

**An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna**

**Department of Education and Skills**

**Subject Inspection of Technical Graphics and Design  
and Communication Graphics  
REPORT**

**Coláiste Iósaef  
Kilmallock, County Limerick  
Roll number: 76070A**

**Date of inspection: 5<sup>th</sup> May 2016**



**REPORT  
ON  
THE QUALITY OF LEARNING AND TEACHING IN TECHNICAL GRAPHICS AND  
DESIGN AND COMMUNICATION GRAPHICS**

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**INFORMATION ON THE INSPECTION**

<b>Date of inspection</b>	5 <sup>th</sup> May
<b>Inspection activities undertaken</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Review of relevant documents</li><li>• Discussion with principal and teachers</li><li>• Interaction with students</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Observation of teaching and learning during six class periods</li><li>• Examination of students' work</li><li>• Feedback to principal and teachers</li></ul>

**MAIN FINDINGS**

- The quality of teaching and learning in graphics subjects is very good.
- Effective methods to promote increased levels of student visualisation were employed successfully in the lessons observed.
- Students engaged with their assigned tasks and exhibited very good levels of understanding and proficiency.
- An effective reporting system that is based upon the principles of assessment for learning (AfL) is developing in the school.
- Overall, graphics subjects are catered for appropriately on the school's curriculum and are well resourced by school management.
- Planning and preparation for teaching and learning were of a high standard.

**MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS**

- The subject department should develop its AfL reporting system to further include students in the discussion of work presented in order to maximise their learning.
  - Senior management and the subject department should explore the possibility of including a graphics module within the school's Transition Year (TY) curriculum.
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## **INTRODUCTION**

Coláiste Iósaef is a co-educational school that is managed under the auspices of Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board (ETB). It has a current enrolment of 443 students. At junior cycle, students are offered the Junior Certificate and the Junior Certificate School Programme (JCSP). Senior cycle students may choose to take part in the school's optional TY programme prior to enrolling in the Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme, the established Leaving Certificate or the Leaving Certificate Applied (LCA) programme.

## **TEACHING AND LEARNING**

- During the evaluation, very good quality teaching and learning was observed in all three lessons.
- In all lessons, very clear aims and learning intentions were shared with students. To develop this good practice further, the subject department should work towards identifying clear success criteria for students. This would facilitate the revision of learning outcomes collaboratively with students periodically, and at the end of lessons, to ascertain the quality of learning.
- Teaching aids and resources were utilised very effectively in all lessons observed. Information and communication technology (ICT) provided teachers with a useful medium to scaffold students' visualisation of complex concepts and geometries.
- Animated images were integrated into lessons effectively. This strategy was particularly prevalent and successful when introducing topics and when providing students with visual learning aids in the area of geological geometry. Teachers modelled good practice at the blackboard and reinforced key drawing conventions and good practice throughout the lessons observed. This support was often administered individually at students' desks. This level of personal individualised formative feedback is essential and should be extended where possible.
- Pair work was utilised in one lesson. On this occasion, it helped to generate a good level of discussion and dialogue among students. This should be further developed, where appropriate, by encouraging groups of students to partake in problem solving activities prior to individual progression with prescribed tasks.
- Teachers focused on developing students' subject specific literacy in all lessons. New and unfamiliar terms were identified and explained and students were encouraged to use these terms when presenting their answers or when posing questions. Students' oral literacy could be further developed through greater use of higher order questions. This would require students to articulate their answers utilising subject specific terminology on a more regular basis.
- Student behaviour was excellent in all lessons observed. A positive rapport between teachers and students was apparent throughout the evaluation and this was fostered by the supportive approach adopted by the subject teachers.
- Students were highly engaged in all of the lessons observed. Student work was of an appropriate standard and in some cases exceeded that standard.
- An AfL reporting system has been developed by the school. This system provides teachers with an opportunity to report on students' work formatively. The subject department should develop this system to further include students in the discussion of

work presented in order to maximise their learning. This could be achieved by agreeing and setting very specific success criteria and providing students with the opportunity to self-assess their work. This practice would encourage greater levels of dialogue and discussion around the quality of work and further stimulate conversations focused on improvement.

- At junior cycle, most students choose higher level and this trend is improving. At senior cycle, the majority of students choose higher level. Attainment at both levels is good and in recent years at junior cycle attainment has been very good.

#### **SUBJECT PROVISION AND WHOLE SCHOOL SUPPORT**

- Uptake of graphics subjects is good at both junior and senior cycle. This is supported by a short subject-sampling programme in first year where students get an opportunity to sample Technical Graphics and choose their preferred optional subjects based upon their experience, aptitude and skills. Currently at senior cycle, a similar system does not exist. School management and the subject department should work towards developing a modular TY programme in DCG that would further support senior cycle students in making their optional subject choices prior to entering fifth year.
- Graphics subjects are scheduled appropriately and receive appropriate time allocations. Teachers are deployed appropriately to class groups and are scheduled to teach classes in the well-equipped graphics room, or on occasion in the Materials Technology (Wood) classroom. These rooms are suitable and are well resourced with all of the necessary audio-visual and Information and Communication Technology (ICT) equipment to facilitate the effective teaching and learning of graphics subjects.

#### **PLANNING AND PREPARATION**

- During the evaluation there was evidence of extensive and high quality planning and preparation for teaching and learning. High quality curricular plans were presented during the evaluation and these plans outlined key areas of curricular content, associated learning outcomes, appropriate resources and assessment methods and subject specific literacy and numeracy interventions.
- A subject co-ordinator has been identified and takes an active role in ensuring that collaborative planning occurs regularly. Subject planning meetings are convened and records demonstrate that a good blend of issues are discussed ranging from pedagogical issues such as assessment for learning practices to organisational and curricular issues including material procurement and course content.
- Teachers' individual planning and preparation for lessons was very good and is a significant strength of the subject department.

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

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