

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

**Subject Inspection in French**

**REPORT**

<b>Ainm na scoile / School name</b>	Carrigaline Community School
<b>Seoladh na scoile / School address</b>	Waterpark Carrigaline Co Cork
<b>Uimhir rolla / Roll number</b>	91388S

**Date of Inspection: 20-10-2017**



### **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 French 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.

## SUBJECT INSPECTION

### INSPECTION ACTIVITIES

<b>Dates of inspection</b>	19-10-2017 and 20-10-2017
<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 8 class periods</li><li>• Examination of students' work</li><li>• Feedback to principal and relevant staff</li></ul>

### School context

Carrigaline Community School is a co-educational school operating under the joint trusteeship of Cork Education and Training Board (CETB) and the Diocese of Cork and Ross. It has a current enrolment of 1,153 students. It offers a broad curriculum including the Junior Certificate, an optional Transition Year (TY) programme, the Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme (LCVP) and the Leaving Certificate Applied (LCA). A dedicated unit provides tuition for students with autistic spectrum disorders.

### SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

#### Findings

- The quality of teaching observed was generally very good with some examples of excellent practice and some of practice with scope for development.
- Good quality learner experiences are enabled in a supportive and inclusive classroom environment and levels of achievement are generally very commendable, with some scope to further raise levels of achievement at the upper levels of higher level Junior Certificate.
- Assessment practices are commendable and are evolving in line with evolving curricular requirements.
- The French department is highly collaborative and works reflectively and proactively to enhance and develop provision.
- Subject provision and whole-school support is of a very high standard with some notably excellent aspects of practice.
- Very effective planning systems and structures have been established in the department; these should now support adaptations of planning for teaching and learning in the context of the introduction of the junior cycle specification for Modern Foreign Languages.

#### Recommendations

- Departmental collaboration should focus on the identification, embedding and evaluation of some specific teaching strategies which could support the raising further of student performance at the upper levels of higher level Junior Certificate.
- The French department should use its very effective collaboration to consider planning and practice in order to maximise the opportunities for the teaching and learning of French as offered by the introduction of the junior cycle specification for Modern Foreign Languages.

## DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 1. TEACHING, LEARNING, AND ASSESSMENT

- The quality of teaching in lessons observed was generally very commendable with some examples of excellent practice and some of practice with scope for development.
- Clear evidence of subject and pedagogical knowledge was demonstrated, as was a professional openness to the development and enhancement of practice.
- Lessons generally had been thoroughly and thoughtfully prepared in line with documented subject planning. Appropriately, attention was paid to both the development of language and cultural awareness. Lessons which had been explicitly planned so as to move beyond the confines of any one textbook were more engaging for students. It was very positive to see a TY lesson focused on the reading of a literary text which both engaged and challenged the students. The decision to take a modular approach to the TY programme has facilitated this approach.
- There was very good teacher use of the target language with some excellent examples of this. Best practice was observed where the target language was also used for classroom communication and where explanations were given in the target language thus avoiding any undue recourse to translation.
- Due attention was paid to the development of the various language skills. It was advised that a key emphasis be put on support for student acquisition of linguistic structures. To this end, greater use could be made of auditory material, especially in the earlier years of language learning. Feedback to teachers allowed discussion of how best to approach listening and reading comprehension exercises so as to develop student skill in these areas. The merits of oral collaborative composition, so as to draw from students and support written production, were also discussed.
- Teaching strategies employed included the use of whole-class approaches, group work, pair work, and student preparation of a poster to demonstrate learning. The introduction of the new junior cycle specification for Modern Foreign Languages, with its focus on linguistic learning outcomes, should encourage further student oral participation and provide further opportunities for the use of role play. However, it is always important to demonstrate a good clear example of a role play or a pair work exercise before asking students to replicate.
- Students were fully and whole-heartedly engaged in many of the lessons observed. The quality of teacher-student rapport contributed much to the level of engagement.
- Very effective practice was noted where student learning was skilfully scaffolded and reinforced and where attention to differentiation supported all students to achieve in an inclusive classroom context. Many students demonstrated very good recall. Best practice was observed where students were being encouraged to develop good organisational skills and good language learning habits such as note-making and dictionary use.
- Assessment practices are commendable and are evolving in line with subject development. Developments include the introduction of an element of oral assessment in first year and the use of an e-portfolio.
- School management and the French department monitor outcomes for students. Outcomes are commendable and, very positively, departmental reflection has identified the need to

focus on strategies to further raise the levels of student performance at the upper levels of higher level Junior Certificate.

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

- Subject provision and whole-school support is of a very high quality with some exemplary aspects of practice.
- Access to the subject is very good; all first year students take both French and German. Second year students may continue to study one, or both, languages. Timetabling is as supportive as possible, as instanced by parallel timetabling in TY which has allowed a modular approach. When, and if possible, it would be advisable to see if timetabling at sixth-year level could facilitate the creation of separate ordinary and higher level groups.
- Most of the French teachers are classroom based and this has allowed the creation of some really effective language learning environments.
- The French department is commended for the organisation of activities such as French club and, in particular, for the personal and professional investment in a long-established exchange programme with Lycée Saint Martin in Rennes.
- Participation in teacher professional development is promoted. In this context, opportunities such as the Summer Scholarship in France scheme and the Teacher Professional Visits scheme should be considered, as should the possibility of making an application for the services of a French language assistant.

## **3. PLANNING AND PREPARATION**

- High quality planning systems and structures have been put in place and subject plans and schemes of work have been devised.
- A highly collaborative subject department meets regularly and records of meetings are retained.
- Coordination rotates and is taken seriously. Currently, the department, led by its coordinator, is focusing on the introduction of the use of a Virtual Learning Environment (VLE).
- An opportunity now exists for the department to consider, and to focus on, how planning for junior cycle will have to evolve to reflect the requirements of the new specification for Modern Foreign Languages.

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 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 of quality 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;

# **Appendix**

**SCHOOL RESPONSE TO THE REPORT**

**Submitted by the Board of Management**

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

The Board of Management of Carrigaline Community School wishes to acknowledge the high quality of teaching observed in a supportive, inclusive environment.

**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 French Department will

- Identify, embed & evaluate further teaching strategies in order to further raise student performance.