

An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna

Department of Education and Skills

**Subject Inspection of Music
REPORT**

**Holy Faith Secondary School
Clontarf, Dublin 3
Roll number: 60750J**

Date of inspection: 24 September 2014



**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 MUSIC

INFORMATION ON THE INSPECTION

Date of inspection	29 September 2014
Inspection activities undertaken <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review of relevant documents• Discussion with principal and the teacher• Interaction with students	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Observation of teaching and learning in two single and one double class periods• Examination of students' work• Feedback to principal, deputy principal and the teacher

MAIN FINDINGS

- The quality of teaching and learning was very good in the lessons observed.
- Lessons were well managed and students were purposefully engaged in a variety of learning activities.
- Practical music making activities occurred in all lessons and good use was made of information and communication technology (ICT).
- During lessons, good use was made of assessment strategies which allowed students to demonstrate and reinforce their learning.
- Whole-school support for the provision of Music is very good in terms of timetabling arrangements and the resources and facilities available.
- Subject planning is well established and the music plan captures to some degree the manner in which Music is taught in lessons.

MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS

- In order to further enhance the good assessment practices in place, music students should be required to store all resources and materials in folders which should be monitored regularly.
 - There is further scope to develop the music plan so that it fully captures all of the commendable practices in evidence in lessons.
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INTRODUCTION

Holy Faith Secondary School, Clontarf is a voluntary secondary school for girls with a current enrolment of 650. The school offers the Junior Certificate programme, the Leaving Certificate programme, the Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme and a compulsory Transition Year (TY) programme.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

- The quality of teaching and learning was very good in the lessons observed. All lessons were characterised by a warm classroom atmosphere with very good interpersonal relationships between teacher and students.
- Good planning and preparation was evident in the variety of teaching resources used and in the structure and sequence of the lessons.
- Lessons were well managed and conducted at an appropriate pace. Students were engaged in a variety of learning activities which ensured they were actively involved in lessons. Collaborative strategies such as pair work and group work were used to very good effect.
- The aim and learning intention were communicated to students at the start of lessons and revisited both during and at the end. This very good strategy helped to ensure that learning was consolidated in the lessons visited. It also helped to make it clear to students what they were being asked to do and why.
- There was a very good level of practical music-making activities in lessons. This meant that listening and composing activities were rooted in performing.
- Good attention was given to developing students' literacy skills, particularly with respect to the use of music terminology. Students' knowledge and understanding was appropriately linked to the music activities conducted in lessons.
- Good use was made of ICT to support learning.
- Very good use was made of investigative higher-order questions which encouraged students to reflect and respond critically and analytically. This promoted deeper understanding of music concepts.
- Homework was assigned in all lessons and some good practice was evident in the use of formative feedback in the correction of written work. To enhance this good work, music students should now be required to store all materials and resources in folders which should be monitored regularly.

SUBJECT PROVISION AND WHOLE SCHOOL SUPPORT

- Whole-school support for the provision of Music is very good. Music is mandatory for all students in first year and optional thereafter. There is very good uptake of Music in both junior and senior cycle.
- Timetabling for Music is in line with syllabus guidelines. The school has very good resources and facilities for the teaching of Music
- The music department comprises one teacher. Participation in external conferences hosted by the Post-Primary Music Teachers' Association is ongoing by this teacher and

such commitment to continuing professional development is very good. The school has also provided whole-staff training on issues such as the use of assessment for learning strategies and literacy and numeracy across the curriculum.

- The music department provides a variety of choral activities for students. For instance, the school participates in the Emmanuel Programme. Students can also participate in the school choir which performs in liturgical ceremonies. Good links have been established with the local community where the choir has also performed on occasion. The involvement of the music teacher in these and other activities is commended.

PLANNING AND PREPARATION

- Subject department planning is well established and time is made available for all subject departments to meet. The music teacher is also a member of the science department and uses planning time to meet with colleagues.
- The subject plan provides much information including an overview of how Music is provided for. Commendably, the TY programme is designed so that students experience an integrated approach to Music.
- There is scope for further development of the plan to develop schemes of work that are based on learning outcomes, methodologies and in particular the assessment policy and strategies in use by the music department.

The draft findings and recommendations arising out of this evaluation were discussed with the principal, deputy principal and 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 welcomes this very positive report and in particular wishes to acknowledge its commendation of the very good learning and teaching in Music.

The Board is pleased to note the engagement of students, the effective use of ICT, the attention given to developing students' literacy skills and the good links established with the 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 is pleased to report that both recommendations with regard to students' storage of resources and development of music plan have been addressed.