

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

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

**REPORT**

<b>Ainm na scoile / School name</b>	St Augustine's College
<b>Seoladh na scoile / School address</b>	Abbeyside Dungarvan Co Waterford
<b>Uimhir rolla / Roll number</b>	64890W

**Date of Inspection: 22-10-2019**



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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 Graphics and Design & 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.

The board of management of the school was given an opportunity to comment on the findings and recommendations of the report; the board chose to accept the report without response.

## **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

<b>Date of inspection</b>	22-10-2019
<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 four lessons</li><li>• Examination of students' work</li><li>• Feedback to principal and relevant staff</li></ul>

### School context

St Augustine's College is a co-educational voluntary secondary school with 754 students. The school provides the Junior Cycle Programme, an optional Transition Year (TY) programme, the Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme (LCVP) and the established Leaving Certificate.

### SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

#### Findings

- The overall quality of teaching and learning was good with some very good assessment practices utilised in lessons.
- Teacher prepared resources, including animations and videos, had a positive effect on students' learning experiences.
- Very effective sketching techniques were incorporated into activities to scaffold students' freehand drawing skills.
- Graphical problem-solving was encouraged and facilitated, on occasion; however, there is scope to further develop this key skill.
- Subject provision and whole school support for graphics subjects is very good.
- Planning and preparation for the subject area is good with some scope for improvement identified in the area of collaborative planning for junior cycle Graphics.

#### Recommendations

- Problem-solving should be actively promoted among students and further integrated into their learning experience, where possible.
- The subject department should collaboratively plan for the teaching, learning and assessment of Graphics incorporating and utilising the planning processes espoused by the Junior Cycle for Teachers (JCT) support service.

## DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 1. TEACHING, LEARNING, AND ASSESSMENT

- The overall quality of teaching and learning was good with some very good assessment practices utilised in lessons to promote and enhance students' learning and understanding.
- Lessons were effectively structured to develop and build upon prior learning. Clear learning intentions supported ongoing assessment.
- Teachers demonstrated various graphical constructions to a high standard, helping students to identify appropriate standards for their own work. The use of colour, sequencing and indexing was reinforced and modelled to a high standard. Animations and videos were incorporated into lessons very effectively. These approaches helped to support students' visualisation and to develop their understanding of various concepts and associated constructions.
- In one lesson observed, sketching was taught in a structured manner that helped to scaffold students' skill development very well. The process utilised by the teacher helped students, who found sketching difficult, by sequentially building their skill level using good sketching techniques and practices.
- Good questioning was used to elicit student responses effectively. A variety of techniques was utilised to maximise student engagement in discussions and in the explanation of constructions. This resulted in participative and engaging discussions.
- While there were a number of instances where graphical problem-solving was encouraged and facilitated, there was scope to further develop this key skill. Individual and collaborative strategies, which require students to apply their prior learning, should be further embedded in students' activities. Ideally, these tasks would result in students arriving at a solution, or indeed multiple solutions, with minimal support and guidance provided by their teacher.
- Teachers provided students with good quality oral formative feedback throughout the lessons observed. A useful and systematic approach to monitoring students' portfolio work is employed by the subject department. This system effectively supports formative assessment and also helps to encourage independent learning. This commendable practice should be further embedded and extended, where appropriate.
- Student engagement was very good. Individual tasks and activities were pitched at an appropriate level and provided opportunities for students of varying abilities to achieve. Partially completed worksheets helped to ensure that each lesson's key focus was the pivotal component of the students' activity.
- Students demonstrated good construction skills and explained key associated concepts to an appropriate standard. Student achievement in certificate examinations is in line with expectations and is generally improving in relation to the number of students choosing higher level.

### 2. SUBJECT PROVISION AND WHOLE SCHOOL SUPPORT

- Overall, subject provision and whole school support for graphics subjects is very good.
- Recently graphics was made available to all first-year students. This development is a direct result of modifications made to the methods used to form the optional subject bands. There

are now three first year groups and the gender balance in the current first-year group has improved significantly.

- The subject department is well resourced and supported by school management. Plans are underway to redevelop and refurbish existing school facilities to facilitate the foreseen growth in students choosing graphics subjects. This proactive measure is most welcome and will help to ensure that students' preferences can continue to inform the school's curriculum.
- The subject department comprises two graphics teachers who are deployed appropriately across the various year groups. Both teachers have attended recent and appropriate continuing and professional development (CPD) training in the subject area. These include training provided by the JCT support service and supplementary training focused on incorporating parametric modelling techniques into teaching and learning.

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

- Overall planning and preparation for the subject area is good with some scope for improvement identified in the area of collaborative planning for junior cycle Graphics.
- A subject plan has been developed and it includes drafts of initial units of learning for first-year Graphics. The subject department should work towards further developing collaborative plans for junior cycle Graphics. These units of learning should be developed in line with the process of planning espoused by the JCT and include provision for formative and ongoing assessments and include all strands and elements of the Graphics specification.
- The subject department's subject plan also includes schemes of work for Technical Graphics, a TY Graphics module and senior cycle Design and Communication Graphics. The planned TY module focuses on aspects of sketching, geometry, orthographic projection and practical tasks that reinforce learning in these areas, including activities that explore the use of packaging and basic computer-aided design (CAD) modelling and photorealistic rendering.
- Regular subject planning meetings are held and records of these meetings are retained. Issues discussed at these meetings include: the purchase of consumables; student attainment and organisation of the subject sampling programme. Planning for the new Graphics specification should now be included in all subject planning meetings.

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 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;