

An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna
Department of Education and Skills

Cigireacht Ábhair ar Eolaíocht & Fisic agus Ceimic
(comhchúrsa)

TUAIRISC

Ainm na Scoile	Coláiste Na bPiarsach
Seoladh na Scoile	Ros Muc Co. na Gaillimhe
Uimhir Rolla	71380N

Dáta na Cigireachta: 08-12-2016



CAD IS CIGIREACHT ÁBHAIR ANN?

Déanann cigireachtaí ábhair tuairisciú ar cháilíocht na hoibre i réimsí curaclaim faoi leith laistigh de scoil. Dearbhaíonn siad dea-chleachtas agus déanann siad moltaí, nuair is cuí, chun cuidiú le forbairt bhreise a dhéanamh ar an ábhar sa scoil.

CONAS AN TUAIRISC SEO A LÉAMH

Le linn na cigireachta seo, rinne an cigire meastóireacht ar fhoghlaim agus ar theagasc in Eolaíocht & Fisic agus Ceimic (comhchúrsa) faoi na ceannteidil seo a leanas:

1. Foghlaim, teagasc agus measúnú
2. Soláthar don ábhar agus tacaíocht na scoile uile
3. Pleanáil agus ullmhúchán

Déanann na cigirí cur síos ar an gcáilíocht a bhaineann le gach ceann de na réimsí sin agus feidhm á baint acu as contanam cáilíochta na Cigireachta a thaispeántar ar leathanach deiridh na tuairisce seo. Soláthraíonn an contanam cáilíochta samplaí den teanga a úsáideann cigirí agus iad ag déanamh meastóireachta agus ag cur síos ar cháilíocht sholáthar na scoile i ngach réimse.

Cigireacht Ábhair

GNÍOMHAÍOCHTAÍ CIGIREACHTA LE LINN NA CIGIREACHTA SEO

Dáta na Cigireachta	08-12-2016
Na gníomhaíochtaí cigireachta ar tugadh fúthu <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Athbhreithniú ar na cáipéisí cuí• Plé leis an bpríomhoide agus le príomhbhaill den bhfoireann• Idirghníomhú le daltaí	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Breathnú ar theagasc agus foghlaim i dtrí cinn de thréimhsí ranga• Iníúchadh ar obair na scoláirí• Aiseolas don phríomhoide agus do na baill foirne chuí

COMHTHÉACS NA SCOILE

Scoil chomhoideachais is ea Coláiste na bPiarsach. Tá sí suite sa Ghaeltacht agus oibríonn sí faoi choimirce Bhord Oideachais agus Oilíúna na Gaillimhe agus Ros Comáin. Tá an scoil rannpháirteach i bplean gníomhaíochta na Roinne um chuimsiú oideachais, Comhionannas Deiseanna sna Scoileanna a Sheachadadh (DEIS). Bhí triúr scoláire agus ochtó ar rolla na scoile tráth na cigireachta. De bhreis ar an Teastas Sóisearach bunaithe agus an Ardteistiméireacht bhunaithe cuirtear Clár Scoile an Teastais Shóisearaigh agus Gairmchlár na hArdteistiméireachta ar fáil sa scoil.

ACHOIMRE AR NA PRÍOMHCHINNTÍ AGUS MOLTAÍ:

CINNTÍ

- Bhí cáilíocht an teagaisc agus na foghlama go maith nó go han-mhaith sna ceachtanna a breathnaíodh.
- Bhí ullmhú maith déanta ar na ceachtanna agus bhain na múinteoirí úsáid as spriocanna foghlama chun creat a thabhairt dá gcuid ceachtanna agus bhain na scoláirí úsáid astu mar chúnamh dá gcuid foghlama féin.
- Bhain na múinteoirí úsáid as réimse mhaith modheolaíochtaí lena n-áirítear teicneolaíocht faisnéise agus cumarsáide (TFC) agus méid áirithe foghlama ar bhonn fiosraithe chun a chinntiú gur coinníodh teagasc an mhúinteora agus gníomhaíochtaí na scoláirí ar mheá chothrom i ngach ceacht.
- Croí-ábhar is ea an eolaíocht sa scoil agus i láthair na huaire múintear an comhchúrsa Fisice agus Ceimice do scoláirí na cúigiú agus na séú bliana le chéile.
- Baintear leas as seomra ranga a cuireadh in oiriúint mar shaotharlann, áit a gcuirtear formhór na gceachtanna ar siúl.
- Tá pleanáil na roinne eolaíochta go maith agus cuimsíonn sé scéimeanna éifeachtacha oibre chomh maith le hanailís ar thorthaí scrúdú teastais.

