

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

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

**Castleknock College**  
**Castleknock, County Dublin**  
**Roll number: 60100Q**

**Date of inspection: 7 October 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>	7 October 2011
<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 three class periods</li><li>• Examination of students' work</li><li>• Feedback to principal and teachers</li></ul>

**MAIN FINDINGS**

- The quality of teaching and learning observed during this evaluation was very good.
- The students' work examined during the evaluation was of a very good standard.
- A sense of care and a concern for each student's wellbeing and progress in learning informed planning, teaching and assessment.
- Students' behaviour was exemplary. They were proud of their artistic achievements and were very positively disposed to the subject.
- Current provision and plans for development indicate a very significant whole-school commitment to Art.
- The art department reviews and develops its provision very effectively.

**MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS**

- Transition Year (TY) students should be introduced to a module of contemporary art.
  - The Art Teachers Association of Ireland and the Professional Development Service for Teachers should be contacted to access the subject support available.
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## **INTRODUCTION**

Castleknock College has an enrolment of 566 male students. The school offers the following programmes: the Junior Certificate, a compulsory TY programme and the established Leaving Certificate. Art is an optional subject, except in TY where it is compulsory.

## **TEACHING AND LEARNING**

- The quality of teaching and learning observed during this evaluation was very good. Teachers' expectations were appropriately high and encouraged students to achieve to their potential.
- Communication was very effective and appropriately included visual, aural and written channels. The quality of the teacher-generated materials to support teaching and learning was very good.
- The methodologies chosen to achieve learning intentions were appropriate and pitched correctly. It is very good to note that particular attention was given to helping students plan appropriately for projects.
- Good use was made of information and communications technology (ICT) in lessons. For example, a visualiser was used to very good effect in one lesson to demonstrate colour mixing and paint application.
- During lessons, students were given opportunities to suggest routes for progression using guided questions. This is very supportive of students' independent learning.
- The structure of lessons was good. Lessons were divided into steps and each step was planned in a sequential and logical way to enable students to progress easily from one step to the next.
- It is very good to note that students' interests and motivations are encouraged as subject matter for lessons. For example, students were encouraged to use their own photographs and collected images as source material for projects. The quality of this source material was good and very appropriate to the tasks being carried out by students. This approach has facilitated students in making work that is personally meaningful for them and represents very good practice.
- The quality of students' work observed during the evaluation was of a very good standard. In particular students' observational drawing was of a high standard. The finish of students' work in a wide variety of media was good. Students were adept at using the aesthetic qualities of materials to emphasise meaning and message. It is clear that students are learning how to communicate effectively in a wide variety of disciplines and crafts.
- A sense of care and a concern for each student's wellbeing and progress in learning informed planning, teaching and assessment. Teachers had very good knowledge of students' understanding, potential and motivations.
- Individual students were monitored and supported as appropriate. This provided good opportunities for advice and challenge, relative to the students' abilities.
- Teachers had a very good rapport with students which led to a very positive classroom atmosphere. Students' behaviour was exemplary and affirmation was given generously.

- In all of the lessons observed, students were engaged in learning. They were proud of their artistic achievements and were very positively disposed to the subject.
- Students are given regular opportunities to practise their use of terminology with their peers and with teachers. It is good to note that teachers pay particular attention to encouraging students to accurately describe their visual perceptions.

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

- Whole-school support for Art is very positive and includes good timetabling and access to Art for students.
- The art department provides a very wide and rich range of extra-curricular and co-curricular activities to support achievement in Art. The art department is planning a very ambitious arts week to be held during the last term of this academic year. This event has the potential to be a vibrant and stimulating educational art experience for all students at the school.
- The physical resources provided to support Art are very positive, for example, students have access to a well-stocked art library. A professional quality gallery and exhibition space for art is currently being developed at the school. This has the potential to be very advantageous for students.
- The school has developed a whole-school assessment policy for which the art department has developed a set of subject-specific protocols. These are informed by the requirements of the certificate examinations and are supportive of students' independent learning. These procedures include formative and summative assessment processes.
- Students and their parents are regularly informed of students' progress using a variety of appropriate channels of communication.
- The art department is accommodated in two well-appointed rooms. These have been developed into optimal learning environments for students.
- Teachers' organisation of resources, materials and equipment is very good. Recycling and good management of materials ensures that waste is minimal. Teachers plan carefully so that optimal use is made of the allocated budget.
- It is recommended that the art department make contact with the Art Teachers' Association of Ireland and the Professional Development Service for Teachers to access the subject support available.

#### **PLANNING AND PREPARATION**

- The art department continuously seeks to review and develop its resources and provision for students.
- A good art department plan was presented during the evaluation which included the organisational and procedural aspects of the department as well as a set of curricular plans for teaching and learning.
- The curricular plans for lessons balanced the need to acquire skills and knowledge with providing a rich and positive learning experience for students. Best practice was observed by using learning outcomes for students.

- To further enrich students' experiences, it is recommended that a module of contemporary art be introduced in TY.
- Some very good work has been recently carried out using ICT to develop resource materials including literacy materials and study aids for students. These resources are attractive and motivational for students. The plans to install ICT equipment in the large art room have the potential to be very beneficial for students.
- The quality of teachers' planning was good.
- Good records are kept of students' attendance, effort and achievement.

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The draft findings and recommendations arising out of this evaluation were discussed with the 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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