

**An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna**

**Inspection of a course  
in a Coláiste Gaeilge (Irish College)**

**REPORT**

**Coláiste Mhuigheo  
An Cheathrú Thaidhg, Ballina  
County Mayo  
Reference Code: CGC 221**

**Date of inspection: 21/07/16**



**AN ROINN OIDEACHAIS AGUS SCILEANNA | DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND SKILLS**

**THE INSPECTORATE**

## **INTRODUCTION**

The Inspectorate of the Department of Education and Skills evaluates the quality of educational provision in a certain number of courses provided each year by Irish colleges on behalf of the Department of Arts, Heritage Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht affairs.. This report of the Irish course is based on observation of teaching, learning and cultural activities, interaction with students and discussion with management, and inspection of relevant documentation.

## **SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER DEVELOPMENT**

### **Key findings**

- A competent principal managed the course and there was significant co-operation among the staff.
- The teachers worked diligently but there is a need for accuracy in the written word given to students.
- Very enthusiastic leaders with a very high standard of Irish were employed on this course.
- The students had respect for the Irish culture and derived enjoyment and benefit from the afternoon events which were implemented through the medium of Irish.
- The students took an active role in suitable activities in spoken Irish in the classroom. Additional visual aids need to be prepared in order to show the meaning of the words to the students.
- In a meeting with a focus group of ten students which was organised as a part of the evaluation visit, it was reported that they were all satisfied with the college's various activities.

### **Main recommendations**

- It is recommended that the written form be grammatically correct on the whiteboard and on the information sheets.
- It is recommended that the the translation method be avoided and that more use be made of a broader range of mime and visual aids to support extracting the meaning of the words.

## **1. QUALITY OF TEACHING AND LEARNING**

- The quality of teaching and learning was good. Very good learning environments were created by the teachers with a display of art work and students' written work and self- designed charts, labels and useful pictures. It is recommended that these be augmented and be used to explain the meaning of the words rather than relying on translation. The layout of the themes was beneficial and the programme was taught as had been pre-planned. It is recommended that the written form be more grammatically correct on the whiteboard and on the information sheets.
- Two classes were in operation catering for the varying abilities. During the lessons observed, the teachers gave the students the opportunity to work in pairs and in groups. Debates and discussion were used during lessons.
- The students had plenty of speaking opportunities. They were generally knew the terminology which had been taught previously.
- The learning outcome was beneficial and the input given to the students was commendable. Additional information sheets of material relevant to state examinations were disseminated.. The students were able to use the terminology during activities. It would be beneficial for the students to revise the terminology and the vocabulary already taught before assigning them a new task such as debating.

## **2. QUALITY OF STUDENTS' EXPERIENCE OF THE IRISH LANGUAGE AND CULTURE**

- The language and cultural events were of good quality. Dance and singing were used productively to practise the language and the students took part enthusiastically in the events which were observed. Various competitions were organised for them. They were given useful expressions for the events and activities.
- The students were given ample opportunities to talk. At a meeting with a student focus group, they reported that their Irish was improving. They were able to participate with fun in activities , particularly the water events and the dances on the beach.

## **3. QUALITY OF LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

- The quality of leadership and management was effective. Teachers and leaders with a high standard of Irish They worked diligently and enthusiastically to strengthen and develop the students' repertoire of language. The students were allocated classes according to age and ability in the language. The general organisation of the course was praiseworthy.
- It was confirmed that the college plan for the Irish course was available and the plan was of a good standard. The course was beneficial and varied. Emphasis was placed on active learning. The students were also given an oral test during the course.
- The Irish course authorities confirmed that the college's steering committee has formally adopted the policy regarding child policy as required by the provisions of *Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children*

(Department of Children and Youth Affairs, 2011), and that the practice of the Irish course is in line with the requirements of *Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children* (Department of Children and Youth Affairs, 2011).

- It was confirmed that the health and safety statement, the code of behaviour and the bullying policy were available. There was a health and safety officer registered in the college plan for the Irish course.
- The management of the students was effective on the day of the inspection. The Irish language rule was well implemented. It was reported that the leaders were very able and trained in the water and it was they who ran all the water events.
- Good daily use was made of the hall for group work, games and various events. On the whole, the management of facilities and resources was good.
- Progress was made regarding the recommendations made last year. The staff made use of visual resources to support the development of communication. The leaders had very good Irish and encouraged the students to speak Irish at breaks and during the events outside of classroom.

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The steering committee of the Irish-language college was given an opportunity to comment on the findings and recommendations of the report; the steering committee chose to accept the report without response.