

An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna
Department of Education and Skills

Subject Inspection in Guidance

REPORT

Ainm na scoile / School name	Terenure College
Seoladh na scoile / School address	Templeogue Road Terenure Dublin 6W
Uimhir rolla / Roll number	60570H

Date of Inspection: 07-12-2017



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 Guidance 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

Dates of inspection	06-12-2017 and 07-12-2017
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 two class periods• Examination of students' work• Feedback to principal and guidance counsellor

School context

Terenure College is a fee-charging Catholic voluntary secondary school under the trusteeship of the Irish Province of Carmelites. It has a current enrolment of 682 male students. The school offers Junior Cycle, compulsory Transition Year (TY), and the Leaving Certificate.

SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

Findings

- The overall quality of teaching, learning and assessment was good, with well-planned lessons observed which included a good range of methodologies; however, there was scope to include more active and collaborative activities for students.
- Overall guidance provision is good with a dedicated, full-time guidance counsellor delivering the programme.
- While there is a good overall balance between the three aspects of guidance: social/personal, educational and career; the balance is not as good between the junior and senior cycle programme, with most education and career guidance inputs delivered at senior cycle.
- High quality student support structures are in place including a highly effective student support team which collaborates very effectively with the wider school community.
- A very good collaborative approach to whole-school guidance planning is established and supported by effective links with subject departments, parents, past students, employers, and education and training bodies.
- Senior cycle guidance curricular planning is good, with an appropriate range of topics identified for senior cycle students; however, junior cycle guidance curricular planning is satisfactory as learning outcomes are not as clearly identified in the curricular plan.

Recommendations

- When planning lessons, teachers should include more opportunities for students to be active, and to collaborate, share and reflect on their learning.
- Senior management and the guidance planning team should ensure that the whole-school guidance programme includes a more balanced distribution between junior and senior cycle guidance inputs.
- The guidance department should develop the guidance curricular plan to include a more detailed junior guidance curriculum with clearer learning outcomes.

DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. TEACHING, LEARNING, AND ASSESSMENT

- The overall quality of teaching was good with well-planned lessons, good use of digital technologies and pre-prepared work-sheets in evidence.
- Short, interesting and relevant videos were selected and used effectively to engage students. One of the videos used by the teacher was created by TY students from the school and was of a very high quality. Such sharing of and using each other's resources is to be commended.
- The teacher created a very positive atmosphere for learning in all lessons. Students were observed offering good answers, asking questions and seeking support in a relaxed manner.
- Students were well-behaved and respectful in all lessons and while they were all individually engaged in the tasks, there was scope to include more opportunities for pair or group work to generate more discussion and collaboration. This was especially evident in the senior cycle lesson as students worked independently for most of the lesson.
- The lessons were effectively outlined through the sharing of clear learning intentions at the outset. Students were very aware of the learning points of each lesson. However, the learning was not reviewed, assessed or consolidated at the end. It is recommended that time is dedicated to reflecting on learning and assessing students' progress.
- Students have made very good progress and this was evident from their responses in class and knowledge of a wide range of career and education options. Students have completed a good range of guidance assignments which have further developed their self-knowledge and resulted in valuable career plans.
- Assessment of guidance is a positive feature of the programme and students were given clear instructions for submission of assignments, including deadlines.
- Students were familiar with the guidance-related online tools and were able to competently identify how to search for courses and careers.
- It is notable that during interactions with students, they expressed feeling very supported by their guidance counsellor and enjoyed guidance lessons.
- A good range of psychometric assessment instruments is used effectively by the school to assist students in the selection of appropriate education and career choices.

2. SUBJECT PROVISION AND WHOLE SCHOOL SUPPORT

- Overall provision for guidance is good with a dedicated, full-time guidance counsellor employed by the school to deliver the programme.
- The guidance curriculum for senior cycle is good with an appropriate selection of topics, timeframes and sequence identified. The junior cycle curriculum merits further development as it is quite limited. The guidance department should include a more detailed junior guidance curriculum with clearer learning outcomes in a revised curricular plan.
- There is an overall good balance between the three aspects of guidance: social/personal, educational and career. However, the balance is not as good between the junior and senior cycle guidance programme with most guidance delivered at senior cycle. This imbalance should be addressed to include more junior cycle guidance inputs.
- A highly effective student support structure has been established. The school offers a wide range of effective personal and educational supports for students, including chaplains who work very closely with the staff and students. The team has been engaged in regular review of its work and prepared annual reports for the principal. This is highly commendable.
- Very good practice was noted in the area of whole-school STEM promotion through initiatives such as the first-year science fair, junior science club, entries to the BT Young Scientist

competition, participation in the TY digital media and future scientist events, and good links with past students and colleges offering STEM courses.

- Effective procedures are in place to support students on entry to the school through the induction programme, but there is scope for the guidance counsellor to play a more active role in the induction process.
- There is effective and close co-operation between the guidance counsellor and both the Social Personal and Health Education and Special Education Needs departments. These positive working relationships facilitate identification of students who need additional support.
- It is very good that the school promotes positive mental and physical well-being. The Friends for Life resilience-building programme is effectively delivered to students in junior cycle. It is commendable that mindfulness and meditation training, and other initiatives to promote healthy lifestyle choices, are offered to students.

3. PLANNING AND PREPARATION

- Overall guidance planning is very good with a collaborative team approach firmly established. The inclusion of a greater number of staff from different subject departments would further enhance the composition and whole-school nature of this team.
- There is an effective system of rolling review of guidance-related policies and plans. At the time of the evaluation the whole-school guidance plan was being reviewed and updated. This is very good practice.
- Record keeping and student files are maintained to a high standard and are in keeping with good practice guidelines.
- There is very good planning for senior cycle students to attend career and education talks and college open days. A good variety of guidance-related speakers come to the school and there are very good links with past students and parents who assist with mock interviews and the careers fair.
- School management effectively supports the guidance counsellor to attend on-going continuing professional development and counselling supervision. This is to be commended.
- Good communication with parents and students has been established, but the guidance section of the school website is under-utilised and could be developed and linked to the school's official social media platform.

The draft findings and recommendations arising out of this evaluation were discussed with the principal and guidance counsellor 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

We note that the inspection found that a very positive atmosphere was created in all lessons and that the students feel very supported by their guidance counsellor. In addition, the report highly commends the high quality student support structures that are in place which include a highly effective student support team which collaborates very effectively with the wider school community. The reports states that it is very good that the school promotes positive mental and physical well-being. It was also noted that a very good collaborative approach to whole school guidance planning is established. The report commends the very good practice of rolling review of guidance-related policies and plans.

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

Having discussed and reflected upon the draft findings and recommendations of the inspection the junior cycle guidance programme is currently being further developed to increase the guidance input and to state more clearly the detailed learning outcomes.

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;