

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

**Subject Inspection in Physical Education**

**REPORT**

<b>Ainm na scoile / School name</b>	Killarney Community College
<b>Seoladh na scoile / School address</b>	New Road Killarney Co Kerry
<b>Uimhir rolla / Roll number</b>	70450D

**Date of Inspection: 16-11-2018**



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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 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.

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.

## **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>	16-11-2018
<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 three class periods</li><li>• Examination of students' work</li><li>• Feedback to principal, deputy principal and relevant staff</li></ul>

### School context

Killarney Community College is a co-educational, post-primary school with an enrolment of 369 students in the current school year. The school is under the patronage of the Kerry Education and Training Board (ETB). The school offers the Junior Cycle programme, the Junior Certificate School Programme (JCSP), an optional Transition Year (TY) programme, the Leaving Certificate, the Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme (LCVP) and the Leaving Certificate Applied (LCA). The school participates in Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools (DEIS), the action plan of the Department of Education and Skills for educational inclusion.

### SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

#### Findings

- The overall quality of teaching and learning observed during the evaluation was good, with some examples of excellent practice noted along with minor scope for development in some aspects.
- A very positive, affirming learning environment was a feature of all lessons.
- Good opportunities for self-reflection, peer-reflection and self-assessment were provided to students in many lessons.
- Subject provision and whole school support for Physical Education is good; there is scope for improvement in the timetabling of the subject at senior cycle.
- Subject department planning is very good with scope to further involve students in the planning process noted; teachers' individual lesson planning is very good.
- Excellent assessment and reporting structures are in place in the school.

#### Recommendations

- Where possible, games lessons should always include a conditioned or modified game aimed at consolidating learning from drills and practices.
- While the school has kept the timetabling of Physical Education under regular review, the current arrangement at senior cycle whereby students access Physical Education on a rotational basis for part of the year should be revised.
- Opportunities for greater student input into the planning and organisation of the school's Physical Education programme, particularly at senior cycle, should be explored.

## DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 1. TEACHING, LEARNING, AND ASSESSMENT

- The overall quality of teaching and learning observed during the evaluation was good with some examples of excellent practice noted. Students achieved very well in PE lessons, exhibiting good levels of skilled performance on many occasions.
- Students participated enthusiastically in all lessons and co-operated fully with their teachers and with each other. A very positive learning atmosphere was evident in all lessons with regular teacher affirmation of students' efforts noted.
- Frequent, appropriate and well-structured opportunities for self-reflection, peer-reflection and self-assessment were provided to students in lessons. These were a considerable aid to student learning and helped to encourage students to become autonomous learners. This is highly commended.
- Opportunities were provided for students to work individually, in pairs and in groups. Some opportunities were provided for students to lead aspects of learning in lessons, notably during the warm-up phase of lessons. This approach merits more extensive use in lessons, particularly with regard to students in senior cycle.
- The high quality of teacher demonstrations, and a clear focus on the technical aspects of skill acquisition, were a considerable aid to students' learning. Students' responses to questioning indicated a very good level of understanding.
- Individual lessons were very well planned with a range of well-chosen, appropriate resources used to enhance the learning experience of students. The use of digital technologies, especially the use of laptops, tablets and projectors to show relevant video clips, was particularly effective.
- While lessons generally had a very good structure, it is recommended that games lessons should always include an appropriate, small-sided, modified or conditioned game to consolidate learning from the skills phase of lessons. This ensures that the students have sufficient opportunity to apply the skills acquired in a semi-competitive situation before moving on to a full-sized game.
- Very good opportunities were provided for students to provide feedback to each other on their performances and learning. Occasionally, students were asked to focus on too many aspects when providing this feedback. Discussions took place around the need to ensure that students can manage this more effectively by limiting the range of areas which are the focus of feedback.
- A good focus on learning intentions at the start of lessons and very good recapping at the end were features of all lessons. This is commended, as is the practice of canvassing students' views on the lesson at its conclusion, which was also noted.
- There is a very effective subject department structure in place in the school. A consistency of approach was evident in all of the lessons observed with clearly established classroom management routines helping to ensure the smooth running of all lessons. The planned Subject Learning and Assessment Review (SLAR) meetings at junior cycle will help to further consolidate the sense of teamwork and shared responsibility which permeates the work of the department.
- Teachers' commitment to continuing professional development (CPD) is apparent and Kerry ETB has provided a range of CPD opportunities in which the teachers have participated. Commendably, the physical education department also participates in other, nationally-

