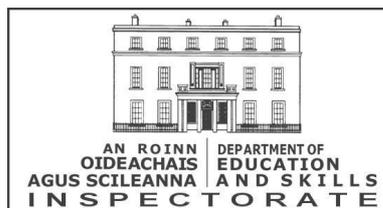


An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna
Department of Education and Skills

Follow-Through Inspection
REPORT

Ballinode College
Clarion Road, Sligo, County Sligo
Uimhir rolla: 72360M

Date of inspection: 9 November 2015



Date of original inspection	22 October 2013	Type of original report	Subject Inspection: Science	Date of FT inspection	9 November 2015
Report published	Yes				
Follow-through inspection activities					
<p><i>The following activities took place in the course of the follow-through inspection</i></p> <p>Meeting with principal and senior management team Meeting with members of the in-school management team or subject coordinator Meeting with relevant teachers Observation of teaching and learning Interaction with students Review of school documentation and records and students' work Review of resources and facilities</p>					
Recommendation in original inspection report		Progress achieved to date on implementation of recommendation			
Greater use of an investigative approach to teaching and learning, rather than teacher instruction and note taking, should be incorporated into as many lessons as applicable.		<p>Good progress</p> <p>In the lessons visited, good examples of investigative methodologies were observed. Students' prior knowledge of the topic at hand was sought through discussion or questioning that supported enquiry-based learning. Where practical work was observed, students were asked to develop a hypothesis and methodology and were then required to logically predict the outcomes before performing the experiment. These good practices should be expanded upon by the science department and used in as many lessons as possible.</p>			
Greater use should be made of directed questioning to ensure maximum student engagement.		<p>Good progress</p> <p>Directed questions, which were distributed across the student cohort, were used in all the lessons observed. When lessons are recapitulated, teachers should ensure that this style of questioning is utilised. Where student discussion occurs, it is important that students' responses are clearly audible so that all students can engage in the process.</p>			
The science department should extend the formative approaches used in the correction of homework to the monitoring of students' practical copybooks.		<p>Very good progress</p> <p>The science department has implemented this recommendation.</p>			
In the context of the future development of the school, priority should be given to the need for a second laboratory.		<p>Good progress</p> <p>Senior management has begun this process and future building plans include an extension that contains a new laboratory. The management team has also tried to place the post Leaving Certificate (PLC) students off campus, where possible, to enable better access to the existing laboratory for the post-primary students. The science teachers and management should now devise short-term plans to upgrade the current laboratory while the development of the extension is ongoing.</p>			
As all teachers in the science department follow the agreed schemes of work, it would be beneficial to set common assessments at various times throughout the year.		<p>Very good progress</p> <p>The science department has implemented this recommendation.</p>			

Summary of findings

- Evidence of some good investigative methodologies was observed in the lessons visited.
- Directed questioning was employed frequently throughout lessons ensuring that as many students as possible were assessed.
- Students' laboratory copybooks were used by teachers to provide formative feedback on how they could improve on the quality of their work.
- Senior management has begun, and is continuing, to work on developing an extension to the school that contains another laboratory.
- The science teachers now set common assessments for year groups during the academic year.

Recommendations

- The science department should now expand upon the investigative methodologies that it employs and incorporate these methodologies into as many lessons as possible.
- All teachers should use directed questions as a means of recapitulating on lessons and ensure that any responses offered, through student discussion, are audible to all students.
- While the development of any new laboratory is ongoing, senior management and the science department should devise short-term plans to upgrade the existing laboratory.

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.