

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

**Subject Inspection in Art**

**REPORT**

<b>Ainm na scoile / School name</b>	Pobailscoil Iosolde
<b>Seoladh na scoile / School address</b>	Palmerstown Dublin 20
<b>Uimhir rolla / Roll number</b>	91302F

**Date of Inspection: 10-05-2018**



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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 Art 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>Dates of inspection</b>	9-05-2018 - 10-05-2018
<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

Pobailscoil Iosolde is a co-educational post-primary school in Palmerstown, with a current enrolment of 732 students. The school offers Junior Certificate, Junior Cycle, Junior Certificate School Programme (JCSP), a compulsory Transition Year (TY), the established Leaving Certificate and the Leaving Certificate Applied (LCA) and Leaving Certificate Vocational Programmes (LCVP). The school takes part in the Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools (DEIS) action plan.

### SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Findings

- The overall quality of learning, teaching and assessment is good, with scope for improvement in a few areas including differentiation.
- Very good learning was evident in samples of student work reviewed.
- Art is taught in an atmosphere of mutual respect and student behaviour was exemplary.
- Subject provision and timetabling for Art is very good, and the subject is adequately supported by school management.
- A well-equipped specialist room is provided for Art, and a lecture theatre is currently used for additional art lessons.
- The overall quality of planning is good but the subject plan is in need of updating to reflect curricular and assessment changes.

#### Recommendations

- The art department should take greater cognisance of the wide range of student ability and should differentiate learning to raise expectations and to appropriately challenge all learners.
- Senior management, in collaboration with the art department should devise a time-bound action plan to address the provision of a suitable learning space to accommodate the growth of the art department; in the interim, to ensure equality of provision for all students, the specialist room should be shared more evenly among class groups.
- All members of the art department should collaboratively develop subject planning to link differentiation and assessment practices with schemes of work, and should update the subject plan to reflect the new subject specification for Junior Cycle Visual Art.
- The art department should identify and implement teaching and learning strategies to increase uptake of higher level in certificate examinations for Art.

## DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 1. TEACHING, LEARNING, AND ASSESSMENT

- The overall quality of learning and teaching is good, with scope for improvement in a few areas such as differentiation and expectations of students.
- All lessons were very well prepared with appropriate equipment and materials organised in advance. High quality teacher-made resources were also prepared to enhance learning in most lessons.
- Teachers shared appropriate topics and tasks with students in all lessons. These were most effective when expressed in terms of learning intentions. Time should also be given to the review of learning intentions at the end of lessons.
- Art is taught in an atmosphere of mutual respect where students are strongly affirmed for effort and achievement. Student behaviour was exemplary in all lessons observed.
- Art is taught in a mixed-ability setting and learning was most effective where teachers differentiated lesson content to take account of the full range of students' learning needs and abilities. There is scope for teachers to further develop differentiated learning experiences, and particularly to raise expectations and to challenge more able students.
- Very good classroom routines and structures are in place for storing student work, setting up workstations and organising equipment. Classroom management was very good overall, but in some instances teachers could facilitate greater student autonomy by creating more opportunities for students to take ownership of their learning.
- In junior cycle lessons there is a strong focus on practical skills development and knowledge of art elements, and effective methodologies were used to ensure very good student understanding of these. In such lessons the creative process should also be addressed, so that students develop their individuality and critical thinking skills through practical skills-based activities.
- Students' project work reviewed during the evaluation indicated high-quality learning, particularly in the areas of drawing and painting. It is evident from the review of some samples of practical work that the use of primary sources as a starting point for project work is now promoted. This very good practice should be developed in favour of the secondary sources noted in Junior Certificate examination work.
- A range of approaches is used to deliver the art history curriculum, some of which were teacher led. To encourage students to explore and make judgements about artworks seen during the delivery of digital presentations, teachers should develop the use of visual thinking strategies. Very good practice was noted where students worked in groups and then individually to create their own illustrated notes on art history topics.
- Teachers used good questioning strategies in all lessons, including sufficient wait time and scaffolding to prompt student memory. Art teachers should also include strategies to elicit responses from a wider range of students.
- Teachers provide high-quality written formative feedback on students' written work. This approach should be extended to practical work and strategies should now be implemented to ensure that students use this feedback to improve their learning.
- The art department provides good opportunities for students to experience success in Art beyond the curriculum, including a range of cross-curricular initiatives and external competitions such as *Junk Kouture*.

