

An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna
Department of Education and Skills

**Subject Inspection in Technical Graphics and
Design and Communication Graphics**

REPORT

Ainm na scoile / School name	Cross And Passion College
Seoladh na scoile / School address	Kilcullen Co Kildare
Uimhir rolla / Roll number	61690W

Date of Inspection: 15-05-2019



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 Technical Graphics and Design and Communication Graphics 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 met the requirements in relation to each of the checks above.

SUBJECT INSPECTION

INSPECTION ACTIVITIES

Dates of inspection	14 and 15 May 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 five class periods• Examination of students' folio work• Feedback to principal and relevant staff

School context

Cross and Passion College is a co-educational voluntary secondary school, with a current enrolment of 812 students. The school operates under the trusteeship of Le Chéile. The curriculum provides optional Technical Graphics (TG) in Junior Cycle, optional Design and Communication Graphics (DCG) in Leaving Certificate established and the Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme (LCVP), graphics in Leaving Certificate Applied (LCA) and a graphics module during compulsory transition year (TY).

SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

Findings

- The quality of teaching was very good, with good quality learning observed during the evaluation.
- Questioning was used very effectively in all lessons to review prior learning with a focus on improving understanding and further developing concepts.
- Lessons were structured to incorporate planned differentiation, teacher demonstration and opportunities for students to engage in independent and collaborative activities.
- Monitoring and assessment practices with respect to students' portfolios and the allocation of homework varied within the department.
- The quality of whole-school support for TG and DCG is very good.
- Preparation for individual lessons was very good, subject department planning requires further development.

Recommendations

- Teachers are encouraged to place a greater emphasis on progressing new learning when identifying and discussing learning intentions and what successful learning looks like.
- The subject department should develop a consistent approach to assigning and formatively assessing student portfolios and homework.
- Subject department planning should be furthered to include; strategic planning for curricular development and action planning for evidence-based improvements in teaching, learning and assessment.

DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. TEACHING, LEARNING, AND ASSESSMENT

- The quality of teaching was very good, a range of teaching strategies, such as pair and group work were employed effectively to facilitate student learning.
- Good quality learning was observed during the evaluation. Students were engaged in purposeful activities. Students would have benefited from an enhanced learning experience with teachers placing an emphasis on the progression of new learning by identifying and discussing learning intentions and what successful learning looks like.
- Teachers used questioning very effectively in all lessons to review prior learning and further class discussions. Questions were differentiated appropriately, and used to improve understanding of the subject matter and to consolidate learning. Student responses were developed where necessary and at all times affirmed for their efforts. A range of question techniques was noted, including passing questions to peers, small group conferring, and rapid responses. These techniques worked effectively and engaged students.
- Planned differentiation was evident in most lessons. Tasks and learning activities were differentiated within the whole-class environment in an inclusive manner. Reactive differentiation was also facilitated by teacher movement and the skilful matching of students to peers to act as second teachers. This is commendable practice.
- Lessons were clearly structured into segmented sections, and communicated to students with high expectation. The incremental explanation of new concepts was followed by the opportunity to practice, implement and display the concept. This was a significant strength in lessons. In one lesson, students' used the visualizer to display and review their learning to the whole-class group, this was sensitively managed and co-ordinated by the teacher.
- Teachers demonstrated explicit problem-solving of worked examples and specific drafting techniques in a timely manner. The interrelationship of topics and the core geometric principles should be deepened further during such opportunities. Strategies to strengthen students' involvement in teacher-led demonstrations should be investigated.
- The learning environment was positive and there was a very good rapport evident between the students and the teachers in the lessons observed. Students engaged diligently with the assigned tasks and worked collaboratively when required.
- Physical solid models were deployed most effectively when improving students' spatial problem-solving skills. This interaction assisted their three-dimensional reasoning and two-dimensional visualisations in tandem with establishing the rudiments of orthographic projection. Very good use was made of digital technology and modelling software to communicate information and enhance the learning experience.
- The assignment of homework tasks within the department was inconsistent. It is recommended that procedures should be established for the assignment and monitoring of both homework and portfolios. Correction and formative commentary was evident in some instances. This good practice should be extended to provide all students with formative comments on areas where they could improve, to affirm their efforts and inform future learning.
- The standard of freehand sketching and drafting skills varied considerably from poor to very good. In order to raise the standard of accuracy and drafting presentation it is suggested that students are given opportunities to apply feedback they received and reflect on their progress by documenting learning using sketches and text in their portfolios.

2. SUBJECT PROVISION AND WHOLE SCHOOL SUPPORT

- The quality of whole-school support for the graphic subjects is very good. Appropriate allocation of time with a spread of lessons over the week ensures regular contact time, with one exception noted for one class group where the spread of lessons was less than optimal.
- The school supports teachers' continuing professional development (CPD), and there are very good records of staff engagement retained in the subject planning folder.
- The subjects are well resourced. The specialist classroom is equipped with the necessary drafting and digital equipment required for both the TG and DCG syllabi. The visual appearance of the classroom could be improved to provide further stimuli through the display of student work, subject specific resources and posters.
- All first-year students complete a taster programme in TG. The programme is effective in enabling students to make an informed subject choice. The duration of the taster programme should be kept under review to ensure students achieve the minimum classroom contact time in light of the impending introduction of the Graphics specification.
- All TY students complete an eight week graphics module. The school hosts a subject options information evening for prospective Leaving Certificate students. Students rank their preferred subjects and option bands are created.
- Uptake of TG is very good, currently there are six class groups studying TG for Junior Cycle. Classes have a balanced gender mix. In senior cycle more than one in every six students studies DCG.

3. PLANNING AND PREPARATION

- Preparation and planning for individual lessons was very good. Student friendly support materials were prepared in advance and in some instances were physical tactile objects.
- The subject plan is a comprehensive document, detailing time allocated for each topic, the suggested teaching methodology and assessment mode. However the plan for TY graphics should be expanded to include module content structure, teaching methodologies and assessment modes.
- Subject department planning should include strategic planning for curricular developments in Junior Cycle following the positive expansion of the technology education curriculum in Cross and Passion College with the introduction of senior cycle Technology.
- Department planning meetings are scheduled frequently and documented by the subject co-ordinator. Meetings should include a focus on the design, implementation and subsequent review of an action plan for evidence-based improvements in teaching, learning and assessment.
- Attainment in certificate examinations are analysed annually, comparisons to national averages and trends have been documented. This data should now form part of the department's evidence base when planning for improvement.

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

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 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;

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 wishes to acknowledge this report, its recommendations and its findings. The Board welcomes the report's affirmation of the commitment of our Technical Graphics and Design and Communications Graphics Department and that the quality of teaching and learning taking place in a purposeful and disciplined environment is very good. Acknowledgement of the quality of preparation of lessons and the quality of whole school support for subjects is much appreciated.

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

The school will address the recommendations of the report with an emphasis on the quality of 'Subject Department Planning'.

Particular emphasis will be placed on the requirements of the Junior Cycle Specification in Graphics to begin in 2019-2020.

The assignment and formal assessment of student portfolio and homework will be prioritised in both Junior and Senior Cycle planning.