MOLTAÍ

- Ba chóir do mhúinteoirí breacadh nótaí mar mhodheolaíocht sna ceachtanna a laghdú an oiread agus is féidir agus iarracht a dhéanamh le níos mó úsáid a bhaint as déanamh nótaí agus as modheolaíochtaí foghlama ar bhonn fiosraithe.
- Tá an gá le huasghrádú a dhéanamh ar an seomra ranga oiriúnaithe aitheanta ag an mbainistíocht shinsearach agus ag an mbord d'fhonn saotharlann níos oiriúnaí a chur ar fáil. Ba chóir tús áite a thabhairt don obair seo chun deiseanna foghlama do na scoláirí a uasmhéadú.

- Is maith an obair atá déanta ag an roinn eolaíochta chun a cuid scéimeanna don chéad bhliain a fhorbairt. Ba chóir di an obair mhaith céanna a dhéanamh ó thaobh leibhéal na sonraí de do scéimeanna oibre uile a fhorbrófar amach anseo.

MIONCHINNTÍ AGUS MOLTAÍ

1. TEAGASC AGUS FOGHLAIM

- Bhí cáilíocht an teagaisc go maith nó go han-mhaith. Múineadh gach ceacht trí mheán na Gaeilge. Bhí ullmhú maith déanta ag na múinteoirí ar a gcuid ceachtanna. Baineadh úsáid mhaith as TFC agus as na hacmhainní agus an trealamh a bhí ar fáil. Roinneadh spriocanna foghlama leis na scoláirí agus bhain na múinteoirí úsáid as na spriocanna seo chun foghlaim na scoláirí a sheiceáil ag deireadh na gceachtanna. De bhreis air seo cloíodh leis an dea-chleachtas sin go ndearna na scoláirí machnamh ar na spriocanna foghlama chun a gcuid foghlama féin a mheas.
- Baineadh úsáid as réimse mhaith modheolaíochtaí foghlama agus teagaisc le linn na gceachtanna a breathnaíodh agus ba mhaith an chothromaíocht idir an méid a chuir na múinteoirí isteach agus gníomhaíocht na scoláirí. Ar na modheolaíochtaí áiríodh teagasc soiléir ón mhúinteoir, achoimre a thabhairt ar réamhfhoghlaim, obair ghrúpa agus obair bheirte, na scoláirí ag tabhairt faoi obair thrialach agus faoi thascanna aonair, breacadh nótaí agus déanamh nótaí agus roinnt foghlama atá bunaithe ar fhionnachtain. Ba chóir do mhúinteoirí breacadh nótaí a laghdú mar mhodheolaíocht agus déanamh nótaí a spreagadh i gceachtanna, agus ba chóir dóibh níos mó úsáid a bhaint modheolaíochtaí foghlama ar bhonn fiosraithe.
- Bhí cáilíocht na foghlama go maith. Tá na cáilíochtaí gairmiúla riachtanacha ag na múinteoirí agus tá siad tar éis freastal ar réimse cúrsaí forbartha gairmiúla leanúnaí a bhaineann le foghlaim scoláirí. Is de bharr go bhfuil siad féin tógtha dá réimse ábhair a spreag na múinteoirí na scoláirí chun tabhairt faoina gcuid foghlama agus chun taitneamh a bhaint aisti.
- Bhí bainistiú an seomra ranga an-mhaith. Bhí iompar na scoláirí thar cionn agus bhí idirchaidreamh ómósach dearfach idir na scoláirí agus na múinteoirí. Bhí meascán maith de chairteacha agus d'obair na scoláirí ar bhallaí na seomraí ranga ina raibh na ceachtanna eolaíochta ar siúl. Bhí atmaisféar an tseomra ranga ag cuidiú leis an bhfoghlaim agus bhí na scoláirí rannpháirteach agus gníomhach le linn na gceachtanna.
- Tá cumas measctha sna ranganna eolaíochta agus múintear ceachtanna Fisice agus Ceimice do scoláirí na cúigiú agus na séú bliana le chéile. Ciallaíonn seo go bhfuil ar na múinteoirí idirdhealú a dhéanamh sna ceachtanna agus freastal ar scoláirí gach leibhéal agus gach cumais. Tugadh straitéisí maithe idirdhealaithe faoi deara i ngach ceacht, bhí struchtúr maith ar na ceachtanna agus tugadh dóthain ábhair do na scoláirí chun dúshlán a chur fúthu.
- Bhí cáilíocht na measúnachta go maith. Bhí na straitéisí ceisteoireachta an-mhaith sna ceachtanna a breathnaíodh. Bhain na múinteoirí úsáid mhaith as am feithimh agus ceisteanna ardoird mar chúnamh chun idirdhealú a dhéanamh ar na ceachtanna. Lena chois sin scaip na múinteoirí ceisteanna thar díorma na scoláirí chun an fhoghlaim a sheiceáil. Léirigh na freagraí a thug na scoláirí gur thuigeadar na coincheapanna agus na scileanna atá sna spriocanna foghlama den chuid is mó.
- Tugtar obair bhaile do na scoláirí go rialta. Bhí cleachtais cheartúcháin an ranga uile, ón mhúinteoir agus ó phiaraí follasach. Thug na múinteoirí aischothú múnlaithreach ó bhéal agus i scríbhinn araon do na scoláirí maidir le slite chun feabhas a chur ar a gcuid oibre ach tá scóip ann chun cur le cáilíocht an aischothaithe i scríbhinn i roinnt cásanna. Lena chois sin ba chóir

