

An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna
Department of Education and Skills

Subject Inspection in Art, Craft and Design

REPORT

Ainm na scoile / School name	Donabate Community College
Seoladh na scoile / School address	Portrane Road, Donabate Co Dublin
Uimhir rolla / Roll number	761040

Date of Inspection: 04-04-2019



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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 Art, Craft and Design 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	03-04-2019 and 04-04-2019
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 four class periods• Examination of students' work• Feedback to principal and relevant staff

School context

Donabate Community College is a co-educational post-primary school under the patronage of Dublin and Dun Laoghaire Education and Training Board (DDLETB). The school provides the Junior Cycle, the Leaving Certificate (established), the Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme (LCVP) and an optional Transition Year (TY) programme. The school caters for 761 students and includes a class for students with autism spectrum disorders (ASD).

SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

Findings

- The quality of teaching and learning was very good overall.
- The exhibition of students' artwork is used to very good effect in designated areas around the school.
- The quality of assessment is effective overall; higher-order questions were not consistently used in all lessons.
- The overall quality of provision and whole-school support for Art is very good.
- Highly effective reflective practice is evident among the teachers of Art.
- Overall, very good progress has been made in planning and preparation for Art; planning for differentiation in TY Art needs further development.

Recommendations

- Higher-order questioning should be consistently used to deepen students' understanding of lesson content.
- The art department should ensure that the TY art plan includes differentiated learning intentions which support students whose experiences and abilities in Art vary.

DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. TEACHING, LEARNING, AND ASSESSMENT

- The overall quality of teaching and learning in the lessons observed was very good.
- Lessons observed were well planned and structured. Very effective use of information and communication technology (ICT) was noted in a few instances. The content of lessons was appropriately pitched and prepared with students' interests in mind.
- In very many instances students were motivated to learn and had a positive approach to participation in class tasks. Teacher-student rapport during all of the lessons observed was very good, and the behaviour of students was very good overall.
- The student work reviewed was of a very good standard, and indicated highly-developed technical skills. The teachers of Art have begun to integrate students' learning of practical skills with the development of the creative and critical thinking skills needed to process ideas in Art. This is good practice.
- The exhibition of students' artwork is used to very good effect in designated areas around the school. Larger murals and statement artworks are used to involve all students in experiencing artworks. The Physics versus Art installation and the artwork based on contemporary artwork and literature are illustrative of this good practice.
- During the evaluation, the project work reviewed demonstrated that students are encouraged to use primary sources as stimuli. In some instances students preferred to use photographs or images from their electronic device. While these are valid sources of inspiration, teachers should continue to ensure that students understand the benefits of exploring physical objects that are meaningful and interesting to them. Such benefits include the opportunity to study art elements in greater detail, and to manipulate objects to explore ideas.
- The quality of assessment is effective overall, with examples of very good practice noted in some instances.
- Teachers used a good range of questioning strategies. In a few instances, teachers used directed higher-order questions which encouraged students to think, negotiate and explain their understanding of lesson content. This is good practice. It is recommended that further use is made of higher-order questioning to deepen students' understanding of lesson content.
- In a few instances, success criteria were provided to students at the start of the lesson. This practice proved effective in supporting meaningful engagement with lesson content.
- The quality of oral feedback provided to students was a significant strength in the lessons observed. Observation of sketchbooks, copybooks and some larger art works indicated that students' work is monitored regularly.
- Some examples of very good written formative feedback was noted. However, in some of the student work reviewed, teacher feedback was repeated, indicating that students may not be making full use of the feedback provided. The art teachers have identified this issue, and have developed classroom strategies to encourage learners to effectively use the teacher feedback being provided.

2. SUBJECT PROVISION AND WHOLE SCHOOL SUPPORT

- The overall quality of provision and whole-school support for Art is very good. In line with good practice, option bands are constructed based on students' choice.

- Timetabling for Art meets the specification and syllabus requirements for all year groups. However, timetabling for one group of first-year students is not optimal, as the class is split between two teachers. At the time of the evaluation, senior management had plans in place to address this issue in the next academic year.
- The art department provides a wide variety of extra-curricular and co-curricular activities to support and extend students' learning. Recent activities include a collaborative project with the music and English departments to promote culture awareness among the school community.
- Health and safety procedures are well established for art lessons. The art department has developed a comprehensive health and safety policy, including a risk assessment.

3. PLANNING AND PREPARATION

- Overall, very good progress has been made in planning and preparation for Art.
- Good lines of communication exist between the art department and senior management. Minutes for meetings are shared with senior management. A good analysis of student outcomes in the certificate examinations is completed.
- Commendably, the art department has prepared an action plan aimed at developing the organisation and promotion of Art within the school. Clear time frames for the implementation of actions are identified. To build on this good practice, it is suggested that the art department use the analysis of student outcomes and reflections on classroom practice, to collaboratively devise specific targets aimed at ongoing improvements in teaching and learning.
- The teachers of Art have engaged with subject-specific continuing professional development from the Junior Cycle for Teachers (JCT) support service. JCT planning templates are well utilised to unpack learning outcomes and devise units of learning.
- The TY programme for Art appropriately includes the study of visual culture and appreciation. It is good practice that some of the TY module descriptors for Art indicate a strong focus on the development of students' ideas.
- In recent times the TY art programme has been further developed to support cross-curricular projects. The art department designed modules to take into account the interest and needs of students following teacher reflection and feedback from learners. However, the plan would benefit from additional planning for differentiation. Differentiated learning intentions which support the varying experiences and abilities of students in Art should be developed and included in the plan.

The draft findings and recommendations arising out of this evaluation were discussed with the principal, deputy principals and art department 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
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;