An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna

Department of Education and Skills

Subject Inspection of Music
REPORT

Coláiste Eoin
Stillorgan, County Dublin
Roll number: 60041D

Date of inspection: 23 November 2011
REPORT
ON
THE QUALITY OF LEARNING AND TEACHING IN MUSIC

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INFORMATION ON THE INSPECTION

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MAIN FINDINGS

- In the lessons observed, the quality of teaching ranged from very good to quite good.
- Practical music-making activities were successfully integrated into lessons to reinforce theoretical concepts or as a stand-alone activity.
- In most lessons, care was taken to involve as many students as possible during question and answer sessions.
- Overall, classroom management and student discipline were handled effectively.
- While the school is very supportive of teachers engaging in continuing professional development (CPD), the music department has yet to avail of this opportunity.
- While planning and preparation for Music is very good. However, the plan does not accurately reflect the good practices observed.

MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS

- To ensure that the ongoing assessment of student learning is effective, all learners should be encouraged to participate in question and answer sessions.
- Music teachers should engage with CPD activities, where feasible.
INTRODUCTION

Coláiste Eoin is an Irish-medium school, situated in Stillorgan and catering for 477 boys. The school offers Music as an optional subject within the Junior Certificate and the Leaving Certificate programmes. It is also a mandatory component of the Transition Year (TY) programme. Senior cycle students from Coláiste Iosagáin attend lessons with students from Coláiste Eoin for many subjects including Music.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

• The quality of teaching in the lessons observed ranged from very good to quite good. In some lessons, a greater range of teaching methodologies was used which catered for the different learning needs of students.

• In most lessons, good routines were established from the outset which included monitoring attendance. This practice should be consistently implemented in all lessons.

• Practical music-making activities were successfully integrated into lessons to reinforce theoretical concepts or as a stand-alone activity.

• In every case, lessons were purposeful, logical, sequential and in most cases, suitably paced. Where appropriate, good links were made to previous lessons. However, it is important that students are always made aware of the learning intention from the outset. This should also be revisited at the end so that it is clear to students what is expected of them.

• A wide range of questioning strategies was used in the classes observed. These were particularly effective when students were required to think analytically for themselves and apply their knowledge in a meaningful way.

• In most lessons, care was taken to involve as many students as possible in responding to questions. In all lessons, to ensure that the ongoing assessment of student learning is effective, all learners should be encouraged to participate in question and answer sessions.

• Information and communication technology (ICT) was used to good effect in illustrating the story behind a song or to provide students with a visual and aural experience of a piece of music.

• In all classrooms visited, the quality of learning displayed by students was very good and students rose very well to all challenges posed by teachers

• Students are consistently being encouraged to develop their musical vocabulary and literacy skills which is very good practice.

• Overall, classroom management and student discipline were handled effectively. Teachers had established a mutually respectful rapport with their students who were engaged and motivated in all activities.

• Good efforts have been made to acquire or create posters containing illustrations of various music concepts. However, there is scope to increase the range of such materials in order to further enhance the learning environment appropriate to this subject.

• Assessment of students’ work varied in the lessons observed. Some written work, such as composing assignments, is appropriately marked and annotated. This good practice should now be applied to students’ notebooks and workbooks.
- Music teachers are acquiring or developing resources for students but no system has yet been established for them to store these materials appropriately. This should be addressed.

**SUBJECT PROVISION AND WHOLE SCHOOL SUPPORT**
- Music was introduced to this school in 2005 and is very well supported by senior management. There is a strong commitment to the further development of the subject.
- Timetabling of Music is in line with syllabus recommendations.
- The systems in place for students selecting their optional subjects are appropriate and option bands are created around their choices.
- There is a very healthy uptake of Music in all year groups.
- The resources and facilities for music are very good.
- Music technology is available to students as an option for the practical component of certificate examinations.
- Recently, staffing has increased in the music department from one teacher to two. Both teachers are very experienced. This increase in staffing is an indication of the high profile which Music now has in the school. However, notwithstanding the evidence of good quality teaching in the department overall, school management has an obligation to ensure that all staff have appropriate teaching qualifications.
- The school is very supportive of teachers engaging in continuing professional development (CPD). However, the music department has yet to avail of in-service opportunities provided by the Professional Development Service for Teachers (PDST) or conferences hosted by the Post-Primary Music Teachers’ Association (PPMTA). Music teachers should avail of all such opportunities.
- Commendably, students are afforded the opportunity to participate in a range of music activities including orchestra and choir, participation in the annual TY musical production and school concerts.

**PLANNING AND PREPARATION**
- Management is supportive of collaborative planning and schedules formal meeting times for all subject departments, including Music.
- It is evident that this music department is working very well and that members collaborate on both curricular and extra-curricular activities. Commendably, the music department in Coláiste Eoin regularly work in partnership with the music department in Coláiste Iosagáin.
- The quality of planning for lessons is very good.
- A detailed subject department plan has been developed which includes a broad outline of programme content for each year group. This plan could be developed further by documenting methodologies and assessment strategies being used by individual teachers in the delivery of topics.
• Consideration needs to be given to how music teachers plan to cater for the literacy and numeracy needs of students. This should form part of whole-school planning so that the plan reflects some of the practice already in place.

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.

*Published November 2012.*
Appendix

School response to the report

Submitted by the Board of Management

Area 1: Observations on the content of the inspection report

Glacann Bord Bainistíochta Choláiste Eoin agus múinteoirí Ceoil an Choláiste leis an Tuairisc le hAghaidh Freagra Scoile maidir leis an gCigireacht Ábhair ar Cheol a déanadh i gColáiste Eoin ar 23 Samhain 2011.

Gabhaimid buíochas leis an gCigire Ábhair as an slí profisiúnta inar cuireadh an chigireacht i bhfeidhm agus as na moltaí agus an chomhairle a chuir an Cigire Ábhair ar fáil le linn na cigireachta agus sa tuairisc a eisíodh ina diaidh.

Tá an Bord Bainistíochta bródúil as obair na Roinne Ceoil sa Choláiste agus as an dul chun cinn atá déanta ag an ábhar ó bunaiodh mar ábhar ar churaclam an Choláiste sa bhliain 2005 é.

Is mian linn tagairt ghairid a dhéanamh do na moltaí a déanadh agus do na céimeanna a tógadh chun na moltaí sin a chur i bhfeidhm.

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

1. Níl ach múinteoir le cáilíocht chuí san ábhar ag múineadh an Cheoil i gColáiste Eoin anois.

2. Tá ballráíocht bainte amach ag an múinteoir Ceoil i gCumann na Múinteoirí Ceoil. Tá sí tar éis freastal ar Chomhdháil na Múinteoirí Ceoil agus beidh sí ag baint úsáide as an tSeirbhís Forbartha Profisiúnta do Mhúinteoirí.

3. Cuirfear mianta na Stráitéis Forbartha Litearthacha agus Uimheartha i bhfeidhm i bpleanáil ábhair don Cheol.

4. Aithníonn an Coláiste an easpa spáis stórála d’acmhainní Ceoil atá ann faoi láthair. Tá srian ar chumas an Choláiste móran spáis a chur ar fáil de bharr aois an fhóignimh agus an easpa spáis atá sa bhfoirgnimh i gcóitinne. Tá sé i gceist, áfach, céimeanna a chur i bhfeidhm chun seomra teagasc níos mó a chur ar fáil don ábhar sa chéad scoilbhliain eile.