mandated, elements of curriculum review including the trialling of the use of a physical education app at senior cycle.

## **2. SUBJECT PROVISION AND WHOLE SCHOOL SUPPORT**

- Subject provision and whole school support for Physical Education is good. The subject is well resourced and provided for with a range of well-maintained facilities available.
- Physical Education is appropriately timetabled at junior cycle, ensuring that the school meets requirements in relation to the timetabling of Physical Education as part of wellbeing at junior cycle. The school is also well on schedule to ensure that overall requirements in relation to wellbeing at junior cycle are fulfilled.
- The most recent review of the timetabling of the subject at senior cycle saw the school amend the practice of timetabling Physical Education opposite the LCVP link modules. While this change is commended, the current situation is also unsatisfactory as students in 5<sup>th</sup> year and 6<sup>th</sup> year now have Physical Education on a rotational basis for approximately 11 weeks each year. It is recommended that the matter be revisited to ensure that students have access to the subject for the full year.
- It is very positive to note that Kerry ETB is in the process of providing a suite of tablet devices for use by the physical education department. The use of these devices can be expected to have a positive impact on students' learning experiences.

## **3. PLANNING AND PREPARATION**

- The quality of planning and preparation for Physical Education in the school is very good. A very good subject plan is in place, outlining all the main aspects of the delivery of the subject and, commendably, uses *Looking at Our School* (LAOS) to inform the planning of learning outcomes both within and outside the classroom. It is very good practice that the subject plan is available electronically and can be amended by the subject department as the need arises.
- While a broad range of activities is provided in the school's physical education programme, and some opportunities for student-led activity were noted, it is recommended that students, particularly those in senior cycle, be provided with further opportunities to decide on the nature of their physical education programme and to take leadership roles with regard to its delivery. The excellent opportunities provided by Kerry ETB for students to participate in rich-task events at junior cycle should provide a very good foundation for this.
- In addition to a wide range of co-curricular and extra-curricular activities in which the school is involved, the school has also begun the process of applying for the Active Schools Flag. This is commended.
- Individual lessons were very well planned and, commendably, included wellbeing indicators for the activities planned.
- Excellent assessment and reporting structures are in place in the school. While four reports, which include a formative comment on students' participation and progress, are sent home each year, the school ensures that over-assessment does not occur in Physical Education as some reports are based on teacher observation during lessons. This is considered appropriate.
- Fitness tests are used appropriately to ensure developmental feedback is provided to students, as they grow and develop, with regard to changes in their fitness levels across a

range of fitness components. This is commended and regarded as a wholly appropriate use of such tests in a physical education setting.

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 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**

### **Part A Observations on the content of the inspection report**

The Board of Management of Killarney Community College welcomes the positive report on the quality of Learning and Teaching in Physical Education.

The Board is pleased that the report acknowledges the positive and affirming learning environment within lessons and that the subject is well resourced and provided for with a range of well-maintained facilities.

The Board is happy to note that excellent assessment and reporting structures are in place in the school, along with effective subject department planning and teacher commitment to continuing professional development which was apparent in this inspection report.

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

The Board of Management is confident that where possible, games lessons now include a conditioned or modified game aimed at consolidating learning from drills and practices.

The Board will support the school in reviewing the timetabling of Physical Education to further support student access to Physical Education and to promote opportunities for greater student input which is currently being explored.