

An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna
Department of Education and Skills

Subject Inspection in Physical Education

REPORT

Ainm na scoile / School name	St Pauls C.B.S.
Seoladh na scoile / School address	Christian Brothers Nth Brunswick Street Dublin 7
Uimhir rolla / Roll number	604300

Date of Inspection: 18-01-2019



An Roinn Oideachais
agus Scileanna
Department of
Education and Skills

SUBJECT INSPECTION

Subject Inspections report on the quality of work in individual curriculum areas within a school. They affirm good practice and make recommendations, where appropriate, to aid the further development of the subject in the school.

HOW TO READ THIS REPORT

During this inspection, the inspector evaluated learning and teaching in Physical Education under the following headings:

1. Teaching, learning and assessment
2. Subject provision and whole-school support
3. Planning and preparation

Inspectors describe the quality of each of these areas using the Inspectorate's quality continuum which is shown on the final page of this report. The quality continuum provides examples of the language used by inspectors when evaluating and describing the quality of the school's provision in each area.

The board of management was given an opportunity to comment in writing on the findings and recommendations of the report, and the response of the board will be found in the appendix of this report.

CHILD PROTECTION

During the inspection visit, the following checks in relation to the school's child protection procedures were conducted:

1. The name of the DLP and the Child Safeguarding Statement are prominently displayed near the main entrance to the school.
2. The Child Safeguarding Statement has been ratified by the board and includes an annual review and a risk assessment.
3. All teachers visited reported that they have read the Child Safeguarding Statement and that they are aware of their responsibilities as mandated persons.

The school met the requirements in relation to each of the checks above.

SUBJECT INSPECTION

INSPECTION ACTIVITIES

Dates of inspection	18-01-2019
Inspection activities undertaken <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review of relevant documents• Discussion with principal and key staff• Interaction with students	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Observation of teaching and learning during three class periods• Examination of students' work• Feedback to principal and relevant staff

School context

St Paul's CBS is an all-boys secondary school with a current enrolment of 222 students. The school provides the Junior Cycle, Junior Certificate School Programme (JCSP), Leaving Certificate and an optional Transition Year programme. The school participates in the Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools (DEIS) initiative. Physical Education (PE) is a compulsory subject for all students.

SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

Findings

- The quality of teaching and learning observed during the evaluation was good; the overall quality of assessment was satisfactory.
- In some lessons, insufficient scaffolding in the progression of skills was observed.
- Respectful interactions among students and between students and teachers play a key role in supporting a positive student experience.
- The quality of subject provision and whole-school support for PE is satisfactory; in the current school year a small number of PE classes are being delivered by unqualified PE teachers.
- The breadth and depth of students' curricular experience is limited by the available facilities.
- The overall quality of planning and preparation is satisfactory; subject department planning is underdeveloped.

Recommendations

- To develop students' capacity for peer and self-assessment the PE department should investigate methods to explicitly teach assessment techniques in an age appropriate, progressive manner.
- Teachers should, when planning lessons, ensure activities selected for skills development are sufficiently scaffolded to match the age and stage of development of their students.
- Senior Management should ensure that all lessons in PE are delivered by teachers who hold qualifications recognised by the Teaching Council for the teaching of the subject.
- A review of the subject department plan should be undertaken by the PE department to enhance subject provision and provide for improved learner experiences.

DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. TEACHING, LEARNING, AND ASSESSMENT

