

An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna
Department of Education and Skills

Subject Inspection of ART
REPORT

Castleknock Community College
Carpenterstown Road, Castleknock, Dublin 15
Roll number: 76062B

Date of inspection: 25 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**

INFORMATION ON THE INSPECTION

Date of inspection	25 November 2011
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 eight class periods• Examination of students' work• Feedback to principal and teachers

MAIN FINDINGS

- The quality of teaching and learning in Art was very good.
- The students were progressing very well.
- Classroom management was very good and the atmosphere in lessons was positive.
- A well-informed set of lesson plans and assessment protocols is in place.
- The level and range of the co-curricular and extracurricular activities provided are very positive.
- The resources provided for Art are well managed.

MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS

- Contact should be made with the Art Teachers' Association of Ireland and the Professional Development Service for Teachers to avail of the subject support available.
 - Contemporary art should be included in the plan for TY students.
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INTRODUCTION

Castleknock Community College has an enrolment of 600 male and 518 female students. The school offers the Junior Certificate, an optional Transition Year (TY) programme, the Leaving Certificate (LC), the Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme (LCVP) and the Leaving Certificate Applied (LCA) programme. Art is an optional subject on all programmes except for the LCA programme, which does not include Art at present, and the TY programme, which provides all students with an Art programme and also offers Art as an optional module.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

- The quality of teaching and learning as observed during this evaluation was very good.
- The communication of ideas, concepts and instructions was very clear. Teachers made very good use of terminology to support learning. Students' understanding and use of terminology was also very good.
- Visual aids were used to good effect to inspire, aid communication and to illustrate concepts.
- Good questions were asked in the lessons observed. Questions were asked of the whole group and named students were asked to answer. This good practice should be extended. Further opportunities should be created to ask targeted students higher and lower-order questions, in line with their abilities.
- A range of methodologies was used in lessons to help maintain students' interest and engagement. In one lesson, students were asked to focus on proportion, firstly using two-dimensional materials and subsequently, three-dimensional materials. This is very good practice. It is good to note that information and communications technology (ICT) is used in the presentation of material during lessons and in the generation of handouts and support material for students.
- It is noted that the art department is constantly developing methodologies and adopts a reflective approach to delivering lessons. This is very good practice.
- Whole-group teaching is appropriately used in lessons. Individuals are supported as necessary to ensure that they are progressing as well as possible. It is suggested that where a number of students are asking for help to address the same issue, small group discussions and demonstrations may be useful.
- During the lessons observed, students were progressing very well. It is good to note that students' finished work was very well presented and that appropriate levels of attention are given to the choice and subsequent use of various materials and techniques. The evidence presented showed that the teaching and learning of the history and appreciation of art is progressing well.
- At all times, students were monitored. In the very few instances where students became unfocused, they were gently and firmly redirected back to their learning.
- Classroom management was very good. Students were choreographed in each lesson so that they could accurately and easily access and return stimuli and materials.
- At all times, the atmosphere in lessons was positive. Affirmation was given generously and genuinely. The rapport between teachers and students and between students and their peers was positive. Students are learning in a stimulating, comfortable and safe environment. They displayed a very positive disposition towards the subject.
- The art department has developed a detailed set of protocols for the assessment of students' work. These protocols are well informed, include summative and formative practices and are supportive of students' independent learning. Marking schemes with criteria are shared with students and formative comments are made on students' written and practical work. This is very good practice.

- To further develop students' literacy, it is suggested that an illustrated word bank be displayed in both art rooms.

SUBJECT PROVISION AND WHOLE SCHOOL SUPPORT

- Art is very well supported by senior management. This is reflected in the provision for Art on the timetable and access to Art for students on the various programmes.
- The art department provides a very wide variety of extracurricular and co-curricular activities to support students' learning in Art. This includes very significant efforts to incorporate the visual arts into a variety of school activities and events as well as helping students who are preparing portfolios and entering competitions. This work underpins the art department's desire to provide students with a very rich and broad understanding of the subject.
- Students' achievements in Art are specifically recognised in the school's award system. This is fully indicative of the art department's ambition to encourage and support students to achieve to their potential.
- The school has developed an assessment policy in which the art department has developed its own set of procedures. These procedures are based on the needs of students and are very well informed. It is good to note that Assessment for Learning practices are given priority when appropriate.
- Students and their parents are issued with progress reports at appropriate points during the year.
- The art department is accommodated in two well-appointed rooms. These rooms are very well managed and have been developed into very good learning environments for Art. The art department carefully budgets so that students can access the best quality materials from the funding available. It is also very positive to note that the storage of materials and equipment is well organised.
- To avail of the subject support available, the art department should access the Art Teachers' Association of Ireland and the Professional Development Service for Teachers.

PLANNING AND PREPARATION

- The art department is very well managed and plans so that good structures are in place to support teaching and learning. The focus is on 'making success achievable' for students.
- Good collaborative planning and review has ensured that curricular planning for Art remains fresh and stimulating. A well presented art department plan was available which outlined learning plans for all student groups. It is good to note that learning outcomes are used. This should be extended and developed as the department progresses.
- The TY plan should include input on the appreciation of contemporary art to add to the good work already in place.
- A specific series of history of art lessons focussing on developing appreciation skills should be delivered from first year.
- Teachers' individual planning for lessons was of a very good standard.

- The art department has a policy of celebrating students' efforts. The school's website and the entire school building are used as gallery space to celebrate and display students' work.
- The art department, supported by the school, has very good policies and procedures for recording students' attendance, efforts and achievement.

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 was given an opportunity to comment in writing on the findings and recommendations of the report, and the response of the board will be found in the appendix of this report.

Appendix

SCHOOL RESPONSE TO THE REPORT

Submitted by the Board of Management

Area 1: Observations on the content of the inspection report

Management and staff were very happy to welcome the inspector to our College to conduct the Art Inspection. At all times the inspector demonstrated her professionalism in her dealings with the Senior Management Team, the staff of the Art Department and our students. Both Art teachers have commented that she captured the Art teaching environment very accurately. The experience was very positive for all and observation was astute.

Area 2: Follow-up actions planned or undertaken since the completion of the inspection activity to implement the findings and recommendations of the inspection

The Art Department have reviewed the Transition Year Schemes and are currently working on a Contemporary Art driven scheme based on “Graffiti – Urban Art”. The Art Department has undertaken this review of T.Y. schemes at their subject department meetings and this work will be on-going. The Art Department understands the importance of on-going professional development. Both Art teachers are fully committed to involvement in appropriate continuous professional development in the coming years.