do na múinteoirí cur in éadan na scoláirí má bhíonn siad ag iarraidh a gcuid oibre praiticiúla a bhreacadh síos trí thras-scríobh ó theimpléid.

- Sna ceachtanna a breathnaíodh leagadh béim mhaith ar scileanna litearthachta trí eochairfhocail a aithint agus a mhúineadh roimh ré. Déileáladh le scileanna uimhearthachta go mór mór trí béim a leagan ar an tábhacht atá le húsáid a bhaint as aonaid chearta agus a gcuid sonraí a thaifeadadh ag na scoláirí. Lena chois sin thaispeáin na scoláirí scileanna maithe labharthachta mar labhair siad Gaeilge líofa agus fadhbanna á bplé acu lena bpiaraí nó ceisteanna á bhfreagairt acu.

2. SOLÁTHAR ÁBHAR AGUS TACAÍOCHT SCOILE UILE

- Tá an tacaíocht scoile uile agus an soláthar ábhair do na heolaíochtaí go maith. Croí-ábhar is ea an eolaíocht agus is féidir leis na scoláirí an Bhitheolaíocht agus an comhchúrsa Fisice agus Ceimice a roghnú sa tsraith shinsearach. Bhí an cúrsa Fisice agus Ceimice á mhúineadh do scoláirí na cúigiú agus na séú bliana araon sa cheacht céanna tráth na meastóireachta de bharr acmhainní teagaisc agus amchláraithe. Bhí líon na scoláirí thar an dá bhlianghrúpa a rinne staidéar ar an gcomhchúrsa go maith.
- Tá na leithdháiltí ama don Eolaíocht agus don gcomhchúrsa Fisice agus Ceimice de réir treoirlínte an tsiollabais. Imlonnaítear múinteoirí de réir a gcuid speisialachas agus is baill iad uile de Chumann Múinteoirí Eolaíochta na hÉireann.
- Baineann an scoil úsáid as seomra ranga athchóirithe a úsáidtear mar shaotharlann i bhformhór na gceachtanna eolaíochta. Thuairiscigh bainistíocht shinsearach na scoile go bhfuil aitheanta ag an mbord go bhfuil gá le huasghrádú a dhéanamh ar an seomra ranga chun saotharlann níos oiriúnaí a dhéanamh de. Ba chóir tús áite a thabhairt do don obair seo chun gur féidir foghlaim agus cleachtadh scileanna eolaíochta na scoláirí a uasmhéadú.
- Tá na háiseanna TFC go maith. Tá trealamh sláinte agus sábháilteachta cuí sna seomraí ranga agus tá ceimiceáin stóráilte i gceart. De bhreis air seo déanann na múinteoirí measúnuithe riosca go bliantúil. Ba chóir don scoil féachaint le cur le líon na n-acmhainní do cheachtanna eolaíochta chun gur féidir obair ghrúpa agus foghlaim ar bhonn fiosraithe a fheabhsú.
