

• The school can work on the identified need to develop further the current formative assessment methods.
• The HoS is encouraged to pursue his plans to commission a study of the learners’ SEC results.

Recommendations – Parental Involvement

• The school is encouraged to extend the good practice of a Parents’ Day during the first term across all grades.
• The school is encouraged to use appropriate communication with both English- and Maltese-speaking parents.
• The HoS is encouraged to evaluate the parents’ response to the pre-review questionnaire on the consideration of their feedback by the school.

Recommendations – Management of Resources

• The school can ensure that all corridors are used to display learners’ work or other educational materials.
• The school is encouraged to persevere in its effort to address the absence of a hall.
• The school is to address the potential hazard of the exposed rain-water duct in one of the school grounds.
• The school is encouraged to continue working on a solution for the traffic and parking problems.
• The school is encouraged to continue following the refurbishment plans for the school library and to invest further in contemporary publications.

6. **Next external review**

The next External Review will take place after the end of this cycle of External Reviews. This may be reconsidered as a result of the Follow-up Visit as per Parameters of the External Review available at:

[https://www.education.gov.mt/qad](https://www.education.gov.mt/qad)

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7. Appendices

Appendix 1 - Pre-External Review Parents’ Questionnaire Results
Appendix 2 - Pre-External Review Teachers’ Questionnaire Results
Appendix 3 - Pre-External Review Learning Support Assistants’ Questionnaire Results