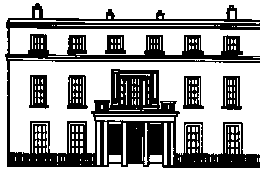


An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna
Department of Education and Skills

Subject Inspection of Physical Education
REPORT

Marian College,
Herbert Road, Dublin 4
Roll number: 60500J

Date of inspection: 30 April 2013



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

**REPORT
ON
THE QUALITY OF LEARNING AND TEACHING IN PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

INFORMATION ON THE INSPECTION

Dates of inspection	30 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 four class periods• Examination of students' work• Feedback to principal and teachers

MAIN FINDINGS

- The quality of teaching and learning in the lessons observed was very good.
- Lessons were characterised by thorough preparation, appropriate structure and pace and purposeful tasks.
- A positive and affirming atmosphere was evident in the lessons observed, where students were actively engaged and enjoyed their physical education lessons.
- Management has made substantial progress in establishing Physical Education on the school curriculum, with a strong commitment to future developments.
- Involvement in sport and physical activity is highly valued, with exemplary efforts made to provide a diverse and inclusive extra-curricular programme.
- Good efforts are made to plan, organise and deliver a broad and balanced physical education programme to meet the interests and needs of students.

MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS

- Management should work towards providing Physical Education for all students and ensure that all lessons are delivered by teachers who are appropriately qualified in the subject discipline.
 - Consideration should be given to the greater use of collaborative methods that involve students in leading elements of their lessons and in analysis of their own and others performance and learning.
 - Further development of the assessment process should be undertaken, and students' learning in Physical Education should be included in school reports to parents.
-

INTRODUCTION

Marian College is a voluntary secondary school for boys with a current enrolment of 449 students. The school provides the Junior Certificate, an optional Transition Year (TY) programme, the Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme (LCVP) and the established Leaving Certificate. The school participates in the Delivering Equality of Opportunities in Schools (DEIS) initiative.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

- Overall, the quality of learning and teaching in the lessons observed was very good.
- Lessons were characterised by thorough preparation, progressive tasks and appropriate pacing. Effective classroom management ensured that a positive and supportive learning atmosphere was created. Participation levels were high, with appropriate efforts made to include students unable to participate in the practical activities. Commendable efforts were made to ensure the effective inclusion and participation of newcomer students and those with special educational needs.
- The content of lessons was effectively introduced and contextualised for students at the outset. Good use was made of the whiteboard to present the intended learning outcomes and to highlight the focused concepts, which enhanced students' understanding and subsequent engagement.
- Warm-up activities were progressively paced and ensured students were adequately prepared to engage in the focused activities. Of particular note was the concentration on developing students' locomotion and body management skills. This welcome emphasis on developing students' functional and fundamental movement skills builds a solid foundation for participation in more complex sports activities.
- There was appropriate use of subject-specific vocabulary. To build on this subject-specific literacy practice, additional opportunities should be provided to facilitate students to analyse and discuss their performance and stage in the learning process.
- Concepts, such as map orientation, effective communication and co-operation in teamwork and support play, were clearly explained and exemplified. Demonstration was effectively used on occasion. Frequent questioning also ensured students were appropriately challenged to reflect on their application and to assess their understanding of the focused concepts.
- Tasks were purposeful and incremental to support students acquire and develop the requisite knowledge and skills that inform their participation. The organisation of groups was effective in ensuring all students were actively engaged in moderate-to-vigorous physical activity, with adequate time for skill acquisition and application. To build on this practice, teachers should consider devolving additional responsibility to students to lead elements of their lessons, such as warm-up activities, skill acquisition or situational-based practises.
- Ample equipment was available to optimise students' engagement, with a good selection of resources to support their learning. The use of task sheets and observation sheets

ensured students had opportunities to reflect on, and record, their engagement and learning.

- Good consideration has been given to the development of the assessment process. Engaging students in the development of a personal portfolio is welcomed. The assessment process should now focus on establishing the over-arching learning outcomes for each year group and align these to the most relevant approaches to formative and summative assessment.
- Recording of participation is well developed. However, students' progress in Physical Education should also be included in the school's reports to parents. The further development of the assessment process will provide a basis on which to comment on students' learning.

SUBJECT PROVISION AND WHOLE SCHOOL SUPPORT

- Management is commended for its commitment to providing Physical Education as a core element on the school's curriculum. Since its introduction in 2008, provision for Physical Education has increased to a double period per week for all students, with the exception of students in sixth year and those studying the LCVP. Management should continue to work towards providing the subject for all students.
- The school has one teacher who is appropriately qualified to teach Physical Education. A team of six additional teachers are also timetabled alongside the physical education teacher to support the delivery of the subject. Most of these teachers possess coaching qualifications or experience and expertise in one or more sporting activities. The commitment and enthusiasm of these teachers to promoting sport and physical activity is acknowledged. Additionally, their contribution to organising and coaching the extensive extra-curricular programme is commended. However, it is best practice that all teachers delivering curricular Physical Education are appropriately qualified in the subject discipline.
- The multi-purpose indoor facility is restrictive on the range of activities that can be provided and on the extent to which students can meaningfully engage. The lack of dedicated storage facilities and adequate changing facilities is also restrictive. Commendably, very good efforts are made to ensure all of the available facilities, including the swimming pool, small pitch and hard court area, are well maintained to provide a safe physical activity environment. Management is commended for its deep commitment and proactive approach to providing a new indoor sports hall for the school. This will be a valuable addition to the school and to the wider community.
- There is an exemplary attitude towards a physical activity culture in the school. The provision of a diverse range of competitive and recreational sports and physical activities ensures that the extra-curricular programme caters for a broad range of student preferences.

PLANNING AND PREPARATION

- A detailed plan guides the organisation and delivery of the subject in the school. The range of reference materials in the subject plan indicates that a reflective approach is taken to inform the planning process.
- The programmes of work provide a broad and balanced range of physical activities. Exemplary links with a range of local sports clubs and activity providers enhance students' physical activity experiences and engagement in sport. This is especially true for the TY programme. Good quality schemes of work have been prepared to inform the delivery of the various activity modules.
- The subject plan should also identify the key learning outcomes for each year group. This will help to provide greater coherence between the various activity strands, enhance the developmental approach to students' learning and inform the assessment process.
- The collaborative engagement with the Co-operating Physical Education Teacher programme (COPET) in Dublin City University (DCU) is of considerable professional benefit.
- Very good attention is paid to health and safety issues in the subject plan, underpinned by a risk assessment audit.

The draft findings and recommendations arising out of this evaluation were discussed with the principal, deputy principal and subject teachers 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.