

**An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna**

**Subject Inspection of Civic, Social,  
and Political Education**

**REPORT**

**Gael-Choláiste Chill Dara,  
Naas, County Kildare  
Roll number: 68072I**

**Date of inspection: 3 December 2013**



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

**REPORT  
ON  
THE QUALITY OF LEARNING AND TEACHING IN  
CIVIC, SOCIAL AND POLITICAL EDUCATION (CSPE)**

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**INFORMATION ON THE INSPECTION**

<b>Dates of inspection</b>	2 & 3 December 2013
<b>Inspection activities undertaken</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Review of relevant documents</li><li>• Discussion with the principal and the teacher</li><li>• Interaction with students</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Observation of teaching and learning during two class-periods</li><li>• Examination of students' work</li><li>• Feedback to the principal and the teacher</li></ul>

**MAIN FINDINGS**

- The standard of teaching and learning in the classes observed was excellent.
- A very effective emphasis on active learning was evident in the lessons and there was a high level of student participation.
- There is very good provision for CSPE in the school and it is obvious that the subject has a central role in the life of the school.
- Very high quality planning is done for the subject.

**MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS**

- It is recommended that, at the end of every lesson, a review of what was learned in that lesson be undertaken.
  - It is recommended that the school internet system be upgraded, that a folder for CSPE be set up on the system and that electronic resources be saved in that folder.
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## **INTRODUCTION**

Gael-Choláiste Chill Dara is a co-educational post-primary school under the trusteeship of An Foras Patrúnachta. The Junior Certificate, Transition Year and Leaving Certificate programmes are on offer in the school. There were 232 students on the roll at the time of the evaluation. All students study CSPE for the Junior Certificate.

## **TEACHING AND LEARNING**

- The standard of teaching and learning in the classes observed was excellent.
- The teacher presented the intended learning targets of the lessons clearly and every lesson had a very good structure and rhythm.
- Very good preparation was undertaken for lessons and first-class aids, such as film clips and worksheets, were used. Very good use was made of images in the lessons; for example, in one lesson, the teachers gave a copy of the symbols relating to the millennium development goals to various groups in the class, to present the topic and encourage the students to speak.
- There was a very good emphasis on active learning in the lessons, in accordance with the recommendations of the syllabus. In one lesson, for instance, students were asked to play a game of *Globingo* to illustrate the concept of interdependence. Group work and pair work were frequently used in the lessons observed.
- At the end of one lesson observed, the learning accomplished in that lesson was reviewed. This should be the norm at the end of every lesson, to consolidate the learning.
- There was a very positive atmosphere in the classroom. It was evident that the students had great respect for the teacher and that correspondingly she provided great support for the students.
- Plenty of opportunities were created for the students to speak and their participation was very good in every lesson. They reflected on the topics being discussed and were ready to share their opinions.
- When a new topic is introduced, the students write the keywords relating to that topic on a prepared sheet as the learning progresses. This practice is commended, as is the emphasis on student literacy in the lessons.
- Regarding assessment, appropriate homework is regularly set and checked. Regular common tests are conducted. The students achieve very well in the certificate examinations.
- There is a great emphasis on the action project in third year and there is a good system in operation to encourage the students to take an active and effective role in the project. It was evident that the students really enjoy learning.

## **SUBJECT PROVISION AND WHOLE-SCHOOL SUPPORT**

- There is good curriculum provision for CSPE. Every junior class has a single class-period per week as recommended in the syllabus guidelines.

- In compliance with the provisions of circular M13/05, CSPE is specifically named in the school reports and planning-time is provided for the teacher.
- There are good resources available for CSPE. The teacher has developed a good range of electronic resources. The school internet system should be upgraded, a CSPE folder set up on the system, and the resources saved in that folder.
- The CSPE teacher is fully qualified in the subject, and is keenly interested in developing the subject in the school. In addition, she has done a lot of professional development in the subject.
- CSPE has a central role in the life of the school. There are frequent references to it in the school newsletter and it is made clear that parents are welcome to participate in some of the CSPE activities.

#### **PLANNING AND PREPARATION**

- Very high quality planning for the subject was evident, with a particular emphasis on literacy and numeracy. Schemes of work have been provided for every year group and these are laid out according to the different topics. The following elements are specified for each topic: learning targets, teaching methodologies, assessment methods and teaching resources. This is all good practice.
- The subject co-ordinator has regular meetings with previous teachers of the subject, with the learning-support department, with class teachers when necessary and with the principal. The minutes of those meetings were made available and it was evident from them that first-class planning was taking place.
- The teacher keeps good records and it is clear from them that she has a very good understanding of the learners' weaknesses and strengths. There was plenty of evidence that she is a reflective practitioner and that was obvious in the lessons observed.

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The draft findings and recommendations arising out of this evaluation were discussed with the principal and the subject-teacher 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 of management and CSPE department is very happy with this report. They take each recommendation in the report on board. The school will continue to make every effort to inspire students to be confident in their own opinions and to be active as citizens in the future.

The CSPE department learned many helpful things during the inspection.

#### **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 CSPE department in the school will address all these aspects below (with help from the board of management).

- 1 A review will be conducted at the end of every lesson to consolidate learning.
- 2 The CSPE resources will be placed on the school system so they will be available to the CSPE department in the future.

*This is a translation of the school response provided by the board of management.*