

An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna
Department of Education and Skills

Subject Inspection in Art

REPORT

Ainm na scoile / School name	Maynooth Community College
Seoladh na scoile / School address	Maynooth Education Campus Moyglare Road Maynooth
Uimhir rolla / Roll number	76193Q

Date of Inspection: 04-03-2020



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

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 under the following headings:

1. Teaching, learning 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.

CHILD PROTECTION

During the inspection visit, the following checks in relation to the school's child protection procedures were conducted:

1. The name of the DLP and the Child Safeguarding Statement are prominently displayed near the main entrance to the school.
2. The Child Safeguarding Statement has been ratified by the board and includes an annual review and a risk assessment.
3. All teachers visited reported that they have read the Child Safeguarding Statement and that they are aware of their responsibilities as mandated persons.

The school met the requirements in relation to each of the checks above.

SUBJECT INSPECTION

INSPECTION ACTIVITIES

Dates of inspection	03-03-2020 & 04-03-2020
Inspection activities undertaken <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review of relevant documents• Discussion with principal and key staff• Interaction with students	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Observation of teaching and learning during three lessons• Examination of students' work• Feedback to principal and relevant staff

School context

Maynooth Community College is a co-educational community college located in the Maynooth Education Campus, which operates under the patronage of the Kildare and Wicklow Education and Training Board. With a current enrolment of 609 students the school offers the Junior Cycle Framework, an optional Transition Year, established Leaving Certificate, Leaving Certificate Vocational programme and the Leaving Certificate Applied (LCA).

SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

Findings

- The quality of learning and teaching was good to very good, with a few instances of satisfactory practice.
- Teachers model enthusiasm for Art, and demonstrate high expectations of students' engagement and outcomes.
- In-class assessment is good but written formative feedback is limited to completed written work.
- In line with good practice, teachers encourage students to use primary sources and annotate their work in order to develop necessary skills, however this tends to focus more on practical than on critical-thinking skills.
- Whole-school support for Art, and subject provision for most programmes is very good.
- The overall quality of planning and preparation for Art is good, but units of learning for Junior Cycle Visual Art are not yet fully developed

Recommendations

- The art department should plan and implement strategies to ensure that students are able to develop ideas more fully from primary sources that are meaningful and interesting to them; annotation practices should be established that focus to a greater extent on idea development and decision-making processes.
- Formative assessment practices should be further developed to include the extension of written formative feedback to practical work.
- Senior management should examine provision of Art in TY, to ensure sufficient contact time with the module for students to creatively develop new skills, and complete projects.
- The art department should further develop units of learning for Junior Cycle Visual Art based on the learning outcomes of the specification, taking cognisance of learning intentions, success criteria, and teaching and assessment approaches.

DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. TEACHING, LEARNING, AND ASSESSMENT

- The quality of teaching and learning in the lessons observed was good to very good, with a few instances of satisfactory practice. The art teachers model enthusiasm for the subject and expectations of student engagement and outcomes is high.
- Teachers shared learning intentions with students in all lessons. This was most effective when the intended learning and success criteria were clearly communicated to students, and reviewed to consolidate learning.
- In some instances the list of learning intentions was quite lengthy, making them difficult for students to assimilate. In all lessons teachers should ensure that learning intentions are concise and pertinent to the lesson so that students understand what is required to experience success.
- Teachers integrated visual culture with practical work very well. Learning was optimised when selected artworks were relevant to the lesson and students were given sufficient time to interpret artworks, enabling them to make clear connections with their own coursework. To maximise learning of visual culture, teachers should ensure that chosen artworks are relevant to the medium and context of students' current area of study.
- Highly effective collaborative learning is facilitated regularly in Art. Students were given clear directions for organised group-work activities and effective structures enabled students to engage well in collaborative tasks.
- Teachers used digital technologies in most lessons to display information. In some instances small font size and poor image clarity impacted on students' engagement. To optimise learning from digital media, teachers should ensure that students can clearly see any images provided. Furthermore teachers should integrate students' creative use of technology to enhance learning and assessment.
- Students are encouraged to annotate their work to enhance their understanding of the artistic process. This was most effective where students annotated their learning journey. Teachers should establish annotation practices that focus to a greater extent on idea development and decision-making processes, to cultivate students' creative and critical-thinking skills simultaneously with practical skills.
- In line with good practice, the use of primary sources is strongly encouraged, which engaged students most effectively when they chose objects that were meaningful and interesting to them. In some instances there was scope for students to manipulate and explore objects more fully to develop ideas. To optimise learning from primary sources, teachers should ensure that students understand the rationale for their use, and should include this rationale in the formation of success criteria.
- The art teachers use a range of effective formative assessment approaches, including student peer and self-assessment. High quality questioning challenged students to think deeply and expand on their responses. While examples of outstanding student responses were noted, overall there was scope for greater differentiation and distribution of questions. Teachers should consider means to support students with varied abilities to respond appropriately to questions in order to experience success.
- Teachers provide high-quality verbal feedback during lessons. The school is planning to introduce stamps for students to record verbal feedback. In the interim, the art department should consider alternative means for students to record feedback, and use it to plan for

improvement in subsequent lessons. Teachers provide written formative feedback on students' completed written work. This approach should be extended to students' practical work and work-in-progress.

2. SUBJECT PROVISION AND WHOLE SCHOOL SUPPORT

- The overall quality of whole-school support for Art is very good. Timetabling of Art for most programmes is very good, with generous time provision in line with curricular requirements. There is scope to increase provision in TY where students' attendance at the short module is often restricted by other programme commitments, impacting on opportunities to meaningfully progress their learning in Art. Senior management should address this to ensure sufficient contact time for students to creatively develop new skills, and to see projects through to completion.
- Art is offered on an optional basis with good uptake overall. Junior cycle option lines are pre-determined, which may account for the low uptake by boys. Senior management should investigate this, and review how subjects are offered to optimise student choice. The option of extending the open choice approach taken in senior cycle to junior cycle should be considered.
- A good range of opportunities is provided for students to access art beyond the curriculum, including initiatives that promote student wellbeing, the annual school musical and portfolio classes. Art has a high profile in the school, with permanent artworks on display throughout the existing school building. Current student work is rotated outside some art rooms. The art department should now plan for a space to display consistently updated, current student work in the new school building.

3. PLANNING AND PREPARATION

- In general lessons were well prepared with a good range of resources and materials prepared in advance.
- The overall quality of planning for Art is good. The art department has developed long-term schedules for the delivery of curricular content for each programme. Individual teachers adapt these to develop short-term projects and in some instances units of learning. Very good schemes of work are established for leaving certificate Art.
- The art department is in the early stages of developing plans to reflect the new junior cycle specification. Long-term plans have been developed to reflect the learning outcomes of the new specification for Visual Art. However, units of learning require further development. The art department should work collaboratively to develop units of learning that outline learning intentions linked to success criteria, and teaching, learning and assessment approaches. This should be informed by whole-school teaching and learning approaches such as input from the student learning team and school improvement strategies.
- The art department work very well as a team. Senior management facilitates regular subject planning meetings. Minutes indicate some discussion of teaching and learning, as well as analysis of data from certificate examinations. There is scope for greater depth of discussion around this analysis which could be used to a greater extent to inform subject planning for improvement.

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 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 of 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. 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;