

An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna

Department of Education and Skills

**Subject Inspection of Music
REPORT**

**Deele College
Raphoe, Co Donegal
Roll number: 71230R**

Date of inspection: 09 April 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	9 April 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 double class periods• Examination of students' work• Feedback to principal, deputy principal and teacher

MAIN FINDINGS

- All lessons observed contained some aspects of good teaching and learning.
- There was scope for development regarding the planning of some lesson components and the management of time during lessons
- Good use was made of information and communication technology (ICT) in lessons.
- Appropriate support systems are in place for students when selecting their optional subjects.
- A variety of co-curricular and extracurricular activities are available for students.
- The music department has optimised planning times by meeting with other similarly sized departments to share good practice.

MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS

- All lessons should begin with a clear statement of the learning intention which should be revisited both during and at the end of the lesson.
 - Care should be taken when planning lessons to ensure that an appropriate level of content and activities is included.
 - The level and quality of assessment practices regarding students' work should be enhanced.
 - The music plan should now be further developed by the inclusion of additional information as outlined in the body of this report.
-

INTRODUCTION

Deele College is a co-educational secondary school under the auspices of Donegal Education and Training Board (ETB). The school caters for 518 students. The following programmes are available to students: Junior Certificate; Junior Certificate School Programme; optional Transition Year (TY); Leaving Certificate and the Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme. Music is a compulsory component of the TY programme. The school participates in DEIS (Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools), the action plan of the Department of Education and Skills for educational inclusion.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

- All lessons observed contained some aspects of good teaching and learning. Such good practices included the following: the development of students' music technical language; the application and analysis of knowledge; the use of students' performing skills on their chosen instrument and the integration of the different components of Music.
- Less effective practice was observed when the entire lesson was not well structured and this was partially due to a lack of clarity regarding the learning intention. In order to ensure that lessons are always logical and sequential, it is recommended that the learning intention be clearly communicated to students from the outset and revisited both during and at the end. This will also help to ascertain the level of success.
- Some good learning was evident in lessons. In one lesson, students were competent to varying degrees in the use of music technology as befits a mixed-ability setting. In another lesson, students displayed very good understanding and knowledge of composing techniques and demonstrated analytical and critical skills.
- A good level of student engagement was evident, particularly in one lesson where there was a strong emphasis on practical music-making activities. Students were afforded the opportunity to perform on their chosen instrument in addition to the class-based instruments.
- There was scope for development regarding the planning of some aspects of the lessons such as the pacing and the amount of content covered. This occasionally led to some student disengagement. Care should be taken to ensure that there is a sufficient level of content and activities so that all students remain focused.
- In a practical component of one lesson, students were challenged to perform to the highest possible standard and lesson content was differentiated to cater for the more able students. These good practices should be extended to ensure that the needs of students of all abilities are addressed.
- It is good to note that the music department affords students the opportunity to experience music technology beyond the requirements of the certificate practical examination. The teacher has also developed a good level of expertise in the use of ICT.
- Students' work and progress are being monitored and assessed through oral questioning, class and homework assignments. However, there is a need to increase the level of formative assessment and in line with good practice, provide students with constructive comments to aid improvement.

SUBJECT PROVISION AND WHOLE SCHOOL SUPPORT

- The uptake of Music in the school is good and there is a very good gender balance between male and female students in classes.
- Timetabling arrangements for Music are in line with syllabus recommendations and there is a sufficient spread of contact time throughout the week.
- Good support systems are in place for students when selecting their optional subjects. Incoming first-year students are provided with a sampling day for all subjects, including Music, prior to entry. They then make their selections and the timetable is generated around their choices. At the end of the year, these students make further selections by reducing the number of optional subjects. Fifth-year students are also provided with a choice of optional subjects from which they make their selections.
- Facilities and resources for Music are poor. At present, the music teacher has to move between five different classrooms to teach Music.
- A variety of co-curricular and extracurricular activities are available for students. These include the school musical, choir and participation in liturgical events. The work of the music teacher and other staff in the provision of such activities is commended.

PLANNING AND PREPARATION

- The music department is staffed by one, fully qualified teacher. Management encourages and supports the teacher to engage with any initiatives that arise in relation to continuing professional development in music education. Commendably, the teacher has availed of opportunities and has attended annual conferences hosted by the Post-Primary Music Teachers' Association.
 - Management is supportive of subject planning and makes time available for all departments including Music to meet. It is good to note that the music department has used some of these planning times to meet with the Art department to share good practices.
 - The music teacher has spent considerable time and effort creating a subject department plan. Programmes of work have been developed for all year groups and these contained many details including the manner in which the different components of music are being integrated. Other documents provided include a whole-school assessment and homework policy.
 - Subject planning could be further progressed by the inclusion of the following information: a developmental plan for the music department including the acquisition of resources; an assessment and homework policy specifically for Music and, development of the programmes of work with a focus on appropriate levels of content and activities.
-

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; a response was not received from the board.

Published October 2014