

An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna
Department of Education and Skills

Subject Inspection in Art

REPORT

Ainm na scoile / School name	Colaiste Pobail Setanta
Seoladh na scoile / School address	Phibblestown Clonee Dublin 15
Uimhir rolla / Roll number	76098W

Date of Inspection: 27-4-2017



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 Art 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

Dates of inspection	26-04-2017 & 27-04-2017
Inspection activities undertaken <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review of relevant documents• Discussion with principal, deputy principals and Art teachers• 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, deputy principals and Art teachers

SCHOOL CONTEXT

Coláiste Pobail Setanta, established in 2008, is a co-educational post-primary school which operates under the auspices of the Dublin and Dún Laoghaire Education and Training Board. The school serves a rapidly expanding area in North County Dublin and its current enrolment stands at 1052. In addition to the Junior and Leaving Certificate programmes, Art is offered in Transition Year (TY), Leaving Certificate Applied, and in the school's unit for students with autistic spectrum disorders.

SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

FINDINGS

- The overall quality of learning and teaching in the lessons observed was very good.
- The high quality learning spaces and classroom structures provided in Art facilitate independent and active learning for students.
- Some highly effective assessment methods are used by the art department in lessons, with some methods needing further development.
- Uptake of Art is generally good in junior cycle, however numbers taking leaving certificate Art have declined.
- Some good planning documentation has been prepared by the art department, which is generally in need of updating.
- Art is well supported by school management.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- The use of written formative feedback should be further developed and provided for students' work-in-progress, including practical work.
- The subject plan and schemes of work should be continuously updated to reflect current developments in Art, with a focus on planning for improvement.
- Uptake of Art should be investigated further and, in collaboration with senior management, strategies put in place to raise its profile in the school.

DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT

- Very high quality learning and teaching was observed in lessons.
- All lessons were well-prepared and well-paced, with clear and appropriate learning intentions shared from the outset. To further build on this good practice learning intentions should be differentiated to fully challenge students of all abilities.
- The learning spaces for Art consist of two well-organised and well-equipped specialist rooms. Some current student project-work and exemplars are on display in both rooms, and in the school building. To raise the profile of the subject in the school, and to continuously expose students to newly-completed artworks, these samples should be replenished on a consistent basis.
- Classroom management was very good, and expectations of student work and behaviour in art lessons is high. The structures and routines that are in place, facilitate students to work independently with guidance and support from their teachers.
- A range of highly effective teaching and learning methodologies is used by the art teachers. Instructions and demonstrations were clear, and appropriate tasks were selected to deepen learning, self-reflection and skills development. Overall there was a very good balance between teacher input and student activity in lessons, which were primarily student-led.
- Students demonstrated the ability to confidently describe the process involved in making a piece of work from conception to completion. This was particularly noted in a lesson where students were facilitated to use information and communication technology to present completed project-work to their class group, and critique their own work. To build on this very good practice and to further develop students' critical thinking skills, the teacher could open up a dialogue for peers to appraise and discuss the presenter's work.
- The art department advocates and encourages the use of primary sources as a starting point for project work. However, in some instances such as preparation for Leaving Certificate practical examinations, secondary sources remain a dominant feature. This should be reviewed and the consistent use of primary sources instilled in students' practice from first year.
- Almost all students successfully take higher level in state examinations. The art department should now work towards increasing attainment further within this level.
- A range of assessment methods was noted in lessons, including highly effective student self-assessment and peer-assessment. Some good assessment practices were also noted in the review of students' work. Written formative feedback provided on some practical examination and written work should be further developed to include practical work-in-progress.
- Questioning was very good in the lessons observed and students were confident and competent in their responses. This was particularly notable in a lesson where students were learning new skills in ceramics, and questioning was used very effectively to ensure that students understood expectations of both behaviour and learning.

2. SUBJECT PROVISION AND WHOLE SCHOOL SUPPORT

- The quality of subject provision and whole-school support for Art is good. Access to the subject is very good overall with option bands based on students' choice.
- Uptake of art is good in junior cycle, however numbers choosing the subject for Leaving Certificate have declined. Due to low uptake in the current fifth year, art lessons for this group have been timetabled after school. The reasons for the decline in uptake of Art at senior cycle should be further investigated, and in collaboration with senior management, strategies implemented to ensure the subject's ongoing sustainability in senior cycle.
- A very good range of opportunities is provided for students to access co-curricular and extra-curricular events. The wide range of initiatives includes Artists in Residence and Artist of the month, and cross-curricular events such as Creativity Week. Students have also achieved considerable successes in competitions such as the Green-Schools animation.
- School management supports and facilitates teachers' to access and participate in CPD, including areas such special needs, and recent changes in Art.

3. PLANNING AND PREPARATION

- A subject plan is in place for the art department that includes key policies, and aims and objectives for the subject.
- The overall subject plan is in need of significant updating to reflect current specification and assessment changes in Art. With a focus on planning for improvement in mind, analysis of assessment data, as well as learning from recent CPD should be used to inform this.
- Some good schemes of work have been developed individually by art teachers. Management facilitates regular meetings for subject departments and these could be used to develop a common template to ensure greater consistency across the art department.
- TY art plans indicate some exciting and meaningful initiatives for students. To build on this, and with a view to increasing uptake in Leaving Certificate, plans could include a greater focus on key Art skills necessary to increase students' confidence in the subject. With this in mind the reinstatement of the second weekly art lesson could be considered by management.

The draft findings and recommendations arising out of this evaluation were discussed with the principal, deputy principals and subject teachers at the conclusion of the evaluation.

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.

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;