

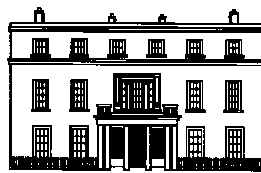
An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna

**Subject Inspection of History
REPORT**

**Meánscoil San Nioclás,
Rinn Ó gCuanach
Co. Waterford**

Roll Number: 76066J

Date of inspection: 29 November 2013



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

**REPORT
ON
THE QUALITY OF LEARNING AND TEACHING IN HISTORY**

INFORMATION ON THE INSPECTION

Date of inspection	29 November 2013
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 two class periods• Examination of students' work• Feedback to principal and teacher

MAIN FINDINGS

- The standard of teaching and learning was very high in the lessons observed.
- Excellent resources were prepared for the lessons, the teaching was clear and the students' participation was excellent.
- There is very good provision for History in the school and the subject is central to the life of the school.
- The teacher is professional and committed to the education of the students.
- The planning for History is of a high standard and this is evident from the lessons observed.

MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS

- To make every attempt to spread the senior history lessons through the week.
 - To specify learning objectives, teaching methods, assessment methods and teaching resources for each topic in the history plan.
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INTRODUCTION

Meánscoil San Nioclás is a co-educational post-primary school under the trusteeship of the Waterford and Wexford Education and Training Board. The programmes available in the school are the Junior Certificate, Transition Year and Leaving Certificate. There are 128 students enrolled in the current school year. Every student studies History in the Junior Certificate and in the compulsory Transition Year. History is available as an option in the Leaving Certificate programme.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

- The standard of teaching and learning was very high in the lessons observed.
- The aims of each lesson were clear and excellent resources were prepared, for example the presentation used in one lesson dealing with *Operation Overlord*.
- The teaching was clear and students' participation in lessons was excellent. Group work, pair work and peer assessment were used to encourage the students to participate actively in the lessons.
- There was a very good emphasis on vocabulary enrichment in the lessons observed. The teacher presented the lesson's keywords clearly and they were reviewed later in the lesson.
- There is a very good assessment system for History and the students perform well in certificate examinations. Students' progress is formally assessed twice a year.
- A significant aspect of the assessment is the History project which each student undertakes in first and second year. The students get recognition for this in their end-of-year marks. These projects were of a high standard.
- A very good example of assessment for learning was observed at the end of one lesson. The teacher gave a *Post-It* note to each student and student were asked to note down something they had learned in the lesson or a question they had, and to attach the note to a small board beside the door when leaving the room. The teacher then had additional information on the students' progress.
- Homework is regularly assigned and corrected in accordance with the principles of assessment of learning. In the certificate examination classes the teacher gives a detailed account to students of the assessment criteria associated with the state examinations and students are often given the opportunity to mark each other's work according to those criteria. This is all commendable.
- History classes are taught in a stimulating learning environment. There are posters, students' projects and lists of important keywords on the walls of the classroom.
- There is clearly a very good relationship between the teacher and the students. The students were happy to ask and answer questions and there was a very pleasant atmosphere in the classroom.

SUBJECT PROVISION AND WHOLE-SCHOOL SUPPORT

- History is central to the life of the school. "History Week" is organised in the school each year. Aspects of History are taught in Irish and Music also.
- There is very good provision for History in the school. There are three periods per week for the junior students, two periods for Transition Year and five periods for Leaving Certificate students.

- As it is a small school, and in order to provide a wider choice of subjects, fifth and sixth year students are sometimes taught together. But the distribution of lessons throughout the week is not always satisfactory. For example, sixth year students have three History periods in one day. This should be avoided, if possible, and every effort made to distribute senior History lessons evenly.
- The teacher has prepared many History resources and there was very effective use of information and communications technology in the lessons. All of this is commendable.
- The professionalism of the teacher was clear and she is committed to the students' education. She has undertaken a range of professional development and has wide experience.

PLANNING AND PREPARATION

- The planning for History is of a high standard and this is evident from the lessons observed
- The plan contains a very good description of the subject aims and objectives, literacy and differentiation. The plan also contains a general description of teaching methods, resources and assessment as well as work schemes for each year group. To achieve excellence in this work it is recommended that, gradually, intended learning outcomes, teaching methods, assessment methods and teaching resources be specified for each topic.
- There is very good co-curricular and extra-curricular planning for History. For example, the junior students frequently go on History tours.

The draft findings and recommendations arising out of this evaluation were discussed with the principal and subject teacher at the conclusion of the evaluation. The board of management of the school was given an opportunity to comment on the findings and recommendations of the report; the board chose to accept the report without response.