- The overall quality of teaching and learning in lessons observed during the evaluation was good; the overall quality of assessment is satisfactory.
- Student participation and activity levels were high throughout the lessons observed. Students readily assisted with the setting up and storage of the equipment required for the lesson; it was clear they are used to these well-established routines.
- Respectful relationships were a key strength of all lessons observed. Students interacted respectfully with each other and this expectation was reinforced regularly by the class teacher. Teachers' regularly role-modelled respectful interactions with their students. These positive interactions ensured a positive learning atmosphere pervaded.
- High quality questioning was used to good effect to support student learning in all lessons. Students were regularly provided with opportunities to apply their skills in collaborative settings with their peers.
- In some lessons, the progression of skills was not suitably aligned to students' age and stage of development. Teachers should, when planning lessons, ensure activities selected for skill development meet the needs of their students.
- Teacher observation was the main form of assessment employed in observed lessons; opportunities to use peer assessment were missed. Students in all year groups would benefit from learning the skills associated with peer and self-assessment practices.
- A clear overview was given to students at the start of each lesson. This provided them with an understanding of what they would be working towards. However, no time was provided during or at the end of the lesson, to review the learning that had taken place. Teachers should endeavour to frame the lesson overview in terms of learning intentions and plan for time during the lesson to review these with students.
- Differentiation was well attended to in a junior gymnastics lesson when students were presented with a selection of activities to choose from in developing their handstand skill. On other occasions the provision of appropriately differentiated activities would have supported an improved student experience.
- Digital media was used to good effect in lessons where it was observed. Students viewed well-chosen images and videos to support their learning. Consideration should be given to the use of video capture and analysis to support skill development as part of the schools Digital Learning Framework development.

2. SUBJECT PROVISION AND WHOLE SCHOOL SUPPORT

- The overall quality of subject provision and whole school support is satisfactory. It is clear PE is a valued subject on the school curriculum and this is reflected in the timetabled provision for the subject.
- All junior cycle and senior cycle students have good subject provision as they are timetabled for a double period of PE. TY students have very good provision with a triple period allocated for practical elements and an additional single period for classroom based work.
- School management and the PE department are making the best use of the limited school facilities to support the teaching and learning of PE. The breadth and depth of students' curricular experience is restricted by the available facilities.

- In the current school year a small number of PE classes are being taught by unqualified PE teachers. Notwithstanding the contribution these teachers are making, they cannot provide sufficient breadth and depth to the student experience. Senior management should ensure that only teachers recognised by the Teaching Council for the teaching of PE are timetabled to deliver the subject.
- The school makes every effort to provide extra-curricular activities on both a competitive and recreational level. Activities such as basketball, futsal, indoor hurling, pool, soccer and table tennis are available in the current school year. Other sports such as rugby and athletics are provided as student interests and resources dictate. The commitment of both staff and management to the provision of extra-curricular activities is to be commended.
- Good links have been established with local sports clubs in rowing and boxing to provide additional opportunities for TY students. Commendably, leadership opportunities are also provided for TY students through planning for the first year football blitz and the school sports day as well as their participation in the Football Association of Ireland Kickstart programme.

3. PLANNING AND PREPARATION

- The overall quality of planning and preparation is satisfactory; a number of actions are required to improve subject planning. These include a move to an outcomes based approach and establishing clear links between outcomes and assessments.
- The current system of three week blocks of work is limiting the student experience. The PE department, as part of an overall review of the PE plan, should extend the duration of blocks to a minimum of six weeks for each topic to allow for greater depth of engagement and richer assessment opportunities.
- The school has the capacity to provide a broader curriculum than is currently available. Games, both invasion and net and fielding, are very well provided for. There is significant scope to develop the other strands of the curriculum to provide a more balanced experience for students.
- Currently, students in all year groups are experiencing the same activities at the same time. Thus, it is recommended that a review of the current subject plan should be undertaken to ensure that activities are sufficiently differentiated between Junior Cycle, TY and Leaving Certificate programmes.
- Individual lessons had a clear structure and provided students with opportunities to be active. However, there was an emphasis in some lessons on the quantity of physical activity over the quality. Teachers should, when planning lessons, provide students with opportunities to reflect on and improve the quality of their work.

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

Appendix

School response to the report

Submitted by the Board of Management

Part A: Observations on the content of the inspection report

The Board of Management welcomes the findings and recommendations made in the Inspection Report. It welcomes the affirmation of good practice and will work to support the school and Physical Education Department in implementing the recommendations contained within. The Board notes among the inspector's findings that the school's capacity to fully provide for students' curricular needs in Physical Education is "limited by the available facilities". It acknowledges that the physical facilities are very dated and require extensive refurbishment and updating. It would welcome any assistance from the Department of Education to help the school update these facilities.

