

An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna
Department of Education and Skills

Subject Inspection in Art

REPORT

Ainm na scoile / School name	Scoil Phobail Chuil Mhin
Seoladh na scoile / School address	Cluain Saileach Baile Atha Cliath 15
Uimhir rolla / Roll number	913150

Date of Inspection: 29-11-2016



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	28 & 29 November 2016
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 five class periods• Examination of students' work• Feedback to principal, deputy principals and Art teachers

SCHOOL CONTEXT

Coolmine Community School is a post-primary, co-educational school in Dublin 15, with a current enrolment of 1,079 students. The school caters for students with a range of academic abilities and needs and provides the Junior Certificate, an optional Transition Year (TY), established Leaving Certificate and Leaving Certificate Applied (LCA) programmes. Art is offered on an optional basis in all available programmes.

SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

FINDINGS

- The overall quality of learning and teaching in the lessons observed was good, with instances of very good practice.
- A range of effective assessment practices is used in Art.
- Excellent opportunities are provided for student leadership in Art through the school's Arts Council.
- A very good rapport between students and their teachers was noted during the evaluation.
- The quality of subject provision and whole-school support for Art is very good.
- The overall quality of planning and preparation for Art is very good.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- The use of primary sources as a starting point for all student practical work should be further developed.
- The art department should develop strategies to encourage greater independent learning opportunities for students in lessons.
- The use of peer-assessment of students' work-in-progress should be further developed.

DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. TEACHING AND LEARNING

- The overall quality of learning and teaching in the lessons observed was good, with instances of very good practice also noted.
- The lesson topic was shared by teachers in all lessons, and clear instructions were provided for the planned task from the outset. This good practice could be developed by also sharing the learning intention for the lesson, to ensure that students know what they will learn as well as what they will do.
- A good range of effective teaching approaches was taken in the lessons observed, and there was a good balance between teacher instruction and student activity in the majority of lessons.
- Practical lessons were active and student-centred for the most part. This good practice was most evident in lessons where students were enabled and encouraged to work at their own pace, to experiment, and to work independently.
- Students were enabled to work collaboratively in an art history lesson where they worked in pairs to plan an essay. Approaches such as this are to be encouraged for the learning of Art History, and greater structure of the pair-work would increase its effectiveness.
- Extension tasks were prepared in some lessons, which is very good practice. Extension activities were most effective when meaningful tasks were provided, which gave the students scope to build on the learning of the lesson, to experiment and to work independently in line with the school's self-evaluation focus on independent learning.
- Student work reviewed during the evaluation was of a very high quality. In some instances a primary sources was used as a starting point for project work. This is to be encouraged in favour of secondary sources used in some of the lessons observed.
- Good references were made to prior learning in all lessons, and good links to Art History were made in all practical lessons. The effectiveness of these links could be further enhanced through the use of visuals of the support studies.
- A very good rapport was noted between teachers and students, and student behaviour was exemplary throughout the evaluation.
- Effective questioning was used in all lessons to assess student knowledge and understanding. Greater use of targeted questions could be used to ensure that responses are elicited from broader range of students.
- Student responses to questions demonstrated very good understanding of course content. Student questions indicated curiosity and interest in Art, and teachers responded well to these as they circulated during lessons to provide individual attention where needed. In some instances these questions could be exploited to provoke whole-class discussion.
- Students are assessed in Art through a variety of means including class tests, homework assignments, and student self-assessment, which is good practice. However, this generally takes place on completion of a scheme of work. It is recommended that students' work-in-progress be reviewed throughout lessons to provide an opportunity for peer-assessment, whereby students share successes and mistakes to enhance learning.
- Students are provided with very good individual, verbal, formative feedback in lessons, and high-quality written formative feedback is provided on students' written work.

2. SUBJECT PROVISION AND WHOLE SCHOOL SUPPORT

- Permanent and temporary student artworks are on display throughout the school, and the overall quality of subject provision and whole school support for the subject is very good.
- Option bands in both junior and senior cycle are generated on the basis of student choice, which is good practice.
- Uptake of Art is very good. All first-year students take the subject as part of a full-year taster programme, and make their choice of optional subjects in second-year. Overall, the timetabling of Art is very good, with double periods provided for the majority of programmes. Provision is excellent in the leaving certificate programme, where sixth-years have six periods of Art per week.
- The provision of Art in TY should be reviewed to ensure that students have sufficient contact time to maintain skills developed in junior cycle, and for those who have not previously studied Art to develop the basic skills necessary to access the subject in senior cycle.
- A range of opportunities is provided for students to access Art beyond the curriculum including competitions, exhibitions and trips. It is highly commendable that the art department has developed an in-school Arts Council to promote student leadership through Art in the school. The Arts Council meets to organise exhibitions and Arts Week, and collaborates with the student council to raise awareness of school issues, and events such as Diversity Week.
- Three specialist rooms are very well equipped catering for all disciplines of art, craft and design, including two functioning kilns. It is recommended that the health and safety statement, which includes a risk assessment of specialist equipment, be updated to include student access the kilns.
- All art teachers have engage in regular continuing professional development and have identified needs for future training. It is excellent practice that teachers within the department share their expertise, and partake in peer-training.

3. PLANNING AND PREPARATION

- Overall, the quality of planning for Art is very good. The art department has collaborated to prepare a comprehensive subject plan that includes an overview of curricular content for each programme.
- Teachers have prepared detailed individual schemes of work, based on the overall subject department plan with schedules for delivery of the course content. This very good work should be further enhanced to include learning intentions for each scheme, and specifying modes of assessment for these.
- The art department meets regularly and minutes of these meetings indicate that teaching and learning are discussed.
- The role of subject co-ordinator for Art forms part of the school's middle-management post structure. Further leadership opportunities for art teachers could be developed by creating and rotating such roles as subject meeting convener.

The draft findings and recommendations arising out of this evaluation were discussed with the principal, deputy principals and subject teachers at the conclusion of the evaluation.

The board of management of the school was given an opportunity to comment on the findings and recommendations of the report; the board chose to accept the report without response.

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;