

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

**Subject Inspection in Physical Education**

**REPORT**

<b>Ainm na scoile / School name</b>	Presentation Secondary School
<b>Seoladh na scoile / School address</b>	Listowel Co Kerry
<b>Uimhir rolla / Roll number</b>	61380H

**Date of Inspection: 23 November 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 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.

## SUBJECT INSPECTION

### INSPECTION ACTIVITIES

<b>Date of inspection</b>	23 November 2017
<b>Inspection activities undertaken</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Review of relevant documents</li><li>• Discussion with principal and key staff</li><li>• Interaction with students</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Observation of teaching and learning during 3 class periods</li><li>• Examination of students' work</li><li>• Feedback to principal and relevant staff.</li></ul>

### School context

Presentation Secondary School, Listowel is an all-girls, voluntary secondary school with an enrolment of 320 students in the current school year. The school offers the junior cycle, an optional Transition Year (TY) programme, the Leaving Certificate Applied (LCA), the Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme (LCVP) and the established Leaving Certificate. The school is under the trusteeship of CEIST (Catholic Education, an Irish Schools Trust).

### SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

#### Findings

- The quality of teaching observed during the evaluation was good in all lessons with minor scope for development regarding the use of questioning to elicit learning and the creation of a clearer focus on learning intentions in some lessons.
- Student learning was good in all lessons with students demonstrating very positive attitudes to participation in Physical Education.
- Very good use of information and communications technology (ICT) as an aid to teaching and learning was observed.
- Planning, both at subject department level and with regard to individual lessons, was very good.
- Subject provision is generally good at junior cycle and in TY, but timetabled provision for Physical Education in fifth and sixth year is inadequate.

#### Recommendations

- Teachers should make further use of questioning, both to elicit learning and create a clearer focus on lesson learning intentions.
- Students in all years should be provided with a minimum of a double period of Physical Education per week.

## DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 1. TEACHING, LEARNING, AND ASSESSMENT

- The overall quality of teaching and learning in lessons observed was good and lessons had a coherent structure. Learning intentions were clearly outlined for students at the start of lessons and it is clear that the school's self-evaluation (SSE) work, which focussed on the use of learning intentions as part of the school's 2015/16 work, is having a positive impact.
- Very good links were made with previous learning at the start of lessons and this helped students to recap on previous learning and to see the current lesson in context. Handouts, charts and general questioning were used effectively to facilitate recapping. It was suggested that a mix of directed and general questioning should be used in order to ensure that all students benefit from this phase of the lesson. The warm up phase of all lessons was well utilised with a range of mobility and flexibility exercises successfully used to prepare students for more vigorous physical activity.
- A range of purposeful, enjoyable tasks set during lessons ensured that students were active, engaged and focussed on the learning intentions for the lesson. In a basketball lesson, it was suggested that fewer practices and drills be employed to facilitate a clearer focus on a smaller number of lesson objectives and that questioning be used more frequently to assess students' learning as took place to excellent effect at the end of the lesson.
- All lessons took place in a very positive atmosphere where purposeful, enjoyable participation in physical activity was successfully promoted by teachers and very positive attitudes were evident among students.
- The senior cycle lessons observed facilitated differentiated learning opportunities, student choice and student-led learning as effectively as possible within the limits of a single-period of forty minutes duration. The school's plans to review provision for senior cycle students is commended as lessons of forty minutes duration do not allow students to engage in the breadth or depth of learning required to provide a more fulfilling learning experience.
- ICT was used very effectively in many lessons. The showing of carefully selected video clips was particularly effective in helping students to visualise particular skills and concepts. This is highly commended.
- Student literacy was developed by teachers through very good use of the whiteboard to write up key terms as required, by reading through handouts and worksheets and through using acronyms to facilitate recall of key concepts.

### 2. SUBJECT PROVISION AND WHOLE SCHOOL SUPPORT

- The quality of subject provision is good overall and Physical Education has a high profile in the school. The involvement of the school in *Forbairt* and the Health Promoting Schools initiative contributes to this in a significant way.
- The school's physical education facilities are good and are very well maintained. The physical education hall is smaller than the current design specifications but is, nonetheless, adequate for the delivery of the subject. An extensive range of equipment and materials is available and the department is well resourced.
- School management is aware that timetabled provision in Physical Education needs to be addressed. Currently, first and second year students have a double-period of Physical Education. A short-term timetabling issue has seen third year Physical Education reduced to a single period for this year. While TY students have a double-period, it is regrettable that

fifth and sixth year students only have access to a single period of Physical Education. School management intends to review subject provision in Physical Education as part of overall curriculum reform. This is commended.

- Almost all of the school's timetabled lessons in Physical Education are taken by the school's qualified physical education teacher. Due to the unexpected departure of another qualified physical education teacher early on in the current school year, the school has had to timetable a teacher without physical education qualifications to teach one period of Physical Education. The school advises that this is a short-term solution in order to provide Physical Education to all students and that steps are being taken to address the matter.

### **3. PLANNING AND PREPARATION**

- The quality of subject department planning is very good with an excellent subject plan in place outlining all key elements of the delivery of the subject in the school. Particularly impressive aspects of the plan include the clear focus on caring for students who are marginalised or disadvantaged in line with the school's ethos; the comprehensive list of extracurricular activities offered; templates with regard to class organisation and teacher self-reflection; and the extensive range of lesson support materials that has been compiled.
- Individual lessons were very well planned with a clear structure and progression evident in tasks set. Lesson materials which had been prepared, including handouts and worksheets, were a considerable aid to student learning and the planned use of ICT was excellent.
- A very good range of activities has been planned at junior cycle as part of the school's physical education curriculum in line with the stated aim of providing an innovative three-year programme of activities. It is also noted, and commended, that planning is well-advanced for Wellbeing as part of the Framework for Junior Cycle. It is also commended that student choice is increasingly facilitated at senior cycle.
- Good reporting practices are in place for Physical Education with a comment provided in reports focusing on students' participation and effort. The school intends to move to the use of more formative comments in reports, apart from the standard range of comments provided by the reporting software. This is positive. To further inform planning and reporting in Physical Education, an assessment of practical performance should be undertaken once per year for all year groups.

The draft findings and recommendations arising out of this evaluation were discussed with the principal and subject teacher 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, and the response of the board will be found in the appendix of this report.

## 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
<b>Very Good</b>	<b>Very good</b> 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 <b>outstanding</b> 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
<b>Good</b>	<b>Good</b> 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
<b>Satisfactory</b>	<b>Satisfactory</b> 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
<b>Fair</b>	<b>Fair</b> 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
<b>Weak</b>	<b>Weak</b> 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;

# **Appendix**

**SCHOOL RESPONSE TO THE REPORT**

**Submitted by the Board of Management**

### **Area 1 Observations on the content of the inspection report**

The Board of Management of Presentation Secondary School Listowel welcomes the report on the quality of teaching and learning in PE.

The board is pleased that the report recognises the 'good' teaching and learning observed in all classes'.

### **Area 2 Follow-up actions planned or undertaken since the completion of the inspection activity to implement the findings and recommendations of the inspection.**

In respect of the recommendations offered, the board wishes to add:

(i) As acknowledged in the report, the school is engaged in the implementation of a timetable review- a part of which is the incremental introduction of double periods in PE in Senior Cycle

(ii) We will be proceeding to introduce double PE classes in 5th year in September 2018.

(iii) As acknowledged in the report, the provision of single PE classes in 3rd Year in 2017 - 2018 has been a short term measure as part of our curriculum review.