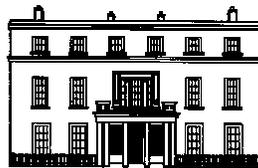


An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna
Department of Education and Skills

**Subject Inspection of GERMAN
REPORT**

**Moyne Community School,
Moyne, County Longford
Roll number: 91436D**

Date of inspection: 20 April 2015



**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	20 April 2015
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, deputy principal and teachers

MAIN FINDINGS

- The quality of teaching and learning was good and many effective methods were used in lessons.
- There is scope to develop the use of the target language in the classroom.
- Classroom management and student behaviour were excellent at all times and the rapport between teachers and students was very good.
- The learning environment was print rich and provided a very good setting for student engagement with the subject.
- There is good provision for German, all students in first year have the option of studying the subject and the uptake for the language is increasing.
- The German department engages with the school self-evaluation (SSE) process by analysing the results of the Leaving Certificate examination.

MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS

- Student use of the target language should be developed by increased use of opportunities for student-student interaction and a formal oral assessment should be given to all year groups.
- The strategies associated with *Assessment for Learning* (AfL) should be embedded into daily classroom practice and students should be given regular written formative feedback in their copybooks.
- Teachers should avail of subject-specific continuous professional development through the means outlined in the body of this report.
- The subject department plan should be developed further in line with the detail provided in this report.

INTRODUCTION

Moyne Community School is a co-educational, post-primary school with an enrolment of 627 students. The school offers the Junior Certificate, all Leaving Certificate programmes and an optional Transition Year (TY) programme.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

- The quality of teaching was good in the lessons observed and lesson content in all lessons was appropriate to the needs of the learners and the requirements of the syllabus.
- There was scope to develop the use of the target language by teachers. When German was used in the classroom, it was sometimes followed by translation. It is better instead to put an onus on the learners to comprehend the target language which results in more effective student learning.
- A range of effective methodologies was used such as clear teacher input, brainstorming and group work. However, there is a need for more consistent use of active teaching methodologies.
- The skill of listening was well developed in junior cycle where students were introduced to relevant vocabulary in advance of the listening comprehension task and it was effective that students were asked to answer the questions in German.
- The quality of student learning was good and students engaged very well with tasks assigned to them. As all class groups are mixed ability, there is a need for teachers to increase the use of strategies associated with *Assessment for Learning* (AfL). AfL strategies such as communicating the learning outcomes to students at the start of lessons, think-pair-share, formative feedback in the course of lessons and review of learning outcomes at the end of lessons should all be embedded by teachers into daily classroom practice.
- Student use of the target language was developed through short pair and group work activities. There is however significant scope to develop student use of German in the course of lessons. This could be done by teachers increasing opportunities for student-student interaction and the introduction of everyday German conversation at the start of all lessons.
- A review of students' copybooks showed that there is a variety of approaches to the correction of this written work. The recent introduction of a student self-assessment check list is very worthwhile. In order to ensure that students' written skills progress over time, students should be given regular written formative feedback by teachers.
- Good attention was paid to the development of autonomous learning among students who were required to complete tasks independently in the course of lessons and also in some cases to use dictionaries.
- A variety of good assessment practices were noted in the course of the inspection. Good use was made of questions in lesson. TY students have prepared presentations on cross-curricular themes. Oral assessment takes place but not for all year groups. Formal oral assessment should take place in both junior and senior cycle and consideration should be given to providing the optional oral in German for students who are sitting the Junior Certificate.

- Classroom management and student behaviour were exemplary at all times. Classroom atmosphere in all lessons was very good and this was due to the very positive regard teachers have for their students. Interactions between teachers and students were most conducive to learning and teachers praised students when appropriate.
- The learning environment was print rich and provided a very good setting for student engagement with German. The posters, photographs, student work, maps, grammar charts, literacy and numeracy boards all contributed to the effectiveness of the learning environment. Currently all desks are in rows in the classrooms and a move to a more learner-centred arrangement of desks is suggested.

SUBJECT PROVISION AND WHOLE SCHOOL SUPPORT

- There is good provision for German in the school. All students in first year are offered the opportunity to study German by means of a taster programme and the uptake of the subject is increasing. Timetabling for the subject is good.
- There are some very good co-curricular opportunities to support the learning of German such as the email partnership with a school in Germany and the language and sports trip which is organised for TY and fifth-year students.
- The department is well resourced and this year the school has the benefit of a German language assistant.
- There has been little whole-school continuous professional development (CPD) in the area of teaching and learning provided and teachers have not availed of any subject specific CPD in the recent past. It is therefore recommended that information regarding opportunities offered by the Professional Development Service for Teachers (PDST), the Post Primary Languages Initiative (PPLI), the German teachers Association and the Goethe Institute be sought and availed of.

PLANNING AND PREPARATION

- Subject department planning takes place during term meetings and very good records are kept of these meetings.
- The subject department plan needs significant development. The plan should contain specific detail about the content of the course for each year group, the specific learning outcomes in terms of the oral, aural, written and reading skills. The details of teaching methodologies, in particular how AfL will be used, should be documented in the plan.
- The plan for TY is good and there are effective cross-curricular components cited in it.
- In the context of school self-evaluation (SSE) the German department has undertaken an analysis of the Leaving Certificate results. This could now usefully be extended to include an analysis of Junior Certificate results. To build on the good SSE processes, it is recommended that a commentary be provided on the analysis of the results, that targets be set and that the student evaluation forms contained in the subject plan be used to inform the development of the subject.

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.

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