

An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna
Department of Education and Skills

Subject Inspection of Art
REPORT

Holy Faith Secondary School
Clontarf, County Dublin
Roll number: 60750J

Date of inspection: 14 April 2011



A N R O I N N | D E P A R T M E N T O F
O I D E A C H A I S | E D U C A T I O N
A G U S S C I L E A N N A | A N D S K I L L S

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

INFORMATION ON THE INSPECTION

Date of inspection	14 April 2011
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 six class periods• Examination of students' work• Feedback to principal and teachers

MAIN FINDINGS

- The organisation and management of teaching and learning in Art is extremely well supported by school management.
- Planning is well organised and managed, and is effectively implemented and carefully evaluated with a clear focus on the needs of the learner. A good balance between subject development planning and curricular planning is achieved.
- In lessons observed, the quality of teaching and learning was of a very high standard. Students achieve a good level of proficiency in a wide range of crafts and disciplines. In the main, students' attitude towards the subject was positive and enthusiastic.
- The art department is very highly regarded in the school and its work makes an important contribution to the daily life of the school.
- The art teachers have made optimal use of the spaces to create a bright, inviting and stimulating learning environment for students.

MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS

- It is recommended that the appreciation of contemporary art be introduced to students in the Transition Year (TY) programme.
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INTRODUCTION

Holy Faith Secondary School in Clontarf is a voluntary post-primary school with an enrolment of 616 female students. The school offers the Junior Certificate programme, a compulsory TY programme, the Leaving Certificate programme and the Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme. Art is compulsory in year one of junior cycle and in TY. In every other instance, it is optional.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

- The quality of teaching and learning observed during the evaluation was of a very high standard.
- Advance planning for lessons was of a high quality and the strategies used by teachers in the lessons observed were effective in facilitating students' learning. Appropriate primary sources were provided and students were taught good research skills.
- The lessons observed were well structured. Class routines such as roll call were carried out. Teacher instruction and demonstrations identified stages in lessons. Students' progress was reviewed at the end of lessons to ensure a firm foundation for the further development of skills.
- Teachers communicated very effectively in all of the lessons observed. Good use of well formed learning outcomes helped students to focus. Teacher exposition was very clear. Subject specific terminology was carefully used so that students understood it and observed how it could be used.
- High quality notes were prepared for students which included a written description of the given brief. The well prepared visual aids were used to illustrate tasks and concepts which significantly helped to develop students' understanding of the material being addressed.
- The quality of students' work was very good in all of the lessons observed. The students' work on display showed a high level of skill and development. Students are achieving a very good level of proficiency in a wide range of crafts and disciplines. Their notebooks showed good progress in relation to the history and appreciation of art.
- Some students in all of the lessons observed felt sufficiently confident to ask challenging questions during lessons. It is positive to note that they used correct terminology to describe their observations. In discussions, students were knowledgeable about art elements and had a good appreciation of art history relative to their developmental stages.
- The atmosphere during lessons was conducive to learning. Students' behaviour was exemplary and in the main, students were enthusiastic about the subject. The rapport between teacher and students was very good.
- The management of lessons was very good. Students were carefully monitored at all times and students' progress was supported effectively with due regard for independent learning where possible.
- Opportunities are provided for students to identify relevant criteria for evaluating their own work and to reflect on their strengths and weaknesses in the subject. Schemes with success criteria are used for summative assessment and formative comments are also used. These strategies represent very good assessment practices.

- The completed homework observed during the evaluation was of a high standard.

SUBJECT PROVISION AND WHOLE SCHOOL SUPPORT

- The art department is very highly regarded in the school and the work of the department makes an important contribution to the daily life of the school.
- Curricular provision for Art is very good. Good timetabling arrangements support the theoretical and practical aspects of the subject. The optional subject choice system for students in the junior and senior cycles is good and appropriately student centred.
- In addition to classroom learning, students are provided with a very rich programme of extracurricular and co-curricular activities. These enrich students' subject experience and may be a contributory factor in the high numbers of students choosing to study art at third level.
- Facilities are good. Two dedicated art rooms with storage space, a wide range of teaching resources, material and equipment, including information and communication technology equipment, ensure that students of Art are provided with very good support for learning. Currently, there are plans in place to install interactive white boards in the art rooms and this will enhance facilities further.

PLANNING AND PREPARATION

- Shared responsibility for department planning and regular meetings support good collaboration in the art department. The plans presented were based on sound art education principles and represented very good approaches to the implementation of the syllabuses. It is good to note that the plans were sufficiently detailed to form very effective direction for teaching and learning in lessons.
- The plans for lessons include opportunities for students to explore a comprehensive range of crafts, disciplines and topics. This represents a positive approach to developing learning experiences for students.
- Teachers have collected and generated a substantial and high quality collection of resource material for lessons.
- The art teachers have made optimal use of the spaces to develop a bright, inviting and stimulating learning environment for students. The quality of the students' work and the teacher-generated exemplars on show deserve praise. The quality of presentation was very good and supported students' confidence in their accomplishments.
- The art department development plan has identified a number of strategies to enhance the provision of Art in the school. These strategies have been well considered and provide a very good map for development.
- Planning for TY is good. A good balance between students' practical art work and art history is achieved. Students' personal interests are also nurtured. It is recommended that some form of contemporary art practice, such as film or installation, be introduced as part of the programme in order to equip students with the skills required to appreciate contemporary art.
- Good arrangements are in place to record and report upon students' progress.

- A programme of homework is prepared for each group of students. This is very good planning
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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.

Appendix

SCHOOL RESPONSE TO THE REPORT

Submitted by the Board of Management

Area 1: Observations on the content of the inspection report

The Board was very pleased with the highly positive inspection report which acknowledges the role of teachers and management in the teaching and learning of Art in the school. The board congratulates the teachers on this excellent report and wishes to thank the inspector for the courtesy shown to all members of the school community.

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 Board will continue to support and promote the teaching and learning of Art throughout the school and will assist in the implementation of the report's recommendation.

Since the inspection an interactive whiteboard has been installed in each of the two art rooms and appreciation of contemporary art has been introduced into the Transition Year programme