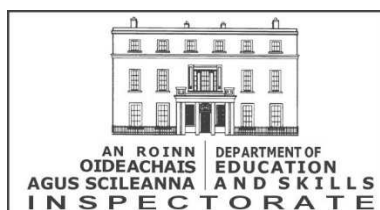


An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna
Department of Education and Skills

Follow-Through Inspection
REPORT

Tralee Community College,
Clash Road, Tralee, County Kerry
Uimhir rolla: 70550H

Date of inspection: 18 March 2014



Date of publication of original report	May 2011	Type of original report	<i>SPHE SIR</i>	Date of FT inspection	18 March 2014
Follow-through inspection activities					
<p><i>The following activities took place in the course of the follow-through inspection:</i></p> <p>Phone conference with principal and meeting with deputy principal Meeting with subject coordinator Meeting with relevant teachers Observation of teaching and learning Interaction with students Review of school documentation and records and students' work</p>					
Recommendation in original inspection report			Progress achieved to date on implementation of recommendation		
<p>The experiential learning cycle is an approach that could further inform lesson design and delivery. Linked to this recommendation is the need to develop an assessment toolkit.</p>			<p>Partial progress The experiential learning cycle is composed of four phases. The experiencing phase was provided for in the observed lesson, as was the processing phase, albeit to a lesser degree. The remaining two phases, generalising and applying, were not adequately accommodated.</p> <p>Partial progress Work has been initiated in the area of assessment. A draft assessment policy, for example, has been prepared. While this policy makes reference to the introduction of key strategies such as portfolio assessment and reflective journals, there was little evidence to indicate significant implementation of these and other assessment approaches and strategies.</p>		
<p>The school's model of provision for Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) should be reviewed and it is recommended that the board prioritise the development and ratification of a corresponding RSE policy.</p>			<p>Partial progress Guarantees were provided that junior cycle RSE is now delivered by teachers of Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) as part of the SPHE programme, with guest speakers being used to supplement rather than replace this class-based provision.</p> <p>As was the situation in 2011, senior cycle RSE is provided solely by guest speakers. This, as outlined previously, is not in line with best practice.</p> <p>An RSE policy has been developed, and board minutes from September 2011 indicate the board's ratification of this mandatory policy. Relevant teachers, however, appeared unfamiliar with the policy. It was also noted that the school's RSE policy does not reflect actual provision for senior cycle RSE.</p>		
<p>A more systematic and incremental approach to SPHE teachers' continuing professional development (CPD) is recommended, as is training in the TRUST resource for senior cycle RSE teachers.</p>			<p>Partial progress Further, relevant CPD has been availed of by one of the SPHE teachers. Training in the TRUST resource for senior cycle RSE teachers has not been completed.</p>		
Summary of findings					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The experiential learning cycle was partly accommodated in the observed lesson. • Work has been initiated in the area of assessment. • Junior cycle RSE is now delivered by teachers of SPHE as part of the SPHE programme, with supplementary 					

support from guest speakers. In senior cycle however, RSE is provided solely by guest speakers.

- Both SPHE and RSE teachers appeared unfamiliar with the school's RSE policy. In addition, the policy does not reflect actual provision at senior cycle.
- Some further, relevant CPD has been undertaken.

Recommendations

- To support a further and fuller implementation of the experiential learning cycle, teachers were directed to the *Teacher Lesson Plan Book* of the SPHE resource in use in the school, in which good quality guidance in relation to the use of experiential methodology can be accessed on an ongoing, lesson-by-lesson basis. Further guidance can be found in the SPHE syllabus and the related teacher guidelines.
- There is a need for the draft assessment policy to be finalised and translated into action. Teachers were reminded that the learning outcomes for each module should provide the starting point when approaching the assessment of students' learning in SPHE, and that related class-based or homework tasks should, ideally, be documented in the relevant programmes of work.
- The school's provision for senior cycle RSE needs to be reviewed in light of: *Circular 0037/2010 Relationships and Sexuality Education*; *Circular 0023/2010 SPHE & RSE Best Practice Guidelines for Post-Primary Schools*; and the RSE *Interim Curriculum and Guidelines for post-primary schools*. As recommended previously, teachers charged with teaching senior cycle RSE should be encouraged and facilitated to attend relevant training as provided by the SPHE Support Service.
- Management should ensure that all SPHE and RSE teachers are familiar with the contents of the school's RSE policy. A good way to ensure this is to involve the relevant staff at development and review stages. The policy needs to be updated to reflect actual provision.
- A more systematic and incremental approach to SPHE teachers' continuing professional development (CPD) is still required. This should be informed by an annual audit of teachers' CPD needs, which should be informed by the SPHE Support Service course schedule, which is currently issued on a bi-annual basis.

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.