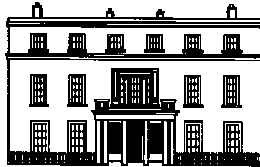


An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna
Department of Education and Skills

Subject Inspection of Special Educational Needs
REPORT
Terenure College,
Templeogue Road, Dublin 6W.
Roll number: 60570H

Date of inspection: 11 April 2013



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

**REPORT
ON
THE QUALITY OF LEARNING AND TEACHING
IN SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS**

INFORMATION ON THE INSPECTION

Dates of inspection	10 and 11 April 2013
Inspection activities undertaken <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review of relevant documents• Discussion with principal and teachers• Interaction with students	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Observation of teaching and learning during seven class periods• Examination of students' work• Feedback to principal and teachers

MAIN FINDINGS

- The quality of teaching and learning observed in seven lessons was either good or very good.
- Some teachers successfully involved their students in the process of assessment but there is scope for further use of assessment for learning strategies.
- The management and staff promote and support a whole-school approach to the inclusion of students with special educational needs.
- The school's allocation of resource teaching hours is used appropriately to meet identified student needs.
- Resource teachers plan their lessons with regard to student needs but planning structures require further development.

MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS

- Assessment for learning strategies and literacy development practices should be integrated further into lessons.
 - When the special educational needs policy is next reviewed, the role and work of mainstream teachers and special needs assistants in supporting students should be included.
 - The resource teaching planning template should be further developed and individual education plans should be created for students with low incidence needs.
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INTRODUCTION

Terenure College is a fee-charging, secondary school under the management of the Order of the Brothers of our Lady of Mount Carmel. The current enrolment is 695 male students. The school offers the established Junior Certificate and Leaving Certificate programmes as well as Transition Year.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

- The quality of teaching and learning observed in seven resource and mainstream lessons was either good or very good. A relaxed but positive, working atmosphere was present in each lesson. Lessons were well planned, structured and student-centred.
- The quality of teaching was appropriate and responsive to individual student needs. Direct instruction and guided learning were the predominant methodologies employed by resource teachers. Generally teachers aimed to reinforce and consolidate subject learning and to build student competence and independence. Good questioning and probing techniques guided and promoted student engagement. Teachers were caring and patient, yet held high expectations for success.
- Students and teachers were mutually respectful. Students were co-operative, well-behaved and engaged in their learning. They asked and answered questions and responded well to praise. Students were consistently challenged yet always appreciative of the support provided.
- The school has only recently begun discussions on whole-school development planning for literacy. Although many lessons highlighted explicit vocabulary instruction, there is scope for integrating additional literacy practices.
- Some teachers successfully involve their students in the process of assessment by sharing intended learning outcomes at the beginning of each lesson and providing formative feedback on how students can improve their work. However, there is scope for further use of assessment for learning strategies in all lessons.
- Enrolling students are administered standardised literacy, numeracy and cognitive ability assessments. The school should now consider how best to analyse and use this data to set targets for literacy and numeracy development, and to advance the process of monitoring the achievement of all students.

SUBJECT PROVISION AND WHOLE SCHOOL SUPPORT

- The admissions policy positively declares that Terenure College supports the principles of parental choice, respect for diversity, inclusiveness and equality of access and participation. The management and staff promote and support a whole-school approach to the inclusion of students with special educational needs (SEN).
- While most junior cycle classes are mixed ability, small classes of students with learning difficulties are set for English, Irish and Mathematics. This arrangement ensures targeted support for these students in these core subjects while allowing full access to a broad and balanced curriculum with their peers.
- The school's allocation of resource teaching hours is used appropriately to meet identified student needs. Resource teaching is provided in one-to-one or small group settings. Students who are exempt from the study of Irish or who have opted not to study

a modern foreign language receive support at those times or, if necessary, are withdrawn from other subjects in consultation with the students and their parents and teachers. The school should consider the benefits of team teaching to address the needs of students who do not have allocated hours or who do not wish to be withdrawn from lessons.

- The quality of the co-ordination of the planning and provision for students with special educational needs is good. The co-ordinator is a competent and appropriately qualified teacher who provides ongoing support and advice to resource and mainstream teachers and works closely with management. The co-ordinator attends scheduled meetings with the guidance counsellor and the pastoral care team, and liaises with the school's educational psychologist and special educational needs organiser.
- Four qualified part-time teachers have been timetabled with the hours allocated to provide special needs assistance to targeted students. These teachers liaise frequently with teachers and parents, and are supported and monitored by the SEN co-ordinator and the management.
- Some relevant continuous professional development has been provided for staff, but the school is advised to continually build capacity in this area by pro-actively auditing the staff's training needs and engaging with the Special Education Support Service.

PLANNING AND PREPARATION

- The school's SEN policy describes a whole-school approach and outlines the provision for students. When next reviewed, the role of mainstream teachers in planning for differentiation and engaging in inclusive teaching methodologies, and the role and work of the SNAs should be detailed. This policy should also note how gifted and talented students are identified, supported and monitored.
- Current planning is guided appropriately by the individual needs of students with reference to psychological assessment report recommendations, student requests and information provided by subject teachers and the SEN co-ordinator.
- There is scope for development in the planning and record keeping of resource teachers. Resource teachers use a simple school planning template to list general goals and to record work completed over the year. The school is recommended to consider further developing this template to improve planning and to improve the recording of progress. A monthly template for resource teachers would facilitate planning the learning intentions of each lesson and more detailed recording of student learning and progress towards learning targets. This template should also provide space for teachers to record evaluations of learning and observations on progress.
- It is recommended that those students with higher-level needs, and particularly those identified as low incidence, have an individual education plan (IEP) detailing long-term goals, prioritised needs and specific short-term academic, social and behavioural targets. Each student's resource and mainstream teachers, special needs assistants and parents should be consulted in the development of the IEP and involved in achieving and reinforcing the targets. Targets should be specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and time-bound, and reviewed periodically. Achieved targets should be replaced with new targets.
- In line with good practice, the SEN co-ordinator maintains a register which lists the students receiving support, their difficulty or disability and the accommodations

provided. This list could be expanded to show the rationale for the support, any allocated resource teaching hours, and how the hours are used to meet the specific needs.

The draft findings and recommendations arising out of this evaluation were discussed with the principal, deputy principal and SEN co-ordinator 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.

Terenure College welcomes the Special Educational Needs Report and is pleased with all of its main findings. It is good that the Report generally appreciates the operation of the College's whole-school approach to pupils with special education needs and its arrangements to ensure a targeted support for these students in core subjects while allowing full access to a broad and balanced curriculum with their peers. However, this means that relevant professional development must be continually provided for the entire staff. This is a support which the College already provides and will continue to do in the future.

In addition, the College especially is pleased that the Report notes the positive, working atmosphere in each lesson and the mutual respect between students and teachers. The College is pleased that the quality of teaching and learning observed was recognised.

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 Report's main recommendations are helpful and will be implemented over the next academic year. The resource teaching template will be further developed. It will be endeavoured to have a greater number of individual education plans (especially for students identified with low incidence needs) while consulting with a range of teachers. In addition, the role and work of mainstream teachers and special needs assistants will be included in the special educational needs policy at its next review. Additional literacy practices are being integrated into lessons during the current academic year.

The helpful suggestion of a review of how best to analyse and use the standard assessments for enrolling students has already begun and will help the process of monitoring the achievement of all students. Since the inspection, the College has considered the benefits of team teaching and is piloting it in the current school year.

Pupil inclusion continues to be an important value within the College. The subject inspection was an extremely positive experience which while strongly re-enforcing the College's approach in this area, points the direction for even greater improvements.