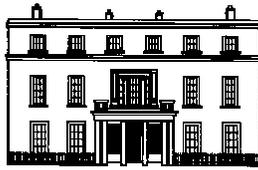


An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna
Department of Education and Skills

Subject Inspection of ART
REPORT

Meán Scoil Mhuire
Convent Road, Longford
Roll number: 63760E

Date of inspection: 23 February 2016



AN ROINN | DEPARTMENT OF
OIDEACHAIS | EDUCATION
AGUS SCILEANNA | AND SKILLS

**REPORT
ON
THE QUALITY OF LEARNING AND TEACHING IN ART**

INFORMATION ON THE INSPECTION

Dates of inspection	22 and 23 February 2016
Inspection activities undertaken <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review of relevant documents• Discussion with principal and teachers• 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 teachers

MAIN FINDINGS

- The overall quality of teaching and learning in the lessons observed was good or very good.
- A very good rapport between students and teachers is evident in the art lessons and students are positively engaged and appropriately challenged by the lesson content.
- Clear learning intentions were shared at the outset of all lessons and achievement of the learning intentions was evaluated in some lessons.
- A very good range of effective and appropriate methodologies is used to teach the subject, and there are good links between Art History and practical Art.
- Timetabling of Art for Transition Year (TY) and senior cycle students is good but there is scope for improvement in the timetabling of the subject in junior cycle.
- A good plan is in place for the art department and the teachers keep records of regular meetings.

MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS

- Assessment for learning strategies should be further developed to evaluate the achievement of the learning intentions and to consolidate learning in all lessons.
 - Timetabling of Art for first-year students should be reviewed.
 - Lesson schemes should be further developed to include differentiated teaching methodologies and assessment strategies.
 - Subject department meetings should focus on collaborative planning with teaching and learning on the agenda.
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INTRODUCTION

Meán Scoil Mhuire is a secondary school in Longford town with a current enrolment of 585 girls, and operates under the auspices of CEIST. The curricular programmes provided include the Junior Certificate, a compulsory TY, the established Leaving Certificate and the Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

- The overall quality of teaching and learning was good or very good in the lessons observed.
- Clear learning intentions were shared at the outset of all lessons and very good continuity with prior learning was noted. Strategies should be explored to establish student's achievement of these learning intentions in class, and time should be allowed at the completion of all lessons to consolidate learning.
- Lessons were well-prepared and well-paced, and lesson content was pertinent to the group being taught.
- During art history lessons a very good variety of teaching methodologies was observed. Most notable of these was in a lesson where practical activities were used to enhance the learning of christian metalworking techniques.
- Art teachers have high expectations of their students, and the majority of students were appropriately challenged. However, differentiated teaching methodologies could be developed further in some art lessons.
- Teachers were mobile throughout all lessons and interacted well with students. Students were positively engaged with their work and a very good rapport was evident between teachers and students.
- A good range of scaffolded and higher-order questions was used in art history lessons. Students who answered questions displayed a good understanding of the topics, and demonstrated an ability to apply their learning. Strategies should be devised to encourage more active involvement in class discussion.
- Good use of primary sources as inspiration for project work was seen in some practical lessons and in student folders, including work from photographs taken by students. This should be further developed for all project work and the use of secondary sources, particularly those deriving from the internet, should be discouraged.
- Independent learning opportunities were offered to students in lessons where they had the autonomy to experiment, imagine and choose the direction of their work from a given starting point. Opportunities for independent and active learning should be developed across the department, particularly in art history where it was less evident.
- Peer collaboration was a notable feature in one lesson where students shared advice and affirmative comments with one another. This is very good practice.
- Both art-rooms are attractive and stimulating environments that enhance the learning of Art. A review of the seating arrangement should be considered where practicable, to further enhance the excellent peer collaboration and the group work observed.
- Very good formative feedback with clear instructions for improvement was noted in art history copybooks and this excellent practice should also be used for practical work.

- Very good use is made of subject specific language in written work and art terminology is on display in both art rooms. Further use of the oral language of Art by students should be encouraged in all lessons.

SUBJECT PROVISION AND WHOLE SCHOOL SUPPORT

- Timetabling for Art in senior cycle is good as students have five periods per week including a double period. Art is compulsory for TY students and the provision of time is good.
- In junior cycle four periods per week are provided for second and third-year students which is adequate. The single period offered to first year students as part of the full year taster programme should be reviewed as more contact time would be appropriate to engage and develop the necessary skills to deepen their knowledge of the course content.
- Art is offered on an optional basis for junior and senior cycle and option bands are generated on the basis of student choice and subject teacher availability. This is good practice.
- Uptake of Art for junior cycle is good but strategies should be devised to increase uptake at senior cycle.
- Extra-curricular and co-curricular provision of Art in the school is good. Co-curricular art initiatives have been developed including links with local artists. Students are supported in accessing the study of Art at third level and portfolio preparation classes are provided on an extra-curricular basis.
- Two specialist art rooms exist and the art department has made very good use of the space available. The department is well resourced with a good range of materials and equipment.
- A designated display board has been provided by management for the exhibition of artwork in the senior school. Similar displays of work should be established throughout the school where practicable, where students' work can be appreciated by a wider audience.

PLANNING AND PREPARATION

- There was evidence of very good preparation in the delivery of lessons observed, and teachers have prepared an excellent bank of visual resources to enhance learning.
- Some very good individual long-term planning documents were observed in the department plan. The overall aims and objectives for Art were also noted. The art department should further develop, share and document the most effective methodologies used to support students, particularly those with additional learning and language needs.
- Differentiated teaching methodologies and assessment strategies should be specified in all schemes for Art and should be devised with the needs of each class group in mind. A review section should be added to reflect on the effectiveness of the planned learning outcomes.
- A subject coordinator is in place and subject department meetings take place regularly, for which minutes are recorded. The agenda for these meetings should be reviewed to

prioritise discussion and sharing of teaching and learning methodologies, and assessment practices.

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 accepts the report as the final inspection report available for publication and does not wish to respond formally to the report.