- Tugtar deiseanna do scoláirí rannpháirtíú i ngníomhaíochtaí seach-churaclaim cosúil le Taispeántas BT an Eolaí Óig agus Teicneolaíochta, Seachtain Eolaíochta agus TeamTech. Mar chuid dá measúnachtaí deiridh tugtar scór céatadáin do na scoláirí i dtaobh a bhfuil bainte amach acu san obair phraiticiúil le linn na bliana.

3. PLEANÁIL AGUS ULLMHÚ

- Tá cáilíocht na pleanála go maith. Tá comhordaitheoir ann agus coinnítear miontuairiscí na gcruinnithe. Coinnítear liosta den bhForbairt Ghairmiúil Leanúnach a dtugann na múinteoirí fúithi agus cuirtear cothrom le dáta é go rialta. Déanann na múinteoirí eolaíochta anailís ar thorthaí na scrúdaithe teastais agus leagan siad síos spriocanna feabhais. Ba chóir do na spriocanna baint ar leith a bheith acu leis na straitéisí teagaisc agus foghlama san Eolaíocht áfach, agus ba chóir doiciméadú a dhéanamh orthu i miontuairiscí cruinnithe na roinne.
- Tá na scéimeanna oibre a dhéanann na múinteoirí go maith ó thaobh sonraí de. Ar scéimeanna oibre don sonraíocht eolaíochta nua don chéad bhliain áirítear spriocanna foghlama atá ceangailte le modheolaíochtaí agus measúnacht, creataí ama agus mír mhachnaimh do mhúinteoirí. Ba chóir na scéimeanna oibre do na blianghrúpaí eile a fhorbairt chuig an leibhéal céanna ó thaobh sonraí de amach anseo.

Pléadh na dréachtchinntí agus na dréachtmholtaí a eascraíonn as an mheastóireacht seo leis an bpríomh-oide agus na múinteoirí ábhair ag deireadh na meastóireachta. Tugadh deis do bhord bainistíochta na scoile ar a thuairim a léiriú ar thorthaí agus ar mholtaí na tuairisce i scríbhinn, agus beidh freagra an bhoird ar fáil san aguisín atá leis an tuairisc seo.

Aguisín

Freagra na Scoile ar an Tuairisc

Arna chur isteach ag an Bord Bainistíochta

Cuid A: Tuairimí ar ábhar na tuairisce scoile

Cuid B: Gníomhartha leantacha a rinneadh nó atá beartaithe le déanamh ó cuireadh críoch leis an ngníomhaíocht chigireachta chun tátail agus moltaí na cigireachta a chur i bhfeidhm

Glacann muidne mar Bhord Bainistíochta Choláiste na bPiarsach leis an tuairisc chigireacht ábhar seo ar Eolaíocht & Fisic agus Ceimic (comhchúrsa). Bhí cinntí an tuairisc seo thar a bheith dearfach agus molann muid dea-phleanáil agus obair chrua ár gcuid múinteoirí. Breathnaítear ar an Eolaíocht mar chroí-lár cúrsaí curaclam sa scoil. Tá sé dearfach gur tugadh aitheantas don dea-phleanáil sin sa tuairisc.

