



An Roinn Oideachais
Department of Education

Subject Inspection: Physical Education Report

REPORT

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| Ainm na scoile/School name | Regina Mundi College |
| Seoladh na scoile/School address | Douglas Road Cork |
| Uimhir rolla/Roll number | 62691G |
| Dáta na cigireachta/ Date of evaluation | 03-05-2023 |
| Dáta eisiúna na tuairisce/ Date of issue of report | 20/10/2023 |

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(s) evaluated learning and teaching in Physical Education 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 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.

Actions of the school to safeguard children and prevent and tackle bullying

| During the inspection visit, the following checks in relation to the school's child protection and anti-bullying procedures were conducted: | |
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| <i>Child Protection</i> | <i>Anti-bullying</i> |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none">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. | <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The school has developed an anti-bullying policy that meets the requirements of the <i>Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (2013)</i> and this policy is reviewed annually.2. The board of management minutes record that the principal provides a report to the board at least once a term on the overall number of bullying cases reported (by means of the bullying recording template provided in the <i>Procedures</i>) since the previous report to the board.3. The school's anti-bullying policy is published on its website and/or is readily accessible to board of management members, teachers, parents and pupils/students. |

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

Subject inspection

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| Dates of inspection | 02-05-2023 and 03-05-2023 |
| Inspection activities undertaken <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review of relevant documents• Discussion with principal and key staff• Interaction with students, including focus groups | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Observation of teaching and learning during three lessons• Feedback to principal and relevant staff |

The focus of this subject inspection was on Junior Cycle Physical Education only.

School context

Regina Mundi College is an all girls, voluntary secondary school located in Douglas in Cork City. The school is under the management of a board of directors. The school offers the Junior Cycle, a compulsory Transition Year (TY) programme and the established Leaving Certificate programme. It has a current enrolment of 571 students.

Summary of main findings and recommendations:

Findings

- Good quality teaching and learning was observed in all lessons with many examples of very good practice.
- A very high quality learner experience was evident in all lessons and teachers created a very positive, affirming learning environment.
- Lesson preparation was very good with all lessons having a clear, coherent structure and very good lesson materials prepared that enhanced student learning.
- The promotion of student wellbeing was an evident priority in all physical education lessons.
- Physical Education was highly valued and well resourced in the school.
- Planning for Physical Education as part of the junior cycle framework was exemplary.

Recommendations

- Closer attention to some of the technical elements of athletics activities was recommended to ensure the accuracy of the information presented; it is suggested that teachers should collaborate through the excellent subject department structure to progress this recommendation.
- The school should consider the development of some on-site facilities to complement the very good facilities that are availed of in the locality.

Detailed findings and recommendations

1. Teaching, learning and assessment

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in the lessons observed was good with many examples of very good practice noted.
- Students achieved very well in the physical education lessons observed. They were attentive, engaged and active at all times. Their responses to tasks set by their teachers as well as their ability to recall and apply previous learning were commended.

- The experience of all learners was very positive in the lessons observed. Respectful relationships were modelled by teachers in their interactions with students and a noteworthy feature of all lessons was the regularity with which students assisted their peers in completing set tasks and providing feedback. During a focus group interview with students, they were keen to point out how much they liked their physical education lessons and in particular the variety of activities they undertook.
- While a clear attempt to develop the junior cycle key skills was apparent in all lessons, the focus on student wellbeing, promoted and developed through positive interactions and a focus on student needs, was particularly noteworthy. This has been planned for by the subject department and was highly commended.
- Teachers' individual practice was good in all lessons with many examples of very good practice noted. Excellent use of digital technologies was observed in one lesson in particular. This involved students video recording each other's performances using a tablet device and analysing sprinting technique and baton changes during a sprint relay lesson. It was clear that students found this a considerable aid to their understanding and learning.
- Teachers used questioning very effectively to elicit learning and students' answers to questions indicated a very good level of understanding. Greater use of student demonstrations was recommended in some lessons in order to enhance student learning, particularly for students who may be visual learners.
- While teacher demonstrations were generally very good, some technical aspects relating to athletics activities could have been clarified in advance of the lessons. It was suggested that the excellent subject department structure which exists in the school should be used to progress this, whereby teachers could collate the key technical aspects of particular activities and produce a one-page document for a range of activities to be stored on the department's shared electronic folder.
- A clear sense that the physical education department operated as a coherent department was evident during the evaluation. The well-planned schemes of work, together with a range of other useful resource materials, were stored on the shared electronic folder which was readily accessible to teachers. The clear, coherent structure to all lessons was particularly praiseworthy. This involved distinct phases such as: lesson introduction; recap on previous learning; warm-up; focus on learning outcomes for the current lesson; performance of a range of tasks; teacher and peer feedback opportunities incorporating aspects of assessment for learning; recap on learning, and introduction to the following lesson.

2. Subject provision and whole school support

- Physical Education had a very good status in the school and was clearly well valued and promoted by school management.
- All those involved in the teaching of Physical Education were appropriately qualified to teach the subject and teachers had engaged in a wide range of continuing professional development (CPD). Additionally, there were a number of teachers on staff, not currently involved in the teaching of the subject, who held physical education teaching qualifications.
- Timetabling of Physical Education was fully in line with requirements as outlined in the junior cycle framework.
- It was clear that the physical education department had planned for, and was working towards, the school's self-evaluation (SSE) agenda as the use of learning intentions and the co-creation of success criteria was a feature of all lessons.
- Very good formative assessment strategies were in place during physical education lessons and reports in Physical Education, sent home twice per year for all year groups, provided a very good picture of student achievement in the subject as well as areas for improvement.
- The school had no physical education facilities available on its own grounds and was commended for the manner in which a wide range of facilities were accessed in the

locality in order to provide physical education lessons and support the school's extensive extra-curricular sports programme. The absence of on-site facilities, however, required students to walk to a nearby sports facility for the majority of their physical education lessons. The school is encouraged to investigate the provision of some on-site facilities to ensure that learning in Physical Education can progress even during inclement weather when walking to nearby facilities may not be practical. Even a basic fitness suite, equipped with minimal equipment, would allow theoretical and practical learning to take place if a suitable location can be sourced.

3. Planning and preparation

- The overall quality of planning and preparation observed during the evaluation was very good with exemplary planning and excellent collaborative practice noted in relation to the implementation of the junior cycle framework.
- A broad range of activities had been planned and this was particularly praiseworthy considering the lack of availability of on-site facilities.
- The school had planned the implementation of the junior cycle physical education short course very comprehensively and junior cycle key skills as well as wellbeing indicators were integrated into this plan in a thoughtful manner.
- The physical education teachers had undertaken two classroom based assessments (CBA) with their students, one in gymnastics and one in athletics, and subject learning and assessment review (SLAR) meetings had been held to support teacher judgement with regard to the quality of students' work. It was noted, and commended, that the physical education department wants to expand the range of options open to students in reflecting on CBAs to include video and audio reflection opportunities.
- Professional time was allocated appropriately to physical education teachers. This time was used to support planning, collaboration, SLAR meetings and reporting on students' progress.
- The facilitator's report on the CBAs was available on the department's shared electronic folder and, commendably, was compiled using a template designed by a member of the physical education department.

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 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 | <i>Very good</i> 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 <i>outstanding</i> 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 | <i>Good</i> 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 | <i>Satisfactory</i> 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 | <i>Fair</i> 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 | <i>Weak</i> 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; |