

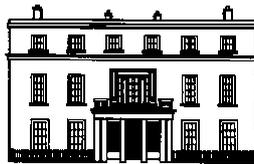
An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna

Department of Education and Skills

**Subject Inspection of Technical Graphics and Design
and Communication Graphics
REPORT**

**Coláiste Éanna
Ballyroan, Dublin 16
Roll number: 60342R**

Date of inspection: 20 September 2011



**A N R O I N N | D E P A R T M E N T O F
O I D E A C H A I S | E D U C A T I O N
A G U S S C I L E A N N A | A N D S K I L L S**

REPORT
ON
THE QUALITY OF LEARNING AND TEACHING IN TECHNICAL GRAPHICS AND
DESIGN AND COMMUNICATION GRAPHICS

INFORMATION ON THE INSPECTION

Date of inspection	20 September 2011
Inspection activities undertaken <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review of relevant documents• Discussion with principal and teachers• Interaction with students	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Observation of teaching and learning during six class periods• Examination of students' work• Feedback to principal and teachers

MAIN FINDINGS

- Overall, graphics subjects are delivered in an effective manner.
- In most cases graphics lessons were structured appropriately and teachers utilised strategies that enabled students to learn and reinforce previous learning.
- Lessons where teachers modelled best practice were most effective.
- Oral feedback was administered throughout the lessons observed, whereas more detailed written feedback on students' portfolio work was less apparent.
- The learning and practical skills exhibited by students are appropriate to their levels and abilities.
- The subject department has engaged in planning and is open and willing to develop additional reflective practices in order to have a positive impact on the quality of teaching and learning in graphics subjects.

MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS

- The subject department should further develop its correction and feedback procedures in order to maximise the benefits of students' portfolio work.
 - To enhance the current procedures, the subject department, in consultation with management, should identify and implement additional measures that would help students make fully informed decisions regarding the selection of graphics subjects.
 - Senior management should work towards developing a subject department of suitably qualified graphics teachers.
 - The subject department should carry out a full review of Design and Communication Graphics in Transition Year.
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INTRODUCTION

Coláiste Éanna offers Technical Graphics (TG) and Design and Communication Graphics (DCG) as optional subjects in its Junior Certificate, Transition Year and Leaving Certificate programmes. The school has a current enrolment of 574 students.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

- Most lessons were well structured and included the introduction, development and recapitulation of topics. This approach worked well.
- In most cases, teachers modelled best practice using the chalkboard. A first-year group responded very well to this approach as it gave them the opportunity to observe the correct drawing procedures executed in a sequential manner. However one class group would have benefited considerably from a clear and purposeful demonstration at the beginning of the lesson as it would have clarified a number of issues that caused confusion for some students.
- Independent learning was a significant feature of a senior cycle lesson observed. In this lesson students were given clear direction from the teacher at the beginning but were then encouraged to develop their research and comparative evaluation skills. The teacher facilitated this learning by guiding and advising students who required direction. Students responded to this level of autonomy by engaging fully in the task and producing good quality work.
- Students received appropriate levels of homework during the lessons observed. In most cases homework was assigned to reinforce subject matter covered in the lessons. In one instance, students were assigned a number of tasks that were unsuitable to their stage of development within the subject area. To achieve maximum benefit from homework tasks, teachers should carefully consider the appropriateness of the tasks and assign homework that either reinforces class work or prepares students for future lessons.
- Information and communication technology (ICT) resources were utilised effectively in most lessons observed. A number of good-quality teaching aids were also prepared in advance, particularly those used to demonstrate various geometrical transformations. To maximise the effectiveness of such teaching aids, students should be encouraged to use the models to investigate possible solutions and to gain a fuller understanding of the associated terms.
- While good-quality formative feedback was administered orally to students in all lessons observed, the subject department should work toward developing a system that would promote a common approach to providing students with additional meaningful feedback in relation to their portfolio work.
- All lessons were characterised by a high work ethic and significant degree of student activity. Students' outputs were of a suitably high quality and demonstrated their understanding of key concepts.

SUBJECT PROVISION AND WHOLE SCHOOL SUPPORT

- Graphics subjects form part of the Junior Certificate, TY and Leaving Certificate programmes in Coláiste Éanna. Class groups receive appropriate time allocations with lessons appropriately scheduled throughout the week. Coláiste Éanna also works in

partnership with a local all-girls school to provide a graphics module for TY students. This commitment to graphics education is commended.

- Uptake of graphics subjects in all programmes is very good particularly at junior cycle.
- Upon entry into first year, students choose one optional subject from a possible three. To assist students and their parents an open evening is held prior to making optional subject choices. To enhance this practice, the subject department, in consultation with management, should identify and implement additional supportive procedures that would further assist students in making fully informed decisions regarding the selection of graphics subjects.
- One specialist room is provided for the teaching and learning of graphics. In addition, a Materials Technology (Wood) classroom is also utilised occasionally. These facilities are well equipped and have suitable resources available including integrated data projection systems. Appropriate storage facilities are also provided for each year-group's portfolio work and drawing instruments.
- Currently four teachers are deployed to teach graphics subjects in the school, two of whom are qualified to teach the subject to the highest level. Senior management should work towards developing a subject department of suitably qualified graphics teachers.
- Student uptake of higher level and attainment in certificate examinations is generally good. To ensure that this is maintained senior management should carefully monitor examination result trends with a view to maintaining consistently high standards.

PLANNING AND PREPARATION

- Effective structures are in place to facilitate subject planning. Records of planning meetings demonstrate a good level of discussion on a wide range of issues. To build upon these good practices the subject department should now include teaching and learning as an item on the agenda of all subject planning meetings. Each meeting would then provide the subject department with an opportunity to discuss the pedagogy associated with graphics. The inclusion of this form of professional discourse will help to maintain and improve the standard of teaching and learning in the classroom.
- There is good evidence of collaborative planning particularly in relation to the delivery of agreed curricular plans. This is achieved through the identification of learning outcomes for each year group in the subject department plan.
- Currently both of the TY DCG modules offered consist of very different subject matter and planned methodologies. In order to streamline the delivery of the module and to enhance students' experience of DCG in TY, the subject department should carry out a full review of DCG in TY. In doing so, attention should be given to including aspects of parametric modelling and varying students' learning experience by including interesting and significantly different strategies to achieve the desired learning outcomes.
- Electronic resources are prepared and stored on the school's local network. This allows all members of the subject department to access and utilise them when required. This collaborative approach to developing and sharing resources is commended.

The draft findings and recommendations arising out of this evaluation were discussed with the principal and the subject teachers at the conclusion of the evaluation. 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.

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