

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

**Subject Inspection in English**

**REPORT**

<b>Ainm na scoile / School name</b>	Kingswood Community College
<b>Seoladh na scoile / School address</b>	Kingswood Avenue Kingswood Tallaght
<b>Uimhir rolla / Roll number</b>	76293U

**Date of Inspection: 20-09-2018**



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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 English 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.

## **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>	20-09-2018
<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 four class periods</li><li>• Examination of students' work</li><li>• Feedback to principal and relevant staff</li></ul>

### School context

Kingswood Community College is a co-educational school under the patronage of Dublin and Dun Laoghaire Education and Training Board. The school is in its third year and offers the junior cycle to 339 students.

### SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

#### Findings

- The quality of teaching and learning ranged between satisfactory and good; overall, the quality was good and instances of very good practice were observed.
- A very good rapport between teachers and students which supported a positive learning environment was evident in all lessons visited.
- In all lessons observed, the clarity with which the learning to be achieved was communicated to students was of a high standard.
- The pace and pitch of some lessons did not always meet the different learning needs of students: in many lessons there was an imbalance between teacher input and student activity that resulted in extended periods of student passivity.
- There is very good whole-school support and provision for English, evidenced in the areas of timetabling, resource provision and class organisation.
- The English teachers in the school have engaged impressively with continuous professional development and have developed a collaborative and collegial approach to planning.

#### Recommendations

- More focus should be given to planning the pace and pitch of lessons, with a view to further developing differentiated teaching methodologies and practices across the department.
- Greater emphasis should be placed on the provision of student-centred learning activities in lessons; focusing on the use of active collaborative learning will be useful in this regard.
- Consideration should be given to addressing the imbalance between teacher input and purposeful student activity by supporting the development of exploratory talk in lessons
- The English team should build on the good planning practices that are currently in place and create a developmental action plan that reflects teachers' vision for the subject in the school.

## DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 1. TEACHING, LEARNING, AND ASSESSMENT

- The quality of teaching and learning in the lessons observed ranged from good to satisfactory; overall, the quality was good and instances of very good practice were observed.
- Teachers displayed commitment to their work to provide relevant learning experiences for their students and were very open to suggestions about how teaching and learning practices could be further developed.
- Lessons were prepared diligently and learning intentions were used to good effect to frame the lesson and include students in their learning journey. The best lessons ensured that the learning intentions were student focused, with distinct links to prior learning.
- Very good teacher-student relationships were evident during lessons. Humour was used to good effect in some lessons to support students' learning, alongside links to students' interests and their lives outside of school. In all lessons students were affirmed and encouraged, supporting a positive learning environment.
- In some lessons, the use of graphics, props, audio and visual clips supported students to engage more closely with texts. Extending these practices throughout the department is encouraged.
- In many lessons, further attention was needed to ensure the pace and pitch of the lesson met the learning needs of all students. Starter tasks, a common feature of the lessons observed, provided opportunities to engage pupils immediately with the learning objectives. However, in some cases, the task went on for too long which impacted student engagement. In other cases, students were not sufficiently challenged by the learning tasks of the lesson. Discussion at subject team level regarding further developing differentiated teaching practices would be helpful in this context.
- A focus on presentation skills has been developed as a whole-school endeavour and there were some examples observed of students' working together in lessons. However, a number of opportunities to develop the student voice through exploratory talk and discussion were missed. In this context, it is recommended that further exploration of the use of carefully structured co-operative learning activities be undertaken, with ample time provided for students to feedback findings, and these activities incorporated into teachers' practice.
- In many lessons there was an imbalance between teacher input and student activity and so teachers are encouraged to develop ways in which students can be more active and, where possible, autonomous in their learning. Specific attention should be given to supporting and scaffolding student discussion and response.
- Some good use of information and communications technology (ICT) was observed but there is scope to develop ICT as an interactive teaching tool.
- Students had opportunities to engage in extended writing tasks, and some good examples of formative feedback was evidenced in students' copybooks. To build on good practices, the English team should now develop a policy with regard to correcting students' written work and providing students with developmental feedback.
- Questioning was used to check students' understanding and there were some examples of higher-order questions in a few lessons. In general, there should be more emphasis on questioning that develops higher-order thinking. Students should be given adequate time to fully develop answers and should be required to answer in fully formed sentences.

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

- There is very good whole-school support and provision for English, evidenced in the areas of timetabling, resource provision and class organisation.
- The school is currently in temporary accommodation which has caused some restrictions but impressive plans are underway to promote and celebrate the subject in the new building next year.
- The team's engagement with continuing professional development is impressive and a testimony to their commitment to the continued improvement of teaching and learning.
- Students are given opportunities to engage in cross-curricular and extra-curricular activities that support them in engaging closer with the subject.

## **3. PLANNING AND PREPARATION**

- The English team members are collaborative, collegial and energetic, evidenced in their regular meetings, sharing of resources, the rotating position of the co-ordinator and their enthusiasm for the subject.
- A good system of planning is in place that reflects the diligence of the team. However, there are some areas that require attention, particularly schemes of work where more explicit links should be made between learning outcomes, teaching methodologies and assessment practices; and a column incorporating relevant whole-school teaching and learning interventions could be added. Furthermore, the creation of a developmental and reflective section of the subject plan should commence, where the targets for planning for improvement can be discussed and documented and the teams' vision for the future of the subject in the school can be shared.
- An informal system of peer-to-peer learning is already in place where teachers can share and discuss good practice. The formalisation and documentation of this good practice is encouraged.

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 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 of 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;