

An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna

Department of Education and Skills

**Subject Inspection of Technical Graphics and Design
and Communication Graphics
REPORT**

**The King's Hospital
Palmerstown, Dublin 20
Roll number: 60272W**

Date of inspection: 14 April 2011



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

REPORT
ON
THE QUALITY OF LEARNING AND TECHNICAL GRAPHICS AND DESIGN AND
COMMUNICATION GRAPHICS

INFORMATION ON THE INSPECTION

Dates of inspection	14 th April 2011
Inspection activities undertaken <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review of relevant documents• Discussion with principal and teacher• Interaction with students	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Observation of teaching and learning during five class periods• Examination of students' work• Feedback to principal and teacher

MAIN FINDINGS

- The quality of teaching and learning in the graphics lessons observed was of a high standard.
- The positive learning environment that has been created in the graphics specialist room places a significant emphasis on affirming students' work and on promoting a suitably high standard of presentation.
- Management provides appropriate supports for the graphics subjects on the curriculum and provides a wide variety of resources that enhance the delivery of the subjects.
- The TY graphics module provides students with a diverse experience of the subject and incorporates an appropriate blend of structured activities and independent learning tasks.
- Summative assessment procedures are well developed and help to provide students with accurate records of their progress in relation to project assignments and coursework.

MAIN RECOMMENDATION

- Systems aimed at improving the levels of formative feedback should be developed to help enhance students' learning and also to further inform teaching practices.
 - The subject plan should be developed to fully represent the subject department's good practices and to provide a resource for the ongoing teaching and learning of graphics subjects in The King's Hospital.
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INTRODUCTION

The King's Hospital is a fee-paying, co-educational boarding and day school with a current enrolment of 701 students. The school offers Technical Graphics (TG) as an optional subject at junior cycle and Design and Communication Graphics (DCG) as an optional subject in its compulsory Transition Year (TY) and as an optional subject in fifth and sixth year. The board of management was given an opportunity to comment in writing on the findings and recommendations of the evaluation, and the response of the board will be found in the appendix to this report.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

- The quality of teaching and learning in the graphics lessons observed was of a high standard and was characterised by good levels of interaction, discussion and participation.
- Demonstration was the main methodology employed to teach key concepts. This was carried out on an individual or group basis and was effective in all instances.
- Students were occasionally involved in demonstrations and this helped to ensure their engagement in the learning process whilst also allowing the teacher to gauge individuals' understanding.
- Good draughting practices were modelled using the whiteboard. Important constructions were recreated or sketched in order to help students' visualise difficult concepts or designs.
- Most lessons were developed in a structured manner. This strategy was effective and enabled students to reinforce and develop prior learning sequentially.
- The levels of student participation, activity and engagement were very good in all lessons observed. Each student received appropriate individual guidance and direction from the teacher. This was achieved by good levels of teacher circulation that enabled a high degree of oral formative feedback to be administered to each student. This personalised, developmental advice and guidance is an important factor in student learning and should be further developed through the incorporation of additional written feedback on students' portfolio work.
- TY students were actively engaged in individual project based learning. This element of the module included tasks that were designed to develop students' information and communication technology (ICT), design and sketching skills. To build upon these good practices, the subject department should consider introducing a collaborative element, particularly during the design stage, which could include the development of concept maps or mood boards.
- The submission of portfolio work formed a key component in each year group's assessment procedures. This good practice helps to develop students' awareness of the importance of maintaining good quality portfolios while also providing each student with valuable reference material.
- Student behaviour was exemplary in the lessons observed. Interactions between students and the teacher were professional whilst remaining courteous and cordial.
- A number of positive summative assessment practices are utilised to inform students and parents of the levels of learning achieved. These practices include terminal and continuous assessments based upon students' coursework.

- Students' displayed a good level of knowledge when questioned by the inspector and demonstrated draughting skills appropriate to their level and abilities.
- Uptake of higher level is very good with almost all students choosing higher level examination papers. Attainment in certificate examinations is also high at both junior and senior cycle.

SUBJECT PROVISION AND WHOLE SCHOOL SUPPORT

- Graphics subjects are offered in all programmes provided for students in The King's Hospital. With the exception of first year, appropriate time is allocated to these subjects. These periods are appropriately timetabled throughout the week and are delivered in both single and double lesson periods as is good practice.
- A year-long sampling programme is currently in place in first year to help students to make more informed optional subject choices. It is important that the duration of the programme be reviewed regularly to ensure that it is fulfilling its purpose without impinging upon the time required for the appropriate delivery of the Junior Certificate programme of subjects.
- Uptake of graphics subjects is good. The subjects are also popular among girls, particularly at junior cycle, with a large number choosing the subjects. The sampling procedures in first year and TY combined with the innovative approach to developing students' skills in graphic communication are all contributory factors to the development of this most welcome trend.
- An interesting and diverse module is planned for DCG in the TY programme. This planned module demonstrates the subject department's commitment to providing an interesting DCG module that will provide students new to the subject with a sound understanding of the fundamentals while also providing students who have studied TG with scope for independent and design based learning.
- The school's graphics room is very well maintained and resourced. The graphics room provides teachers and students with an environment that not only supports teaching and learning but also fosters creativity. This print and graphic rich environment encourages students to create graphic designs worthy of display. The colourful logograms created by junior cycle students are a good example of how exhibiting high quality examples of student coursework can raise the overall quality of work produced.

PLANNING AND PREPARATION

- This single teacher subject department has made many efforts to develop subject planning. The ongoing planning collaboration with the school's Art department will help to encourage collaboration in cross-curricular areas such as the pedagogy associated with sketching, rendering and topography.
- The subject plan shows evidence of ongoing planning, yet the practice observed was far more diverse than the plan would suggest. To help ensure ongoing delivery of a good quality graphics programme, efforts should be made to include in the plan all of the successful strategies and practices that have been developed over time. In doing so, the long-term success of the subjects in the school will be guaranteed.

- The reflective practices that occur following the first year and TY sampling programmes are commended. By surveying students in this manner the subject department gains an insight into the elements of each programme that are working well or indeed, those that may need to be improved.
- Individual planning and preparation for lessons observed was very good. Resources, teaching aids and ICT were prepared in advance of lessons and incorporated in an opportune manner to enhance both teaching and learning.

The draft findings and recommendations arising out of this evaluation were discussed with the principal and subject teacher at the conclusion of the evaluation.

Published November 2011

Appendix

School response to the report

Submitted by the Board of Management

Area 1: Observations on the content of the inspection report

The King's Hospital is a fee-paying school because the Church of Ireland ethos caters for the needs of the minority Protestant population for whom boarding is the only option to be educated within an educational ethos of choice.

These needs cannot presently be financed within the Free Education Scheme.