

**An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna
Department of Education and Skills**

Subject Inspection in Art, Craft and Design

REPORT

Ainm na scoile / School name	Meanscoil Iognáid Rís
Seoladh na scoile / School address	Long Mile Road Walkinstown Dublin 12
Uimhir rolla / Roll number	60480G

Date of Inspection: 20-10-2017



WHAT IS A 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 Art, Craft and Design 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.

SUBJECT INSPECTION

INSPECTION ACTIVITIES

Date of inspection	20-10-2017
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 four class periods• Examination of students' work• Feedback to principal and relevant staff

School context

Meánscoil Iognaid Rís, Drimnagh Castle is an all-boys' voluntary secondary school which has a current enrolment of 583 students. The school provides a range of junior and senior cycle programmes. Art is provided as an optional subject within these programmes. The school participates in Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools (DEIS); the Department of Education and Skills' action plan for educational inclusion.

SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

Findings

- The quality of teaching and learning in the lessons observed was very good.
- The quality of in-class assessment practice was very good; however, a few aspects of assessment practice require further development.
- High-quality constructive written feedback is provided on key pieces of work; there is a need to review how students use the feedback provided.
- Art benefits from a very good quality level of whole-school support.
- Health and safety procedures are very well established in art lessons, but an aspect of health and safety with regards to specialist equipment needs to be addressed.
- Overall, the quality of planning and preparation for Art is very good

Recommendations

- The art department should develop strategies to engage students in using the feedback provided on key pieces of work.
- School management should now plan, as resources permit, for the provision of appropriate protection around the kiln to address the concern identified during the evaluation.

DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. TEACHING, LEARNING, AND ASSESSMENT

- The overall quality of teaching and learning was very good.
- All lessons were very well prepared and paced. Clear learning intentions were shared and these provided a clear aim for each lesson observed. This provided focus for students from the outset.
- A very good range of teaching strategies facilitated a very successful balance between teacher input and student participation in all lessons. A range of highly-effective resources, such as video-clips, hand-outs and worksheets, was tailored to match the specific learning intentions of lessons.
- Student learning was of a very high standard during the lessons observed. Students were on task and purposefully engaged during activities.
- Notably, an initiative titled '*A-Z Artists*' has been developed by the art department to integrate the study of the History of Art into junior cycle. Students demonstrated very good learning as they described and discussed, with assurance, the artists previously studied.
- Very good differentiated teaching was observed in lessons, through the use of one-to-one tuition, demonstration, pre-identified tasks for individual students and adapted teacher questioning.
- Commendably, primary sources are used by students in all practical lessons. Students are encouraged to independently collect their own primary sources.
- While the quality of in-class assessment was very good, there is scope to develop some aspects of formative assessment practice.
- Oral feedback was a significant strength in the lessons observed. This was further supported by high-quality constructive written feedback on key pieces of work. A review of this feedback indicated that there is scope to increase student engagement in using the feedback provided. It is recommended that the art department develop strategies to strengthen this practice.
- A range of questioning strategies was used in the lessons observed. For example questioning was used for recapitulation on previous learning and in ascertaining students' pre-knowledge of a new topic.
- Lower-order questioning was the predominant questioning strategy used in all lessons. Appropriate use of higher-order questions was noted in a small number of instances; however students tended to provide only brief answers to these questions. To facilitate deep critical thinking and the provision of well-developed answers amongst students, the further use of higher-order questioning to support learning is recommended.

2. SUBJECT PROVISION AND WHOLE SCHOOL SUPPORT

- Art benefits from very good quality whole-school support. Access to the subject is good; first-year students complete a taster programme in Art and Music, and choose between the two subjects at the end of the year. It is good practice that this arrangement is reviewed regularly. It is commendable that senior-cycle option bands are constructed based on students' choice.
- The art department is provided with one large specialist room and one smaller classroom with a store room. School management is aware of the constraints of the smaller room as a learning

space for Art. In consultation with management, the art department should devise a time-bound action plan to address the configuration of this space and maximise the use of the storage room.

- Health and safety procedures are well established for art lessons. A whole-school safety statement and a subject-specific risk assessment were reviewed during the evaluation. However, during the evaluation a health and safety issue with regard to specialist equipment was noted. There was no appropriate protection around the kiln. School management should now plan, as resources permit, to address this concern.
- The art department displays great enthusiasm in its work and is dedicated to promoting Art within the school. The department actively encourages whole-school participation in art events which currently includes an Artists in Residence project.
- There was low student attendance noted in a few of the lessons observed. In these instances, the teachers took great care to accommodate and adjust the lesson content for the students present. However, continued low attendance will delay the overall progress of coursework in Art. In order to support effective teaching, learning and assessment, senior management, in association with the art department, need to consider the effectiveness of whole-school approaches to improve attendance. In addition, further communication to students and parents informing them of the impact of low attendance on student progression in Art would be beneficial.

3. PLANNING AND PREPARATION

- Overall, very good quality progress in planning and preparation for Art is evident.
- A collaborative and collegial approach to subject planning is apparent. A comprehensive subject plan is in place with schemes of work developed for all year groups. It was evident in lesson observations that these schemes are used to guide teaching and learning.
- At the time of the evaluation, planning for DEIS was in its infancy as the school has recently commenced its participation in this programme. There was an absence of linkages between DEIS planning and the subject plans reviewed. Moving forward, the art department should integrate relevant whole-school DEIS priorities into curricular planning to support the teaching and learning in Art.
- The art department is piloting a project to assess the pre-knowledge and understanding of art terminology and skills of first-year students. The department has used the analysis of outcomes from this project to inform subject planning. This very good practice enables the art teachers to plan for the participation and progression of all first-year art students.
- Overall, planning for Transition Year (TY) Art is good. A very interesting curricular plan has been prepared for TY, with a good emphasis on collaborative learning opportunities for students. The plan also indicates an appropriate development of artistic skills. Consideration should now be given to devising mechanisms that allow for a more focused approach to the development of artistic ideas.
- The art department meets regularly, and minutes indicate that attainment in certificate examinations is analysed. Commendably, the department has used this analysis to identify targets for action, such as looking at key aspects to the teaching of Art History.

The draft findings and recommendations arising out of this evaluation were discussed with the principal and art department at the conclusion of the evaluation. The board of management of the school 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.

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 of Meanscoil Iognáid Rís welcomes the report of the subject inspection carried out on October 20th 2017.

The Board is particularly pleased with the positive language used throughout the report, acknowledging the commitment to Art Education in the school.

Teaching, learning and assessment

The Board notes with great satisfaction the findings in relation to Teaching, learning and assessment which *inter alia* points to the fact that “student learning was of a very high standard during the lessons observed. Students were on task and purposefully engaged during activities” The findings in this section are very encouraging as the comments were complementary and helpful.

Subject Provision and whole school support

The Board welcomes this section especially the commendation in relation to the structuring of subject choice. “First-year students complete a taster programme in Art and Music, and choose between the two subjects at the end of the year. It is commendable that senior-cycle option bands are constructed based on students choice.”

The Board notes the recommendation on safety and the issue referred to will be addressed without delay. Other issues raised such as attendance are currently being examined as part of the DEIS planning with a view to making incremental improvement in this area.

Planning and Preparation

The Board notes the very positive statements on planning and preparation. Since the Inspection, the recommendation to integrate subject planning and DEIS planning is being undertaken in the overall DEIS plan.

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

(Blank)

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;