

**An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna**  
**Department of Education and Skills**

**Subject Inspection of Art**  
**REPORT**

**Mount Temple Comprehensive School**  
**Clontarf, Dublin 3**  
**Roll number: 81002K**

**Date of inspection: 10 November 2011**



**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 ART**

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**INFORMATION ON THE INSPECTION**

<b>Date of inspection</b>	10 November 2012
<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 teaching and learning observed during this evaluation was good and sometimes very good.
- The teaching approaches used by the art department fostered independent learning and encouraged students to have appropriately high expectations.
- The students' art work examined during lessons was good. Some examples of very sophisticated students' work were also noted.
- During all of the lessons, the relationship between teachers and students was positive and students' behaviour was good.
- Good formative and summative assessment practices are in place.
- The subject is very well supported by school management in terms of resources and timetabling.

**MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS**

- Curricular planning should now be prioritised to include learning outcomes for students. These should be shared with students at the outset of each lesson.
  - The history and appreciation of art should be introduced from first year.
  - Where appropriate, the pace of lessons should be increased to sufficiently challenge all students to their potential.
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## **INTRODUCTION**

Mount Temple Comprehensive School has an enrolment of 475 male and 399 female students. The school offers the following programmes: the Junior Certificate programme, a compulsory Transition Year (TY) programme, the established Leaving Certificate programme, the Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme (LCVP) and the Leaving Certificate Applied (LCA) programme. Art is an optional subject, except on the LCA programme where it is compulsory.

## **TEACHING AND LEARNING**

- Three double lessons were observed during the evaluation and overall, the quality of teaching and learning was good.
- The teaching approaches used by the art department fostered independent learning and encouraged students to have high expectations. Students were facilitated in following their own areas of interest within the subject which supports their positive disposition towards the subject.
- Clear instructions at the outset of lessons focussed students on the tasks to be performed. It is recommended that specific learning outcomes be shared with students at the beginning of lessons and used at the conclusion of lessons to check for understanding and progress. In this way, students' learning will be supported by focussing on the development of specific skills and knowledge rather than the completion of tasks.
- During one of the lessons observed, frequent comments were made to encourage safe practices whilst using equipment. In one instance, the safe use of a piece of equipment was demonstrated to the students. This good practice should be extended to all lessons where appropriate.
- The pace of lessons was generally good. However, there was scope to increase pace in some cases to support student focus. Techniques such as reminding students of the learning outcomes should be used.
- During one of the lessons observed, a set of visual aids was successfully used to help students understand concepts and tasks. Visual aids should be used wherever possible to communicate ideas and concepts to students.
- The work observed during lessons was good. Some examples of very sophisticated completed students' work were also noted.
- During the evaluation, a sample of history and appreciation of art notebooks evidenced that student learning is progressing effectively in this area. To support this good work, it is recommended that the history and appreciation of art be introduced to students as a specific topic from first year. The appreciation of art should be prioritised at the beginning of fifth year to support students' use of terminology and the formation of evidence-based opinions about artefacts.
- During all of the lessons, the relationship between teachers and students was positive and students' behaviour was very good. Teachers had very good knowledge of students' potential and interests. Students were warmly affirmed and encouraged during lessons.
- The monitoring of students' work during lessons was good. Individual students were supported. Where students became distracted, they were refocused in a kind and positive manner.

- Students' efforts and progress are recorded during the year. Summative and formative assessments are carried out during the year. Assessments are appropriately based on the requirements for the certificate examinations. The art department's assessment procedures should be agreed and recorded in a policy document.
- The good practice of writing formative notes on students' written and practical work was observed.

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

- The subject is very well supported by school management in terms of resources and timetabling.
- Access for students to the subject is good.
- The art department provides a range of extracurricular and co-curricular activities for students to support their learning in Art. In collaboration with school management, the department is planning further expansion in this area to widen and enhance all students' experience of art at the school and this is positive.
- An analysis of students' achievement in the certificate examinations is carried out each year. It is suggested that further analysis be carried out to inform planning as the department develops.
- The art department is accommodated in two large designated rooms. These rooms have been developed into good learning environments. A gallery space has been created in one of the classrooms to display students' work in a public area of the school.
- Some designated ICT equipment is available to the art department. It is good to note that students are encouraged to digitally manipulate their work when appropriate. It is recommended that a digital projector be installed in the second art room and that designated digital cameras be obtained for the department, as funding presents. Using this equipment, the art department should catalogue students' work, thus creating a bank of accessible and relevant images to inspire and enthuse students.
- To benefit from the subject support available, it is recommended that the art department makes contact with the Art Teachers' Association of Ireland and the Professional Development Service for Teachers.

#### **PLANNING AND PREPARATION**

- Time is made available for subject department planning. A subject department plan has been developed which outlines the organisation of the department. The overarching aims of the art department to provide students with a good appreciation and experience of the subject are praiseworthy. It is now recommended that curricular planning become the focus of future art department planning. This should include the use of learning outcomes, timeframes for syllabus delivery and plans for assessment. It is good to note that this is already an acknowledged priority at the school.
- Some evidence of documented reflective practice was presented during the evaluation. Consideration should be given to further using reflective practice to evaluate schemes of work as they develop.

- Some very good ideas for lessons were presented. In particular those ideas which were motivational for students and specifically supported the school's learning policy are commended.
- Some very good resources for lessons have been collected and generated by teachers. These are collected using a variety of media including ICT which has the potential to be very motivating for students.
- Students' attendance, effort and achievements are appropriately recorded and shared with students and their parents at specific points during the school year.

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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.