

An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna
Department of Education and Skills

Subject Inspection in Home Economics

REPORT

School name	Presentation Community College
School address	Terenure Park Dublin 6W
Roll number	76092K

Date of Inspection: 10-09-2019



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 Home Economics 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 was given an opportunity to comment in writing on the findings and recommendations of the report; a response was not received from the board.

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	09-09-2019 and 10-09-2019
Inspection activities undertaken <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review of relevant documents• Discussion with principal, deputy principal and relevant staff• Interaction with students	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Observation of teaching and learning during three lessons• Examination of students' work• Feedback to principal, deputy principal and relevant staff

School context

Presentation Community College is a co-educational school under the patronage of the City of Dublin Education and Training Board (CDETb). It has a current enrolment of 351 students. The school provides the Junior Cycle, the Leaving Certificate and an optional Transition Year (TY) programme. Home Economics is an optional subject in the Junior Cycle and Leaving Certificate programme. In TY, Home Economics is provided as a module for all students.

SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

Findings

- The overall quality of teaching and learning was effective with examples of highly effective practice in lessons; some differentiation techniques were evident.
- Teachers used a range of approaches which supported active learning.
- Very good practice was observed in the assessment of previous learning at the beginning of lessons; learning intentions shared in the lessons observed were not explicitly revisited and assessed.
- The overall quality of subject provision is good; timetabling arrangements at senior cycle are not in line with the syllabus requirements.
- The overall quality of planning and preparation is good; learning outcomes for the development of practical and procedural skills, resources, and teaching and assessment strategies specific to learning outcomes are not evident in programmes of work.

Recommendations

- Teachers should further plan for and utilise additional differentiation techniques to include the differentiation of activities and learning intentions and the assessment of these learning intentions.
- Timetabling arrangements at senior cycle should be reviewed by senior management and the duration of all practical food studies lessons should be kept under careful review to ensure that they facilitate high quality learner experiences and outcomes.
- Programme plans should be collaboratively developed by teachers to include teaching and assessment strategies and resources which are specific to learning outcomes, and the incorporation of learning outcomes which are inclusive of the development of practical and procedural skills.

DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. TEACHING, LEARNING, AND ASSESSMENT

- The overall quality of teaching and learning was effective with examples of highly effective practice evident in lessons. In some lessons, students were provided with opportunities to reflect on what they had learned and this enabled students to take more responsibility for their learning. In all lessons, teachers generated questions to support students to make co-curricular links and in the best lessons the teacher integrated wait time and made it clear that they expected students to volunteer answers.
- Teachers displayed enthusiasm for teaching and for Home Economics and students were generally highly engaged in lessons.
- At the beginning of lessons, very good assessment practice was observed when students had the opportunity to display their previous learning and learning homework assignments by creating mind-maps or written records of their learning. In addition, teacher-led questioning assessed students' attainment of learning resulting from a homework task in advance of introducing new material. These techniques consolidated learning and supported an incremental approach to students' learning.
- In most lessons, teachers shared very clear learning intentions with students. In some lessons, too many learning intentions were planned for. Teachers did not explicitly revisit or assess learning intentions. It is recommended that teachers should reflect on the number of learning intentions planned for, revisit learning intentions, and assess students' attainment of the intended learning during the lesson.
- Students were presented with engaging tasks which supported active learning. For example, students had the opportunity to taste and differentiate between different types of milk and justify their decision.
- Questions were very well distributed and assessed higher and lower order thinking skills, and this supported differentiation. However, there were instances where the level of difficulty of the planned activity was too challenging for some students and this impacted on the quality of learning. To further support the mixed-ability nature of home economics lessons, additional differentiation strategies should be fully exploited such as the differentiation of learning intentions and activities to further support positive learner outcomes and experiences.
- In some instances, digital presentations were designed by teachers to structure and support students' learning. In order to explain difficult concepts, digital media clips should be used to further support students' knowledge and understanding.

2. SUBJECT PROVISION AND WHOLE SCHOOL SUPPORT

- The overall quality of subject provision is good.
- At the time of the inspection, the subject department consisted of a newly appointed teacher and a substitute teacher. It is highly commendable that senior management has ensured that there are subject specialists in place to deliver the home economics programme.
- Home Economics is a very popular subject in most year groups. Students are afforded very good access to the subject and resources are provided by the school to ensure that all

students are enabled to fully participate in the range of learning activities in Home Economics.

- All lessons are fifty-eight minutes in duration. Currently, an extended lesson is not provided at senior cycle as per Leaving Certificate syllabus requirements and senior management should address this. Teachers have identified that the provision of fifty-eight minute lessons will require that students in food studies lessons will have to complete some key practical and procedural tasks and evaluation activities at home rather than in class. Senior management should keep current timetabling arrangements under careful review to ensure that the length of food studies lessons allow for high quality learner outcomes and experiences.
- At present, one teacher is not timetabled to teach Junior Cycle Home Economics. It is recommended that all teachers are timetabled to teach the Junior Cycle programme to develop collective expertise and support collaborative planning and review.
- Home economics facilities include a well-resourced kitchen and textiles room. An informative and attractive display of students' project work is presented in the kitchen and on the corridors adjacent to the home economics rooms.
- It is good practice that at junior and senior cycle, subject option bands are created based on student preferences. Incoming first-year students make their subject choices in advance of commencing first year. Some supports are in place to guide students and parents when choosing subjects, however, it is recommended that consideration is given regarding how students and parents could be further supported to make informed decisions.
- A very detailed risk-assessment is in place for the kitchen and textiles room. It is recommended that senior management in consultation with the home economics department undertake a risk assessment of the home economics rooms on an annual basis.

3. PLANNING AND PREPARATION

- The overall quality of planning and preparation was good.
- Programme plans are in the process of being reviewed and updated. It is positive that an incremental approach to the teaching of senior cycle is evident in the revised plans and that teacher reflections are noted on programme plans to inform future planning. It is good practice that plans outline learning outcomes for all year groups. Currently programme plans are not inclusive of learning outcomes for the development of practical and procedural skills. Teaching strategies, resources, and assessment modes which are specific to learning outcomes and reflect the mixed ability grouping of home economics classes are underdeveloped. As part of the current review of plans, these areas should be addressed.
- It is very good practice that an electronic platform which allows teachers to collate and share teaching resources has been in place for some time. Having electronic access to such resources enables teachers to share and modify resources based on the needs of learners.
- Minutes from the most recent subject department meetings are filed in the subject plan. It is recommended that all future minutes are stored in the plan and minutes of meetings held should be shared with senior management.
- It is highly commendable that the home economics department are involved in a range of extra-curricular events. The subject department played a key role in the organisation of a 'Culture Week' and 'Wellbeing Week' in the school. The establishment of a 'Cookery Club' is

planned for this year as well as a range of fitness challenges which promote student wellbeing.

- It is good practice that the home economics department analyses student attainment and higher level uptake in certificate examinations. Best practice was evident when teachers' observations and reflections on student outcomes were recorded. To further enhance this process, it is recommended that the results analysis informs the development and implementation of an action plan which outlines strategies that support a continuous improvement in learner outcomes.

The draft findings and recommendations arising out of this evaluation were discussed with the principal, deputy principal and a subject teacher 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 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;