- Literacy featured strongly in all lessons observed, where teachers and students identified key words related to the topic and correctly used subject specific terminology in context. This is very good practice.

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

- Subject provision for Art is very good and the subject is adequately supported by school management. Art is an optional subject and uptake is very good in junior cycle. The art department has already implemented some good strategies to promote increased uptake in senior cycle, and should continue to build on this.
- The art department is provided with one large specialist room, which is well equipped for a good range of Art, Craft and Design disciplines, including printing and kiln facilities.
- Timetabling of Art is very good overall and appropriate time is allocated in line with subject specifications. However, some third-year groups are shared between two teachers to create smaller classes. Senior management should consider implementing team-teaching in these circumstances to support students appropriately, to ensure continuity and to provide greater access to the specialist room.
- Commendably, senior management has facilitated the growth of the subject in recent years and has assigned the use of a lecture theatre as a second art room. Management is aware of the constraints of this room as a learning space for Art, and should now devise a time-bound action plan to address the suitability of this space, in collaboration with the art department. In the interim, the specialist room should be shared more evenly among class groups with priority given for examination classes.
- Almost all lessons are taught by teachers with the required professional qualifications, and most teachers engage in continuing professional development relevant to the subject.

## **3. PLANNING AND PREPARATION**

- The art department has prepared a subject plan that includes key policies, and aims and objectives for the subject, as well as long term plans which are followed by all members of the subject department.
- Art teachers have taken various approaches to developing individual schemes of work. Some schemes take cognisance of the new specification for junior cycle Visual Art. To ensure greater consistency across the art department all art teachers should work collaboratively to update the subject plan to reflect curricular and assessment changes in Art, and to link differentiation and assessment practices with schemes of work.
- A subject co-ordinator is in place and management facilitates subject department planning meetings. Commendably, minutes of subject meetings indicate some planning for improvement. Assessment data is analysed and the subject department has correctly identified uptake of higher level as a target for improvement. To build on the strategies already in place to achieve this, such as student encouragement and parental communication, the art department should identify teaching and learning strategies.
- 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 should include a greater focus on key Art skills necessary to build students' confidence in the subject.

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 of the school 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.

## 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 in 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;

# **Appendix**

**SCHOOL RESPONSE TO THE REPORT**

**Submitted by the Board of Management**

## **Area 1 Observations on the content of the inspection report**

Pobalscoil Iosolde would like to acknowledge the role of the subject inspection process as part of our commitment to excellence and ongoing evaluation. In particular, we are pleased that the inspection highlighted the high standard of teaching and learning in our school. We appreciated that the inspection acknowledged the following:

1. The good quality of teaching.
2. Very good preparation that enhanced teaching and learning.
3. The quality of whole school provision and support for Art.
4. The atmosphere of mutual respect and exemplary behaviour of students.
5. The strong focus on practical skills development and knowledge through the use of effective methodologies.
6. The use of good questioning strategies in all lessons.
7. The provision of high quality formative feedback.
8. The promotion of literacy in all lessons.
9. The very good provision of Art and the growth of Art in recent years.

## **Area 2 Follow-up actions planned or undertaken since the completion of the inspection activity to implement the findings and recommendations of the inspection.**

The Art Department along with the management of the school takes satisfaction in the positive acknowledgments made in the report and look forward to reviewing and implementing the recommendations of the report.

1. Teachers will continue to provide a high quality of teaching and learning, introducing the learning intentions at the beginning of the lesson and reviewing these at the end of the lesson.
2. Teachers will raise the expectations of students through enhanced differentiation to provide challenges for more able students.
3. The use of good questioning strategies will continue and methods will be put in place to elicit responses from the wider range of students.
4. Management will address the provision of a suitable learning space for Art.
5. Teachers will develop subject planning to link assessment practices and differentiation with schemes of work and reflect the new subject specifications for Junior Cycle Visual Art.
6. The Art Department will continue to implement strategies to increase the uptake of higher level in certificate examinations for Art.