

An Roinn Oideachais & Scileanna

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

REPORT

**Coláiste Uí Chadhain
Na Minna, Indreabhán,
Co. Galway
Reference code: CGC 011**

Date of inspection: 14 July 2016



AN ROINN OIDEACHAIS AGUS SCILEANNA | DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND SKILLS

THE INSPECTION

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 and 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

- All observed aspects of the course were well organised.
- The good atmosphere and positive relations among the students and between students and teachers on the course was noted.
- The quality of teaching in the lessons observed was very good, although some small aspects of learning need development.
- Irish was clearly the language of communication and work in every aspect of the course and management is commended for the way in which students were motivated to use Irish.
- Considerable effort was made to provide varied and stimulating afternoon and night-time activities.
- Certain progress had been made on implementing recommendations from a previous assessment but some work is required yet on policies and on the selection and display of the names of designated liaison person and deputy designated liaison person.

Main recommendations

- It is recommended that the persons named as the designated liaison person and deputy designated liaison person are available at all times at the course location.
- It is recommended that all college policies are compiled in one folder and that the folder is available in the office for teachers and appropriate visitors.
- It is recommended that language exemplars be used to support student learning and to help students formulate correct sentences.

1. QUALITY OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

- The quality of teaching and learning in the observed lesson was very good. Students participated in all parts of the lessons, although the opportunities for paired work in one observed lesson could have been increased.
- Learning objectives were given at the start of lessons and they were revised in certain cases, which is commendable. Much of the teaching was based on pre-learning and that was developed effectively ensured good continuity in learning.
- A range of methodologies was used, including paired work and paraphrase, group work, questioning, and debates with students who played various roles in the process.
- The continued emphasis on correct Irish and the teaching of grammar in an integrated way is commended. The students mentioned the importance of the explanations they were given in relation to aspects of Irish grammar and the way in which this increased their understanding of the language.

2. QUALITY OF STUDENTS' EXPERIENCE OF IRISH LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

- The students were resoundingly positive about the learning experience during the morning Irish lessons. They mentioned the importance and effectiveness of the Irish rule and the students' own commitment to speaking Irish among themselves. The way in which the students are motivated to speak Irish and to assume leadership regarding the implementation of the rule among themselves is commended.
- Considerable efforts were being made to provide varied and stimulating afternoon and night-time activities. The activities observed during the visit were energetic, enjoyable and spirited.
- Irish was clearly the language of all aspects of the course and the students mentioned that the course is well-known for its standard of Irish.

3. QUALITY OF LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

- All aspects of the course observed were well organised, although all college policies should be placed in one folder and made available in the office to teachers and relevant visitors.
- The plan for the Irish course was available in the application form. Some development is required to this to make it appropriate for the course.
- The Irish course authorities confirmed that the steering committee of the college has formally accepted a child protection policy, as stipulated under 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 must be ensured that the persons named as the designated liaison person and the deputy designated liaison person are available at all times at the course location. It is recommended that the principal and one of the teachers are named as liaison persons and that their names are clearly displayed.
- It was confirmed that a copy of the health and safety statement and the code of behaviour were available. An anti-bullying policy should be drafted and approved.
- Management of students was observed to be very good during the inspection.
- The location of the college was suitable for the course, for the classes and for the afternoon and night-time activities.

- Although certain progress had been made on implementing recommendations from a previous assessment, work is required in relation to making current college policies available together and on the selection and display of the names of the designated liaison person and deputy designated liaison person.

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.