

An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna
Department of Education and Skills

Subject Inspection in Art, Craft and Design

REPORT

Ainm na scoile / School name	Lusk Community College
Seoladh na scoile / School address	Raheny Lane Rathmore Road Lusk County Dublin
Uimhir rolla / Roll number	76213T

Date of Inspection: 14 September 2016



WHAT IS A SUBJECT INSPECTION?

Subject Inspections report on the quality of work in individual curriculum areas within a school. They affirm good practice and make recommendations, where appropriate, to aid the further development of the subject in the school.

HOW TO READ THIS REPORT

During this inspection, the inspector evaluated learning and teaching in Art, Craft and Design under the following headings:

1. Learning, teaching and assessment
2. Subject provision and whole-school support
3. Planning and preparation

Inspectors describe the quality of each of these areas using the Inspectorate's quality continuum which is shown on the final page of this report. The quality continuum provides examples of the language used by inspectors when evaluating and describing the quality of the school's provision in each area.

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.

SUBJECT INSPECTION

INSPECTION ACTIVITIES DURING THIS INSPECTION

Dates of inspection	13 and 14 September 2016
Inspection activities undertaken <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review of relevant documents• Discussion with principal, deputy principal and key staff• 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 relevant staff

SCHOOL CONTEXT

Lusk Community College is a co-educational school operating under the auspices of Dublin and Dun Laoghaire Education and Training Board (DDLETB). Opened in August 2013, the school caters for a total of 527 students and includes an autism unit called *Iontás*. The school offers the Junior Certificate, an optional Transition Year programme (TY), the established Leaving Certificate, Leaving Certificate Applied (LCA) and the Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme (LCVP).

SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

FINDINGS

- The overall quality of teaching and learning in the lessons observed was good, with aspects of highly effective practice evident.
- The setting and sharing of clear learning intentions were notable features of teaching and learning.
- Practices in relation to assessing student progress in Art are effective overall; there is scope for improvement in some areas.
- Whilst good differentiated teaching was observed, there is opportunity to further develop differentiated teaching strategies.
- A very good range of methodologies has been developed to integrate the History of Art routinely into the learning for junior-cycle students.
- Good-quality progress has been made in the planning and preparation for Art.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- The teachers of Art need to establish strategies to provide constructive written formative feedback on students' work.
- The use of differentiated teaching strategies should be further developed so that all learners continue to be challenged.
- The health and safety procedures, and maintenance of the specialist room and equipment should be reviewed annually and documented as part of a risk assessment.

DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. TEACHING AND LEARNING

- The overall quality of teaching and learning in the lessons observed was good, with aspects of highly effective practice in evidence.
- Clear learning intentions were set and shared with students at the start of all observed lessons. This good practice was effective in supporting students' learning, and focused them on the knowledge and skills to be developed.
- Classroom management was effective in all lessons, with clearly established routines evident. Teacher-student rapport was mutually respectful and teachers were most affirming of students' contributions and efforts.
- In the majority of lessons observed, there was a good balance between teacher input and productive student participation. There was evidence of good continuity with previous learning and appropriate integration of theory with practical skills.
- Commendably, primary sources were used in all practical lessons observed. Students demonstrated a very good understanding of using primary sources as starting points in their developmental work.
- Information communication technology (ICT) was used effectively in all lessons to enhance explanations and display images designed to enrich students' understanding of lesson content. In one lesson, students were encouraged to use ICT to deepen their understanding of composition, which gave them a varied and positive experience of the lesson content.
- Practices in relation to assessing student progress in Art were effective overall. The provision of oral feedback during lessons was very good; however there is scope for improvement in the area of written formative feedback.
- The content and presentation of students' written and practical work examined during the evaluation demonstrated purposeful and progressive learning. However, no written formative feedback was provided on the work examined. It is recommended that the art department develop strategies for the provision of constructive written formative feedback on students' work. Such feedback should provide guidance on performance and roadmaps for improvement.
- Good differentiated teaching was observed. During practical lessons, on-going teacher monitoring proved effective in focusing and encouraging students appropriately. However, differentiated strategies should be developed further to include the use of hint sheets or extension work, as was discussed with teachers during the evaluation.
- Questioning was used effectively to ascertain student learning and develop lesson content. Consideration could now be given to extending questioning strategies to encourage students' deeper engagement with lesson content.
- A very good range of methodologies has been developed to integrate the History of Art routinely into the learning of junior-cycle students. This practice is noteworthy in building students' confidence and facilitating a deep understanding of and interest in Art History and Appreciation from first year.