Pléadh moltaí an tuairisc seo lena múinteoirí éagsúla agus cuirfear i bhfeidhm iad gan mhoill mar dea-chleachtais. Aithníonn Bainistíocht agus Bord na scoile go bhfuil gá le h-uasghradú a dhéanamh ar ansaotharlann eolaíochta agus déanfar iarratas ar na ngáth bhealaí thríd 8hirdOideachais agus Oiliúna Gaillimh agus Ros Comáin.

CONTANAM CÁILÍOCHTA NA CIGIREACHTA

Déanann cigirí cur síos ar cháilíocht an tsoláthair sa scoil agus feidhm á baint acu as contanam cáilíochta na cigireachta a thaispeántar thíos. Tugann an contanam cáilíochta samplaí den teanga a mbaineann cigirí feidhm aisti nuair a bhíonn siad ag déanamh meastóireachta agus ag cur síos ar cháilíocht sholáthar na scoile do gach réimse.

Leibhéal	Cur-síos	Sampla de na téarmaí tuairisciúla
An-mhaith	Úsáidtear An-mhaith áit a bhfuil cáilíocht na réimsí a ndéantar meastóireacht orthu ar chaighdeán an-ard. Ní bhíonn tionchar rómhór ag an líon beag réimsí atá le feabhsú ar cháilíocht an tsoláthair ar an iomlán. Do roinnt scoileanna sa chatagóir seo bíonn an cháilíocht ar a ndearnadh meastóireacht thar cionn agus is eiseamláir é do scoileanna eile de shárchaighdeáin soláthair.	An-mhaith; ar cháilíocht an-ard; cleachtas an-éifeachtach; le moladh go hard; an-rathúil; beagán réimsí le feabhsú; go hiontach; ar chaighdeán an-ard. Ar fheabhas: thar cionn; ar sárchaighdeán; le láidreachtaí an-suntasach; thar barr
Go maith	Úsáidtear Go maith áit ina bhfuil níos mó láidreachtaí sna réimsí a ndéantar meastóireacht orthu ná na réimsí ina bhfuil gá le feabhas a dhéanamh. Bíonn tionchar ag na réimsí ina bhfuil gá le feabhas a dhéanamh ar cháilíocht foghlama na scoláirí. Ní mór don scoil tógáil ar a cuid láidreachtaí agus gníomhú le dul i ngleic leis na réimsí atá aitheanta ina bhfuil gá le feabhas a dhéanamh leis an gcaighdeán an-mhaith a bhaint amach.	Go maith; cáilíocht mhaith; fiúntach; cleachtas éifeachtach; inniúil; úsáideach; inmholta; caighdeán maith; roinnt réimsí le feabhsú
Sásúil	Úsáidtear Sásúil áit a bhfuil cáilíocht an tsoláthair sách maith. Tá díreach níos mó láidreachtaí a ndéantar meastóireacht orthu ná na laigí. Cé nach mbíonn drochthionchar suntasach ag na laigí cuireann siad srian leis na taithí foghlama agus ba chóir dul i ngleic leo d'fhonn caighdeán níos fearr a bhaint amach.	Sásúil; sách maith; soláthar oiriúnach cé go bhfuil féidearthachtaí ann le feabhas a dhéanamh; leibhéal cáilíochta inghlactha; is gá feabhas a chur ar réimsí áirithe
Measartha	Úsáidtear Measartha áit, in ainneoin go bhfuil roinnt láidreachtaí sna réimsí a ndéantar meastóireacht orthu, go bhfuil níos mó easnaimh nó laigí ann freisin ná na láidreachtaí. Beidh ar an scoil dul i ngleic le heasnaimh áirithe gan mhoill lena chinntiú go mbíonn an soláthar sásúil nó níos fearr ná sin.	Measartha; laigí soiléire ann a bhfuil tionchar acu ar fhoghlaim na ndaltaí; gan a bheith chomh sásúil sin; deacrachtaí ann; níor mór feabhas a dhéanamh i réimsí ar leith; gá le gníomhú le feabhas a dhéanamh
Lag	Úsáidtear Lag áit a bhfuil easnaimh thromchúiseacha sna réimsí a ndéantar meastóireacht orthu. Is gá don scoil uile gníomhú láithreach ar bhonn comhordaithe le dul i ngleic leis na réimsí atá mar ábhar imní. I gcásanna áirithe, b'fhéidir go mbeidh gá le hionchur ó ghníomhaireachtaí eile le tacú leis na feabhsuithe.	Lag; míshásúil; easnamhach; neamhéifeachtach; go dona; athrú, forbairt nó feabhas atá suntasach ag teastáil; deacrachtaí suntasacha ann;

