

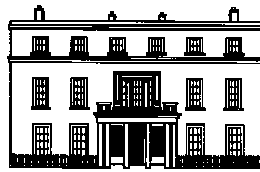
An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna

**Subject Inspection of Irish
REPORT**

**Coláiste Pobail, Baile Lotrail /
Luttrellstown Community College
Blanchardstown, Dublin 15**

Roll number: 76130P

Date of inspection: 25 January 2013



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

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

INFORMATION ON THE INSPECTION

Dates of inspection	23 and 25 January 2013
Inspection activities undertaken <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review of relevant documentation• Pre-evaluation meeting with the principal and teachers of Irish• Observation of teaching and learning during five class periods	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Interaction with students• Examination of samples of students' work and journals• Feedback to individual teachers• Feedback to principal and teachers

MAIN FINDINGS

- The quality of teaching was good in almost every lesson observed and very good in a particular instance. The quality of learning in Irish was good in certain cases and individual students in both junior and senior cycles demonstrated a high level of proficiency in the language.
- Teachers had high expectations of student learning.
- Homework is assigned and students' written work is corrected regularly.
- Irish enjoys a very high status in the school.
- High levels of cooperation and collaborative planning among teachers were evident. Schemes of work and assessment practices were of a very good quality.

MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS

- It is recommended that at appropriate stages during lessons and again at the end of the lesson teachers refer to the learning objectives set out at the beginning of the lesson.
 - It is recommended that the good practices identified in this report, for example differentiated learning should be extended in order to support, in certain cases particularly, the development of, students' oral proficiency in Irish.
 - The development of monitoring and review practices as part of the planning process within the department is recommended.
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INTRODUCTION

Coláiste Pobail, Baile Lotrail / Luttrellstown Community College is a coeducational post-primary school established in 2009 and operates under the patronage of the County Dublin Vocational Education Committee (VEC). At the time of the evaluation visit a total of 314 students were enrolled. As this was the first year for the school to have a senior cycle it was decided to offer the Transition Year (TY) as a mandatory programme in the school year 2012-2013.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

- The quality of teaching was good in almost every lesson observed and very good in a particular case. The quality of learning in Irish was good in certain lessons and individual students in both junior and senior cycles demonstrated a high level of proficiency in the language.
- Teachers have high expectations of student learning and only a small number of students undertake foundation level Irish.
- The learning objectives were shared with students at the beginning of all lessons. In certain cases, however, the objectives were too general. It is recommended that learning objectives are linked more closely with the next stage in the learning to be achieved rather than, as was observed in some lessons, stating the general title of a topic. It is recommended that at appropriate stages during every lesson and again at the end of the lesson teachers refer to the learning objectives set out.
- Work was well structured and the pace of lessons was appropriate in almost all lessons.
- Very good use was made of resources including information and communications technology in all lessons.
- While worthwhile efforts were made to support students' active participation by means of using interesting materials; stimulating their imagination; questioning and setting tasks based on pair or group work, teacher input was excessive in certain cases.
- In most cases pair and group work tasks were effectively organised. In some instances however the role of each student in the groups should be clarified and explained to students before they begin the group work.
- In some lessons learning was differentiated. This good practice should be extended. It was evident that the department has carried out a thorough analysis of appropriate strategies to implement differentiation and the school has a structure which supports this practice.
- Some examples of very good use of questioning which set appropriate challenges for students were observed.
- In some classes there was excessive emphasis on translation to English to explain vocabulary to students or to check their understanding. The use of alternative strategies, more effective in supporting language acquisition, is recommended.
- It was evident that strategies have been initiated to support the integration of students' literacy skills with class work though presenting keywords, for example. Excellent practice in this regard was evident where the nominative case, singular and plural, was presented together with the genitive case.

- Homework is assigned regularly and students' written work is corrected on a regular basis.
- In a minority of cases it is recommended that it be ensured that material presented to students is accurate.
- The good practice of assessing the main language skills in every year group is implemented in the Irish department.
- Good practices operate in the school in relation to assessment, including analysis of student achievement. There is scope to set out the homework and assessment policies more clearly and to define the responsibilities of the various partners with regard to these policies.

SUBJECT PROVISION AND WHOLE SCHOOL SUPPORT

- Irish enjoys very high status in the school and a whole school approach to promoting the use of the language is evident, even outside formal Irish classes.
- A wide range of co-curricular and extracurricular activities is provided to support the learning of Irish. Special commendation is due to the school for their participation in debating competitions.
- Timetabled provision for Irish in the school is very good.
- An exemption from studying Irish is awarded to approximately twenty percent of the total student population and the majority of these students have come from outside the state. In so far as is possible English as an additional language or other educational support provision is offered to these students when Irish classes are timetabled.
- The oral proficiency level of teachers in Irish was satisfactory for teaching the subject. The majority of teachers have Irish at degree level.
- The school supports staff participation in professional development activities. Members of the Irish department participate in the *TL21* research and development project with the VEC and NUI Maynooth.
- It is to be commended that practices which encourage collaborative professional review are established in the school and it is recommended that the Irish department renews its involvement in this practice.

PLANNING AND PREPARATION

- The Irish department is formally established.
- A very high level of cooperation and collaborative planning was evident among teachers and discussion of their classroom practice is approached in an open and embracing manner.
- The inclusion of teaching and learning matters on the agenda of department meetings is recommended.
- Schemes of work set out for Irish are of a very good quality and it is evident that development of students' literacy and numeracy skills is linked to the subject content.

- In order to assist the Irish department to set down baseline data, it is recommended that a specific module is developed for first term of first year and results of assessments of learning carried out during that period are used to guide planning for ensuing stages in learning.
- The schemes are working documents and therefore it is recommended that space be provided within the schemes to include monitoring and review activities and that any necessary changes are noted in the schemes.

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; a response was not received from the board

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