

An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna
Department of Education and Skills

Subject Inspection in Art

REPORT

Ainm na scoile / School name	St Johns College De La Salle
Seoladh na scoile / School address	Le Fanu Rd Ballyfermot Dublin 10
Uimhir rolla / Roll number	60510M

Date of Inspection: 15-05-2018



**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 Art 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.

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 did not meet the requirements in relation to 1 above and therefore was not fully compliant with the checks undertaken.

SUBJECT INSPECTION

INSPECTION ACTIVITIES

Dates of inspection	14-05-2018 - 15-05-2018
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, deputy principal and relevant staff

School context

St. John's College, De La Salle is a post-primary voluntary secondary school in Ballyfermot, operating under the trusteeship of Le Cheile Trust. With a current enrolment of 328 boys, the school participates in the Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools (DEIS) scheme, and offers the Junior Certificate, new Junior Cycle and established Leaving Certificate as well as Transition Year (TY) and Leaving Certificate Applied (LCA) programmes, and the Junior Certificate School Programme (JCSP).

SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

Findings

- The overall quality of teaching and assessment was very good.
- Learning was good overall, but there is scope to increase the level of challenge for some students through differentiation.
- The learning space for Art is very well organised, and highly effective routines are in place to support learning.
- Art is taught in an atmosphere of mutual respect where students are encouraged to work carefully and methodically.
- The quality of subject provision and whole-school support for Art is good, however uptake varies considerably and the subject is frequently not offered due to low demand.
- Overall, subject planning for Art is good, however there is scope to update plans to reflect subject specification and assessment changes.

Recommendations

- Greater cognisance should be taken of the differentiated learning needs of all students in the planning and delivery of curricular content, with a view to raising expectations and increasing the level of challenge as appropriate.
- The low uptake of Art in junior and senior cycle should be further investigated by the art department in collaboration with senior management, and the art department should implement strategies to raise the profile of the subject to ensure its ongoing sustainability.
- Planning documentation should be further updated to reflect recent specification and assessment changes, and the schedule for delivery of the art curriculum should be reviewed to ensure greater coverage of course content and exposure for students to a wider range of art and craft disciplines.

DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. TEACHING, LEARNING, AND ASSESSMENT

- The overall quality of teaching and learning was very good in the lessons observed, however there was scope to further differentiate learning to increase the level of challenge for some students.
- Planned tasks were shared with students from the outset in all lessons, and clear instructions were provided for activities. To build on this, the planned tasks and activities should be expressed in terms of learning intentions and should take cognisance of ideas development as well as skills development.
- The learning space was very well organised. Highly effective classroom routines and structures are in place where students assist their teacher to set up their work spaces and distribute materials. Classroom management was very good.
- Student work is stored appropriately, and some samples of their work are displayed throughout the school, and in the art room to enhance learning. To raise the profile of the subject, and to continuously expose students to newly-completed artworks, the art department should ensure that these samples are replenished on a consistent basis.
- All lessons were well prepared and very good routines enabled students to work independently with encouragement and support from the class teacher. Good references were made to prior learning and students' understanding of assigned tasks was frequently checked. To build on this the art department should now encourage students to take greater ownership of their work and progress, to experiment and explore, and to incrementally increase the level of challenge to deepen their learning.
- Student behaviour was exemplary throughout the evaluation. Art is taught in an atmosphere of mutual respect where students are encouraged to work carefully and methodically. To build on this, work should be differentiated to further challenge more able students, and in particular to develop higher order thinking skills.
- Collaborative learning was facilitated in lessons where appropriate. Students' engagement in collaborative activities varied, and was best in lessons where the teacher implemented effective structures. To maximise learning from collaboration teachers should ensure that students are aware of teacher expectations of their roles, responsibilities and engagement in the activity.
- Samples of student work reviewed during the evaluation indicated that primary sources are used as a starting point for project work. This is good practice.
- The art department employs a range of effective means to consistently assess students' understanding and learning in Art including assessment for learning strategies, self and peer assessment and effective questioning. To enhance this approach teachers should use the outcomes of assessment to adjust the lesson where appropriate, to inform future planning and to challenge students appropriately.
- Students were provided with very good verbal feedback in lessons and very high-quality written formative feedback is provided on key pieces of student work, including work-in-progress. To build on this excellent practice, students should now use this feedback to set targets and to plan for improvement in their own work.

2. SUBJECT PROVISION AND WHOLE SCHOOL SUPPORT

- The quality of subject provision and whole-school support for Art is good. Art is included in a subject sampling programme for all first-year students, and is compulsory in TY and LCA. Art is optional in Junior Certificate and Leaving Certificate. Uptake varies considerably from year to year and is frequently not offered due to low demand. The art department, in collaboration with senior management, should implement strategies to raise the profile of Art in the school and to increase uptake to ensure its ongoing sustainability.
- Timetabling of Art is good, with double periods provided for all class groups. Time provision is appropriate to the relevant specifications.
- Art is offered on a modular basis in TY, and schemes of work focus on the basic practical skills necessary to access Art for Leaving Certificate. Senior management should review provision of Art and related subjects in TY to ensure sufficient contact time to broaden students' experience of Art and creativity.
- The art room is well equipped and a small annual budget is provided for materials. The kiln is not currently operational due to power supply to the room and the absence of a protective cage. If it is feasible within budgetary constraints, school management should consider the possibility of restoring its function for the benefit of students.
- A few good cross-curricular and co-curricular initiatives are facilitated by the art department, including Artists in Residence. The art department should further develop such initiatives to raise the profile of Art in the school and to broaden students' experience of the subject beyond the classroom.
- School management supports and facilitates teachers' CPD and uptake from the art department is very good.

3. PLANNING AND PREPARATION

- The art department has prepared a comprehensive subject plan that includes key policies, schemes of work for each programme, and aims, objectives and future planning for the subject in line with the school's DEIS plan and mission statement.
- The overall quality of planning is good, however there is a need to further update the plan to reflect recent specification and assessment changes in Art.
- Schemes of work have been developed with a strong emphasis on requisite skills development. This should be balanced with a greater focus on ideas development and creativity. The schedule for delivery of the art curriculum should be reviewed to ensure greater coverage of curricular content and a wider range of art and craft disciplines, including more consistent exposure to life drawing.
- The art department analyses data from certificate examinations and commendably it is used to inform future planning. The art department has correctly identified low uptake of the subject, a need to increase uptake of higher level and poor student attendance as areas for improvement and has implemented some strategies to address this. Teaching and learning strategies should also be explored in this context.
- Management facilitates regular meetings for subject departments. The art department regularly links with other practical subject departments for these meetings. This is good practice.

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

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.

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 quality of the school's provision in 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;