2. SUBJECT PROVISION AND WHOLE SCHOOL SUPPORT

- The quality of subject provision and whole-school support is very good. Art is an optional subject at junior and senior cycle and is a core component of the educational programme provided for the students who attend *Iontás*. Effective systems are in place to support the uptake of Art and option bands are constructed based on student choice.
- There is one specialist room shared between the teachers of Art currently. At the time of the evaluation, it was reported by staff that the art room was used for the teaching of other subjects as well due to timetable constraints and the pressure on school accommodation because of increased student enrolments. Almost all art lessons take place in the art room; however, it was noted that one class group does not have access to the room for lessons. To enhance the learning experiences for these students, school management should endeavour to prioritise access for all art lessons to the specialist room, where at all feasible.
- A copy of the school's safety policy was reviewed and it included a safety statement for the art room. There was a very good focus on health and safety procedures in all of the lessons observed. At the time of the evaluation, no risk assessment had been formally carried out by the art department. It is recommended that the health and safety procedures for Art, including procedures for use of the room by non-specialist teachers, be documented and the maintenance of specialist equipment be reviewed annually.
- The teachers of Art are highly commended for their active involvement and delivery of continuing professional development (CPD).

3. PLANNING AND PREPARATION

- Good-quality progress has been made in planning and preparation for Art. There is evidence of reflective practice in subject planning documentation; for example, the findings from formal end-of-year student reviews are used by the team to enhance planning for teaching and learning.
- This is the first year of the TY and LCA programmes in the school. Programme planning for Art in TY and LCA is in the early stages of development. These plans should be reviewed formally at the end of this academic year to assist in the on-going development of Art in both of these programmes.
- Minutes from department meetings include a list of tasks to be completed. To facilitate continuity between meetings, it is advisable that decisions and actions arising from subject-department reviews that focus on teaching and learning should also be recorded.
- Plans are being developed by the art department to link with main feeder primary schools and to foster opportunities to encourage leadership amongst art students; such initiatives should prove worthwhile.

The draft findings and recommendations arising out of this evaluation were discussed with the principal, deputy principal and team of subject teachers at the conclusion of the evaluation

THE INSPECTORATE'S QUALITY CONTINUUM

Inspectors describe the quality of provision in the school using the Inspectorate's quality continuum which is shown below. The quality continuum provides examples of the language used by inspectors when evaluating and describing the quality the school's provision of each area.

Level	Description	Example of descriptive terms
Very Good	Very good applies where the quality of the areas evaluated is of a very high standard. The very few areas for improvement that exist do not significantly impact on the overall quality of provision. For some schools in this category the quality of what is evaluated is outstanding and provides an example for other schools of exceptionally high standards of provision.	Very good; of a very high quality; very effective practice; highly commendable; very successful; few areas for improvement; notable; of a very high standard. Excellent; outstanding; exceptionally high standard, with very significant strengths; exemplary
Good	Good applies where the strengths in the areas evaluated clearly outweigh the areas in need of improvement. The areas requiring improvement impact on the quality of pupils' learning. The school needs to build on its strengths and take action to address the areas identified as requiring improvement in order to achieve a <i>very good</i> standard.	Good; good quality; valuable; effective practice; competent; useful; commendable; good standard; some areas for improvement
Satisfactory	Satisfactory applies where the quality of provision is adequate. Overall, learners have access to a basic level of provision. The strengths in what is being evaluated just outweigh the shortcomings. While the shortcomings do not have a significant negative impact they constrain the quality of the learning experiences and should be addressed in order to achieve a better standard.	Satisfactory; adequate; appropriate provision although some possibilities for improvement exist; acceptable level of quality; improvement needed in some areas
Fair	Fair applies where, although there are some strengths in the areas evaluated, deficiencies or shortcomings that outweigh those strengths also exist. The school will have to address certain deficiencies without delay in order to ensure that provision is satisfactory or better.	Fair; evident weaknesses that are impacting on pupils' learning; less than satisfactory; experiencing difficulty; must improve in specified areas; action required to improve
Weak	Weak applies where there are serious deficiencies in the areas evaluated. Immediate and coordinated whole-school action is required to address the areas of concern. In some cases, the intervention of other agencies may be required to support improvements.	Weak; unsatisfactory; insufficient; ineffective; poor; requiring significant change, development or improvement; experiencing significant difficulties;