

An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna
Department of Education and Skills

Subject Inspection in Art, Craft and Design

REPORT

Ainm na scoile / School name	The Royal And Prior School
Seoladh na scoile / School address	Raphoe County Donegal
Uimhir rolla / Roll number	81011L

Date of Inspection: 02-05-2018



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 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, and the response of the board will be found in the appendix of this report.

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

Date of inspection	02-05-2018
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

The Royal and Prior Comprehensive School is a co-educational day and boarding school under the patronage of the Donegal Protestant Board of Education. Currently, there are 567 students enrolled. The school participates in the Delivering Equality of Opportunities in Schools (DEIS) action plan for educational inclusion. The school provides the Junior Cycle, the Junior Certificate School Programme (JCSP), an optional Transition Year (TY), Leaving Certificate and the Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme (LCVP). Art is offered as an optional subject in both junior and senior cycle.

SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

Findings

- The teaching and learning were of a very high quality in all of the lessons observed.
- Students were motivated to learn through having a clear sense of attainable and challenging learning outcomes.
- The quality of in-class assessment was highly effective.
- The overall quality of subject provision and whole-school support for Art is very good; uptake of Art in junior cycle is good, however it has fluctuated in senior cycle over recent times.
- A very good range of extra-curricular and co-curricular activities is provided to support achievement in Art.
- Overall, planning and preparation to support the teaching and learning of Art are very good; analysis of certificate examinations data is used to identify aspects for improvement in teaching and learning.

Recommendations

- The art department, in collaboration with senior management, should devise an action plan to monitor student uptake at senior cycle, with a view to increasing uptake at Leaving Certificate level.
- Subject planning should be enhanced by the inclusion of action plans focused on supporting and monitoring the progress of teaching and learning initiatives developed by the art department.

DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. TEACHING, LEARNING, AND ASSESSMENT

- The teaching and learning was of a very high quality in all of the lessons observed.
- In all instances, teachers' individual practice was very good and was characterised by effective lesson preparation, clear lesson structure and the selection, use and design of good resources.
- Very good-quality learner outcomes were evident in all of the lessons observed. This was achieved through teaching strategies which encouraged and allowed students to experience success.
- Learning intentions were shared and success criteria were co-constructed with students at the beginning of all lessons. In some instances, the success criteria for set tasks were individualised with, and for, students; students were motivated to learn through having a clear sense of attainable and challenging learning outcomes.
- A very good range of learning experiences was provided. Students displayed very good skills in using a range of media and demonstrated very good knowledge in the application of material for set tasks. Student work reviewed in theory folders, sketchbooks, and larger pieces in portfolios demonstrated ongoing purposeful learning.
- A well-organised learning environment was apparent. Student work is stored appropriately. Artwork is exhibited to very good effect in the art room and in designated areas around the school. Such displays includes a *Student Work of the Week Board* adjacent to the art room. Such practice enhances student learning and sets high expectations for students' achievement.
- The quality of in-class assessment was highly effective. Higher-order and lower-order questions were used appropriately to encourage students to reflect on and to show an understanding of lesson content. Student responses to questions demonstrated a very good understanding of prior learning and use of subject-specific literacy.
- The quality of both the oral feedback provided to students in lessons, and the written feedback on theory work was very good. These strategies support and maintain the high expectations set for each student. There is scope to increase student engagement in using the feedback provided. The art department should develop strategies to engage students in using feedback more meaningfully.
- In all lessons, students were encouraged to take ownership of their work and responsibility for improving it. A series of good assessment strategies including self-reflection tasks was undertaken by students at the beginning and end of all lessons. These strategies enabled students to set individual lesson goals and measure their progress.

2. SUBJECT PROVISION AND WHOLE SCHOOL SUPPORT

- The overall quality of subject provision and whole-school support is very good. Option bands at both junior and senior cycle are created based on student choice.
- Uptake of Art in junior cycle is good but senior-cycle uptake has fluctuated over recent times. There is scope to improve the uptake at senior cycle. The art department, in collaboration with senior management, should devise an action plan to monitor student uptake at senior cycle with a view to increasing uptake at Leaving Certificate level.

- Health and safety procedures are well established and are included in the subject department plan. At the time of the evaluation, a risk assessment had not been prepared for use by the art department. A risk assessment for the art room should be developed and reviewed annually.
- Notably, a wide range of extra-curricular and co-curricular activities is provided to support achievement in art. The department supports students' learning through additional involvements in projects such as *Peace IV*, *the Glanville Art Award* and designing logos for local businesses. Students' achievements are further celebrated with specially designated awards in Art which are presented at the end of the year.
- Senior management is very supportive of teachers' continuing professional development (CPD). A good range of whole-school and subject specific in-service opportunities has been undertaken to enrich students' learning experiences.

3. PLANNING AND PREPARATION

- Overall, the quality of planning and preparation for Art is very good. There are strong links between subject planning for Art and the whole-school DEIS priorities such as attendance and partnership with others.
- There are effective schemes of work in place for each year group. These have a strong focus on the necessary development of practical skills. It is indicative of highly effective practice that schemes are used by the teacher as working documents to reflect on curricular progress. While a comprehensive subject plan is in place, there is further scope to balance planning for skills attainment and knowledge of processes, with a greater focus on the development of ideas.
- Overall, planning for TY is effective, an interesting curricular plan has been prepared for the programme. With a view to increasing uptake in Leaving Certificate Art, consideration should be given to devising formal mechanisms for including the student voice in providing feedback to inform on-going development of TY Art.
- Commendably, the art department has used both in-house and external analysis of certificate examinations data to identify aspects for improvement in teaching and learning. In order to advance the impact of the aspects identified, the art department should devise action plans to support and monitor progress of the teaching and learning initiatives developed to achieve the set targets.

The draft findings and recommendations arising out of this evaluation were discussed with the principal and deputy principal and art department at the conclusion of the evaluation.

Appendix

School response to the report

Submitted by the Board of Management

Part A: Observations on the content of the inspection report

The Board of Management of The Royal and Prior Comprehensive School strongly welcomes the Inspection Report on the Teaching, Learning and Assessment of Art in the School and would like to celebrate the main conclusions, including:-

- The teaching and learning in all of the lessons observed were of a very high quality.
- Students were motivated to learn and were assessed in a highly effective way.
- The overall quality of subject provision and whole-school support for Art is very good.
- The overall quality of planning and preparation to support teaching and learning is very good.
- The Inspection praised the very good range of co-curricular activities that support achievement in Art.

Part B: Follow-up actions planned or undertaken since the completion of the inspection activity to implement the findings and recommendations of the inspection

The Board welcomes the recommendations contained in the report and will ensure their implementation:-

- Strategies are being developed to increase the uptake at Leaving Certificate and action plans are being advanced that will enhance the monitoring of Teaching and Learning initiatives developed by the Art Department.

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;