Part B: Follow-up actions planned or undertaken since the completion of the inspection activity to implement the findings and recommendations of the inspection

To develop students' capacity for peer and self-assessment the PE department should investigate methods to explicitly teach assessment techniques in an age appropriate, progressive manner.

The school assists with cost of subject association membership, actively encouraging teacher participation in professional learning communities. It facilitates teacher engagement with continuous professional development opportunities organised through the JCT, DES, PDST, etc. It provides time for teacher engagement with personal, subject department and whole school planning. It provides a digital platform for the sharing of teacher planning materials and opportunities for face to face professional meetings. The Board and school will continue to do this and remains open to exploring new ways to support subject department planning.

Teachers should, when planning lessons, ensure activities selected for skills development are sufficiently scaffolded to match the age and stage of development of their students.

The school will support the PE Department in ensuring that this becomes a part of subject department planning and practice. It will encourage the PE Department's ongoing engagement with PE Departments in other schools, with the subject association and with curricular and pedagogical developments in the subject area.

Senior Management should ensure that all lessons in PE are delivered by teachers who hold qualifications recognised by the Teaching Council for the teaching of the subject.

The school always works to try and ensure that a teacher directly qualified for the subject leads the class. In the past year the school has found that it has a small number of PE hours beyond which its current PE teachers can work. It has proved very difficult to recruit a PE teacher to come on staff for such a small number of hours. As it engages in timetable planning for the new academic year the school will continue to examine whether there is a subject combination, within arising vacancies, through which a teacher of PE with another subject can be recruited.

A review of the subject department plan should be undertaken by the PE department to enhance subject provision and provide for improved learner experiences.

This work has commenced. Through the provision of adequate planning time, encouragement of membership and engagement with subject associations, and facilitating participation in professional development opportunities the school continues to support the enhancement of subject provision and improved learner experiences. The school would warmly welcome the Department of Education's assistance in updating our outdated PE facilities to support our work in meeting student's Junior and Senior Cycle learning needs in the Physical Education space.

THE INSPECTORATE'S QUALITY CONTINUUM

Inspectors describe the quality of provision in the school using the Inspectorate's quality continuum which is shown below. The quality continuum provides examples of the language used by inspectors when evaluating and describing the of quality the school's provision of each area.

Level	Description	Example of descriptive terms
Very Good	Very good applies where the quality of the areas evaluated is of a very high standard. The very few areas for improvement that exist do not significantly impact on the overall quality of provision. For some schools in this category the quality of what is evaluated is outstanding and provides an example for other schools of exceptionally high standards of provision.	Very good; of a very high quality; very effective practice; highly commendable; very successful; few areas for improvement; notable; of a very high standard. Excellent; outstanding; exceptionally high standard, with very significant strengths; exemplary
Good	Good applies where the strengths in the areas evaluated clearly outweigh the areas in need of improvement. The areas requiring improvement impact on the quality of pupils' learning. The school needs to build on its strengths and take action to address the areas identified as requiring improvement in order to achieve a <i>very good</i> standard.	Good; good quality; valuable; effective practice; competent; useful; commendable; good standard; some areas for improvement
Satisfactory	Satisfactory applies where the quality of provision is adequate. The strengths in what is being evaluated just outweigh the shortcomings. While the shortcomings do not have a significant negative impact they constrain the quality of the learning experiences and should be addressed in order to achieve a better standard.	Satisfactory; adequate; appropriate provision although some possibilities for improvement exist; acceptable level of quality; improvement needed in some areas
Fair	Fair applies where, although there are some strengths in the areas evaluated, deficiencies or shortcomings that outweigh those strengths also exist. The school will have to address certain deficiencies without delay in order to ensure that provision is satisfactory or better.	Fair; evident weaknesses that are impacting on pupils' learning; less than satisfactory; experiencing difficulty; must improve in specified areas; action required to improve
Weak	Weak applies where there are serious deficiencies in the areas evaluated. Immediate and coordinated whole-school action is required to address the areas of concern. In some cases, the intervention of other agencies may be required to support improvements.	Weak; unsatisfactory; insufficient; ineffective; poor; requiring significant change, development or improvement; experiencing significant difficulties;