

An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna
Department of Education and Skills

Subject Inspection of German
REPORT

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

Date of inspection: 14 May 2013



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

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

INFORMATION ON THE INSPECTION

Date of inspection	14 May 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 three class periods• Examination of students' work• Feedback to principal and teacher

MAIN FINDINGS

- The quality of teaching was excellent in all of the lessons observed.
- A commitment to adhering to the principles of communicative language teaching methodologies was clearly evident in all lessons.
- The variety and quality of innovative language learning materials used in all lessons was excellent.
- The quality of student learning was excellent as evidenced by students' ability to comprehend and to speak German.
- Student engagement in lesson activities was excellent and it was obvious that students enjoy learning the language.
- The quality of planning for individual lessons is excellent.

MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS

- It is recommended that school management continue to support strategies that contribute positively to the uptake of German in the school curriculum.
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INTRODUCTION

The King's Hospital is a fee-paying, boarding and day school with a current enrolment of 696 students. The school offers the Junior Certificate, the Transition Year (TY) programme and the Leaving Certificate. The TY programme is compulsory for all students. German is one of three modern languages on offer in the school.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

- The quality of teaching in all lessons observed was excellent. A wide variety of communicative teaching methodologies was used to very good effect.
- The teacher use of the target language was excellent. All classroom activities were conducted through German. Student use of the target language was also very good.
- All lessons began with “warm up” exercises where students were asked and answered simple questions in German. This is a most effective daily routine and instils confidence in the development of the learners’ oral skills.
- Lesson content in all lessons was very good. The range of innovative, interesting and appropriate language learning materials created by the teacher was excellent.
- The teacher’s use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) to make learning interesting and engaging was very good.
- The emphasis on integrating the skills of language acquisition was very good. Students had many good opportunities to listen, read, write and speak German.
- Student engagement with activities was excellent and their interest in the lessons was facilitated by very good pacing and, in particular, by strategies such as the use of prediction and guessing games to enhance vocabulary acquisition.
- It was evident in the course of lessons that the learners enjoyed learning German. The strategies such as games and songs that were used, ensured that students had fun while learning and contributed greatly to positive student learning outcomes.
- The quality of student learning was excellent. In interaction with the inspector in the course of lessons, students’ ability to comprehend and to speak German was most impressive.
- The learning environment which featured posters, student work and other subject-related materials was stimulating and encouraged a most positive disposition to the language.
- Classroom management was highly effective and well organised. The very high level of mutual respect between teacher and students was clearly evident.
- The use of different assessment techniques throughout the lessons was very good. The level of attention to the consolidation of student learning as observed in the course of

lessons contributed enormously to the high quality of student attainment. Appropriate homework was assigned in all lessons.

- A sample of copybooks and folders were viewed in the course of the inspection. Students had completed a very good range of written assignments. All student work is very well monitored. The quality of written feedback provided to the students is of a very high standard and contributes positively to the development of students' written skills in the target language.

SUBJECT PROVISION AND WHOLE SCHOOL SUPPORT

- Timetabling provision for German is good and there are a range of extracurricular activities which support the subject.
- In recent years the uptake for German had declined. However, due to very impressive commitment to the subject on the part of the German department an increase in the numbers of students in junior cycle has occurred. The school management's support for this is evidenced by creating a class in second year which permitted students to study German ab initio. It is recommended that management continue to support strategies that contribute positively to the uptake of German.
- The German department is very well resourced and the teacher's commitment to continuous professional development is excellent and the benefits of this are very obvious in the classroom.

PLANNING AND PREPARATION

- The quality of subject department planning is very good. The documentation reviewed in the course of the inspection revealed a comprehensive approach to planning.
- Planning for the teaching and learning of German in TY is very good with a strong emphasis on a cross-curricular approach in line with the ethos of this curricular programme.
- A strong emphasis on review and self-evaluation was also evident. The attainment of students in the certificate examinations in German is recorded and analysed in the subject department plan.
- The quality of short-term planning is excellent and is informed by a strong commitment to the communicative approach to the teaching of the language.
- Very good records of student progress and attainment are kept and information regarding students' summative assessments is communicated to parents on a regular basis.

The board of management was given an opportunity to comment in writing on the findings and recommendations of the report; a response was not received from the board.

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