

An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna
Department of Education and Skills

Subject Inspection in Art

REPORT

Ainm na scoile / School name	Holy Family Community School
Seoladh na scoile / School address	Kilteel Road Rathcoole Co Dublin
Uimhir rolla / Roll number	91301D

Date of Inspection: 14-12-2016



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	13 & 14 December 2016
Inspection activities undertaken <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review of relevant documents• Discussion with principal, deputy principal and key staff• Interaction with students	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Observation of teaching and learning during five class periods• Examination of students' work• Feedback to principal and Art teachers

SCHOOL CONTEXT

Holy Family Community School is a co-educational post-primary school under the trusteeship of the Presentation Sisters, Spiritan Education Trust, and Dublin and Dún Laoghaire Education and Training Board. The school has a current enrolment of 894 students. Art is offered for the Junior Certificate, Transition Year (TY), Leaving Certificate Applied (LCA), and the established Leaving Certificate programmes.

SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

FINDINGS

- The overall quality of teaching and learning in the majority of lessons observed was very good.
- Clear and meaningful learning intentions are shared and reviewed in all lessons.
- Primary sources are frequently used by students as a starting point for their work, which is good practice.
- A very good range of effective assessment methods is used by Art teachers and students.
- Very good planning practices are in place for the majority of curricular programmes.
- Art is very well supported and has a strong presence in the school.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Active learning strategies should be developed further in art history lessons.
- TY subject plans should be developed in line with planning documents for all other curricular programmes.

DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. TEACHING AND LEARNING

- The overall quality of teaching and learning in the lessons observed was very good, with some areas for further development.
- Clear and meaningful learning intentions were shared in all lessons and success criteria were shared in some lessons. This very good practice could be developed further by differentiating the success criteria.
- A range of highly-effective teaching methodologies was employed including; demonstrations, individual and group instruction, teacher presentations, group discussion and peer-teaching. Overall, there was a very good balance between teacher input and student activity in the majority of lessons.
- Group-work was used in some lessons, which is good practice. However, greater structure would have supported all students to have a meaningful role, and enabled them to fully contribute to the process.
- A variety of approaches was taken to the teaching of Art History. Very good questioning was used to augment a digital presentation led by the teacher in one lesson, however students were more active in their learning in a lesson where they were enabled to research a topic with guidance from the teacher. Wider use of active learning methodologies should be utilised to encourage students to take greater ownership of their work in Art History.
- Very good cross-curricular links are made by the art department. One excellent example was noted in a TY lesson during which students worked in groups to design a mural.
- Primary sources are frequently used by students as a starting point for their work, which is good practice. The use of primary sources should now be developed exclusively as a starting point for student work, in favour of secondary sources used in some instances.
- A very good rapport was noted between teachers and students, expectations of students' behaviour and work are high, and they responded accordingly. Students were self-motivated in the majority of lessons, were inquisitive, and expressed enjoyment in their work.
- Learning intentions were reviewed in all lessons. This was most effective where the students had the opportunity to show and critique their work, and to learn from their peers. This very good practice could be developed further by encouraging greater use of subject vocabulary by students.
- Assessment of students is very good overall. Excellent formative written feedback was seen on both practical and written work in the majority of lessons. Very high-quality verbal formative feedback was given to students individually and in groups throughout lessons. It is commendable that, in many instances, students were able to assess their own progress and make decisions about how to develop and improve their work.
- Students were questioned frequently in lessons and their responses indicated a very good subject knowledge and a clear understanding of the process involved in developing an idea from conception to completion.
- The most effective questioning was noted in lessons where students were asked open questions that developed their critical thinking skills, and this type of questioning should be developed in all art lessons.

2. SUBJECT PROVISION AND WHOLE SCHOOL SUPPORT

- Curricular provision is very good overall for Art, and uptake of the subject is very good.
- Timetabling of Art is very good in junior and senior cycle. It is very welcome that management plans to increase the current timetabled provision of Art in TY to ensure that students have greater contact time to develop necessary skills in the subject.
- Very good opportunities for students to access Art beyond the curriculum are provided through portfolio classes, exhibitions in the community and a variety of cross-curricular initiatives.
- There is a very strong presence of Art in the school and high quality, current student work, in a range of media is displayed in prominent positions throughout the building.
- Art teachers attend regular continuing professional development and this pays dividends in the classroom where students are exposed to an excellent range of options for practical skills development. Teachers should consider peer-teaching to share their own varied and valuable skills with each other in a more formal manner.
- Three well-equipped specialist art rooms are provided available, and students have access to subject-specific materials for a wide range of art, craft and design disciplines, which is commendable.
- A health and safety statement has been prepared by the art department, which is good practice. This should be updated to include a risk assessment of student access to the kilns, and in the interim safety signage should be installed.

3. PLANNING AND PREPARATION

- The quality of planning and preparation for Art is very good for the Junior and Leaving Certificate programmes, and LCA. TY plans include a very brief overview of the module for Art, and this should be reviewed in line with all other art department plans.
- Teachers have prepared detailed individual schemes of work with schedules for delivery of the course content, and these link learning outcomes with teaching methods and assessment, which is very good practice.
- A subject co-ordinator is in place for the art department, which is good practice, however, it is recommended that this role be rotated on a more regular basis.
- The art department meets regularly, and minutes indicate that attainment in state examinations is analysed, which is good practice. This analysis should be further developed to inform ongoing planning for improvement.
- Planning for students with special educational needs is very good, and resource hours are used to cater for a group of students who are not studying a modern language. Approaches such as team-teaching should be considered to ensure that the specific needs of these students continue to be met.

The draft findings and recommendations arising out of this evaluation were discussed with the 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, and the response of the board will be found in the appendix of this report.

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 welcomes the very positive art inspection report. The Board is pleased with the strengths identified. The Board is examining the recommendations with a view to their implementation.

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 will support the art department plans to further develop active learning strategies to be used in art history lessons. The art department has reported to the Board that the Transition Year subject plans will be reviewed and amended to be consistent with the planning documents for all other curricular programmes.

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;