

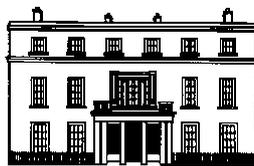
An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna

Department of Education and Skills

**Subject Inspection of Irish
REPORT**

**Collinstown Park Community College,
Clondalkin, Dublin 22
Roll number: 70041J**

Date of inspection: 17 November 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 IRISH

INFORMATION ON THE INSPECTION

Dates of inspection	11 and 17 November 2011
Inspection Activities undertaken <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review of relevant documents• Meeting with the teachers of Irish• Meeting with the principal and deputy principal• Observation of teaching and learning during six class periods	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Interaction with students• Review of samples of students' work and of their school journals• Feedback to individual teachers• Feedback to principal, deputy principal and teachers

MAIN FINDINGS

- A great variety in the quality of learning and teaching was observed, with one very good class, a number of good classes and some weak classes.
- Although there were some aspects of best practice evident in the work of all classes, the methodology was teacher-centred in most instances.
- Effective classroom management was evident and the students received great praise.
- Very good provision has been made for information and communication technology resources and some effective examples were observed of their use to benefit students' learning.
- There is satisfactory provision for Irish on the timetable.

MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS

- It is recommended that the aspects of best practice observed in the classes be shared and used by all in the department.
 - It is recommended that an action plan be set out, with strategies and target dates, so as to raise students' expectations in relation to the learning of Irish and as a support in increasing the number of students pursuing higher level.
 - It is recommended that subject plans be compiled for each term and subsequent implementation be monitored and reviewed on a regular basis.
 - It is recommended that teachers keep a more regular account of learning progression in their classes.
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INTRODUCTION

Collinstown Park Community College is a co-educational post-primary school. There are 629 second-level students on the roll. Transition (TY) is compulsory in the school. The school operates under the patronage of County Dublin Vocational Education Committee and is a participant in the Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools (DEIS) scheme.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

- A great variety in the quality of teaching and learning was observed, with one very good class, a number of good classes and some weak classes.
- Teacher-centred methodologies were to the fore in most classes. Emphasis should be placed on developing students' confidence and on enabling them to speak Irish in all classes.
- Examples of best practice were observed in all classes but these should be consolidated and developed and their use should be shared and extended across the department. For instance, independent learning skills, examples of peer learning and, as was done in over half the classes, informing the students of the learning outcomes at the outset.
- In some cases, tasks given to students for pair or group work must have a clearer structure, students' roles should be defined and explained to them, the tasks should contain an information gap, students should have the language necessary for them to do the work in Irish and, when time is up, feedback should be collected.
- In some cases, overuse was made of translation into English to ensure students understood the material. This was also evident in their copybooks.
- Some very good examples of the effective use of technology as a support for student learning were observed.
- Due care was taken to develop the students' literacy skills.
- Effective management of student behaviour was evident and the students received great praise for their efforts.
- As evidenced by a review of the participation rates of students in state examinations, teachers and senior management recognise that there is scope to raise students' expectations in relation to Irish and to increase the number of students sitting higher level in both cycles.
- Students' written work is regularly monitored. Helpful feedback should be provided about written work on a regular basis in order that students develop an understanding of their learning and of themselves as learners.
- In a few classes observed, it is recommended that care be taken to ensure the accuracy of exemplars presented to the students.
- Profiling statements regarding the Junior Certificate School Programme are fulfilled in the case of students who participate in the programme in line with their learning progress.
- Satisfactory progress is being made by Leaving Certificate Applied students in completing the key assignments.

SUBJECT PROVISION AND WHOLE SCHOOL SUPPORT

- The provision for Irish on the timetable is satisfactory as is the allocation of class periods during the week.
- A high percentage of students are exempt from studying Irish but all students are encouraged to study the language.
- Very good provision is made for information and communication technology resources in the classrooms and there is a broad range of aids available.
- As evidenced in the subject plan, management supports teacher participation in continual professional development. Moreover, management recommends that the teachers discuss and share practice as well as participation in peer observation.
- The department implements the homework and assessment policies of the school. It is recommended that it be clearly set out in the assessment policy that an assessment of the students' oral ability in Irish is part of the assessment process in the case of all year groups. In addition, the teachers should keep note of student attainment in this skill as well as in other assessments.

PLANNING AND PREPARATION

- The role of coordinator forms part of a post holder's duties.
- A high level of open cooperation was evident among the Irish teachers.
- With the exception of the material relating to the actual Irish curriculum, the rest of the Irish plan was written in English. In order to support the use of Irish among staff and for the purposes of developing the subject in general, it is recommended that suitable arrangements be made to make the other aspects of the plan available in Irish.
- The long-term plans were of a good standard. It is recommended, however, that two further headings be included on the template to support the implementation of the plans – monitoring and review.
- The plans are set out over two terms. It is recommended that they be set out over the three terms of the school year. This would form a support for combining regular monitoring and reviewing of student learning with the times in which house examinations or trial state examinations are held.
- Individual teachers should adapt their plans to suit their individual classes. Regarding learning outcomes, language should be used which will inform the students of what they will be able to do or of what they will have learned.
- The plan for TY is of a good standard but it could be more innovative. It is also recommended that more emphasis be placed on project work in Irish to afford the students the opportunity to receive recognition for their work in Irish and to develop their confidence in using the language.
- The planning and preparation of work for the individual classes was good and suitable resources and aids were chosen and prepared for use. It is recommended however that students' learning be differentiated in the material handed out during class and in the

homework assigned so as to ensure that there is an appropriate challenge in the work which they must complete.

- There was little evidence in the teachers' journals regarding attainment in any assessment tests carried out from the beginning of the current school year. It is recommended that the teachers keep a more regular record of student achievement.
- As part of subject planning, it is recommended that an action plan be set out by the department, in conjunction with management, containing strategies and target dates, so as to raise students' expectations in relation to the learning of Irish and as a support to increasing the number of students pursuing higher level.

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 considers this report to be an endorsement of teachers' hard work and commitment and commend the Gaeilge department.

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

- to enhance the current subject plan by compiling a plan for three rather than two terms
- to continue to develop strategies/ set targets in order to raise students' expectations and the uptake of higher level
- to continue to develop strategies/ set targets in relation to encouraging students oral ability
- to extend timetabled oral exams to all year groups and to record student's oral work grades within the assessment policy of the school i.e. student reports
- to continue to develop and share all aspects of best practice, noted in this report, in order to further enhance the teaching and learning of Gaeilge in the school.