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

**Subject Inspection in Science & Physics and Chemistry
(combined course)**

REPORT

School name	Coláiste Na bPiarsach
School address	Ros Muc Co Na Gaillimhe
Roll number	71380N

Date of Inspection: 08-12-2016



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 Science & Physics and Chemistry (combined course) under the following headings:

1. Learning, teaching 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 DURING THIS INSPECTION

Date of inspection	08-12-2016
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 three class periods• Examination of students' work• Feedback to principal and relevant staff

SCHOOL CONTEXT

Coláiste na bPíarsach is a co-educational school, situated in the Gaeltacht and operating under the auspices of the Galway and Roscommon Education and Training Board. The school participates in the Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools (DEIS), the Department's action plan for educational inclusion. The school had, at the time of the inspection, eighty three students. In addition to the established Junior Certificate and Leaving Certificate, the school provides the Junior Certificate School Programme and the Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme.

SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

FINDINGS

- The quality of teaching and learning was good or very good in the lessons observed.
- Lessons were well prepared and learning intentions were used by teachers to frame their lessons and by students as an aid to their own learning.
- A good range of methodologies, including information and communications technology (ICT) and some enquiry-based learning, was employed by the teachers to ensure a good balance between teacher instruction and student activity in all lessons.
- Science is a core subject in the school and currently fifth and sixth-year students are taught the Physics and Chemistry combined course together.
- The school avails of a converted classroom as a laboratory where most of the science lessons take place.
- The science department's planning is good and contains effective schemes of work and an analysis of certificate examination results.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Teachers should minimise note-taking as a methodology in lessons and endeavour to make greater use of student note-making and enquiry-based learning methodologies.
- Senior management and the board have identified the need to upgrade the converted classroom into a more suitable laboratory, this should be prioritised in order to maximise the learning opportunities for the students.
- The science department has accomplished good work in developing its first-year schemes and all future schemes of work should be developed to the same level of detail.

DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. TEACHING AND LEARNING

- The quality of teaching was good or very good. All lessons were taught through the medium of Irish. Teachers had prepared well for their lessons. Good use was made of ICT and the resources and equipment available. Learning intentions were shared with students, and teachers used these intentions to check on students' learning at the end of lessons. The good practice of students reflecting on the learning intentions to evaluate their own learning was also observed.
- A good range of learning and teaching methodologies was employed during the observed lessons and a good balance between teacher input and student activity was provided. The methodologies included clear teacher instruction, summarising prior knowledge, group and pair work, student performance of experimental work and individual tasks, note-taking and note-making and some discovery-based learning. Teachers should endeavour to minimise note-taking as a methodology in favour of note-making in lessons and to make greater use of enquiry-based learning methodologies.
- The quality of learning was good. Teachers have the required professional qualifications and have engaged in a range of continuing professional development (CPD) relevant to students' learning. Teachers, through their own enthusiasm for their subject area, motivated students to engage in and enjoy their learning.
- Classroom management was very good. Student behaviour was exemplary and student-teacher rapport was very respectful and positive. The classrooms where science lessons took place had a good mixture of charts and students' work on the walls. Classroom atmosphere was conducive to learning and students were engaged and active during lessons.
- Science classes are of mixed ability and the Physics and Chemistry lessons have fifth and sixth-years taught together. This means that teachers have to differentiate their lessons to cater for students of all levels and abilities. In all lessons good differentiation strategies were evident, lessons were well structured and students were provided with sufficient material to challenge them.
- The quality of assessment was good. Questioning strategies were very good in the lessons observed. Teachers made good use of wait time and higher-order questions to aid in differentiating the lessons. Teachers also distributed questions across the student cohort to check on learning. The responses provided by the students showed that they largely understood the concepts and skills included in the learning intentions.
- Homework is assigned to students regularly. The practices of whole-class, teacher and peer corrections were evident. Teachers provided both oral and written formative feedback to students on how to improve their work, however there is scope to further expand on the quality of the written feedback in some instances. Teachers should also discourage students from writing up their practical work by transcribing from templates.
- In the lessons observed, there was a good emphasis on literacy skills through identifying and pre-teaching keywords. Numeracy skills were mainly addressed through emphasising the importance of using correct units when students are recording their data. Students also demonstrated good oracy skills as they spoke fluently in Irish when they discussed issues with their peers or answered questions.

2. SUBJECT PROVISION AND WHOLE SCHOOL SUPPORT

- Whole-school support and subject provision for the sciences is good. Science is a core subject and at senior cycle students can choose to study Biology and the combined Physics and Chemistry course. At the time of the evaluation both fifth and sixth-year students were being taught the Physics and Chemistry course in the same lesson due to teaching and timetabling resources. The number of students studying the combined course over the two year groups was good.
- The time allocations for Science and for the Physics and Chemistry combined course are in line with syllabus guidelines. Teachers are deployed according to their specialisms and they are all members of the Irish Science Teachers' Association.
- The school makes use of a refitted classroom, which acts as the laboratory for the majority of science lessons. Senior management of the school reported that the board has identified the need to upgrade this classroom into a more suitable laboratory. This should be prioritised so that students' learning and practice of their scientific skills can be maximised.
- ICT facilities are good. The classrooms have appropriate health and safety equipment and chemicals stored correctly. The teachers also carry out risk assessments annually. The school should look to increase the amount of resources for science lessons so that group work and enquiry-based learning can be enhanced.
- Students are provided with opportunities to become involved in extra-curricular activities such as the BT Young Scientist & Technology Exhibition, Science Week and TeamTech. As part of their final assessments students are provided with a percentage score for their attainment in practical work during the year.

3. PLANNING AND PREPARATION

- The quality of planning is good. A co-ordinator is in place and minutes of meetings are maintained. The CPD undertaken by the teachers is listed and updated on a regular basis. The science teachers analyse the certificate examination results and set targets for improvement, however these targets should be specific to teaching and learning strategies in Science and should be documented in the minutes of department meetings.
- There is a good level of detail in the schemes of work produced by the teachers. The schemes of work for the new first-year science specification include learning intentions linked with methodologies and assessment, timeframes and a teacher reflection section. The schemes of work for the other year groups should be developed to the same level of detail into the future.

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.

Appendix

SCHOOL RESPONSE TO THE REPORT

Submitted by the Board of Management

Part A Observations on the content of the 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

We the board of management of Coláiste na bPiarsach, accept the Science and Physics and Chemistry (combined course) subject inspection report. The findings of the report were very positive and we commend the planning and dedicated work of our teachers. The sciences are deemed to be core courses in the school's curriculum. It is very positive that good planning was recognised in the report.

The recommendations of this report was discussed with the various teachers and they will be implemented as good practice, without delay. The school management and board recognise the need to upgrade the science laboratory and we will make an application in the usual manner through the Galway and Roscommon Education and Training Board.

(This is a translation of the school response submitted by the board of management.)

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 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;