

An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna
Department of Education and Skills

Subject Inspection in French

REPORT

School name	Regina Mundi College
School address	Douglas Road Cork
Roll number	62691G

Date of Inspection: 10-12-2019



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 French 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 manager of the school 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.

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	9, 10 December 2019
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 seven lessons• Examination of students' work• Feedback to principal and relevant staff

School context

Regina Mundi College is a voluntary secondary school for girls in Cork City. It operates under the aegis 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 565 students.

SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

Findings

- The overall quality of teaching, learning and assessment was good with some aspects of very good practice observed.
- Good practice was demonstrated by the teachers' use of French for instruction and communication purposes; there is scope for further development of students' use of the language.
- Very effective practice was observed where there was a clear focus on learner outcomes and experiences, and student participation and learning was highlighted through the sharing of learning intentions.
- Students were motivated, cooperative and interested in their work; scope to optimise their participation was noted as well as the further development of their language-learning skills.
- Overall provision for languages is very good, with French and German provided in junior and senior cycle, while Latin is also offered in the school.
- Individual and collaborative planning for French is very good and is led by the subject department coordinator.

Recommendations

- Increased use of the target language by students in their interactions should be encouraged and facilitated.
- Greater use of learning intentions, and the revisiting of these intentions at the end of lessons is recommended as a way of ensuring that students engage in reflection and assessment of their learning, and by so doing, become more independent learners.
- In planning for lessons, there should be an increased focus on the development of students' language-learning skills, in particular their listening and reading comprehension skills.

DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. TEACHING, LEARNING, AND ASSESSMENT

- The overall quality of teaching, learning and assessment was good, with some aspects of very effective practice observed.
- Good practice was evident in the use of French by all teachers for instruction and communication purposes. This practice should be further developed to facilitate the students' use of the language in their interactions during lessons, and to build their confidence in their oral skills.
- Lessons were well structured. Well-chosen handouts such as worksheets and grammar-related material formed part of teachers' preparation, and good use was made of visual and audio resources to assist and support students in their learning.
- Very good practice was evident where the focus of the lesson was on student engagement and learner outcomes. In these lessons, students were provided with meaningful opportunities for collaboration and participation. The use of learning intentions and success criteria, as well as the integration of different elements of language learning, provided a positive learning experience for students. In order to extend this good practice, all teachers should consider the ways in which learning intentions could be revisited at different points in the lesson in order to highlight student learning.
- Very good relationships between teachers and students were observed at all times. Students were motivated and cooperative, and demonstrated a good level of subject knowledge and interest in their work. They were very diligent in their approach to their work, in particular in noting vocabulary and expressions suggested by the teacher. However at times, they were slow to contribute or to ask questions. In order to optimise student participation, teachers' lesson planning should focus on the quality of the learners' experience. Students should be facilitated to take greater ownership of their learning through purposeful participation, opportunities to ask and answer questions, and for reflection on their learning.
- A good variety of reading and listening material was used during the lessons observed. The texts were well chosen, but were sometimes used primarily as a comprehension exercise. In order to develop students' global listening or reading skills, the texts should be first exploited as a means of developing these skills in the target language, before students move on to answering comprehension questions in English.
- Vocabulary exercises featured as part of established lesson routines, and grammar points were clearly explained. Very effective practice was observed where students' language awareness and understanding of how a language is constructed, was reinforced through their identification of the grammatical structures necessary for communication.
- There was very good monitoring of students' work, including project work, during lessons and individual support was provided to students as required. Homework is regularly assigned and corrected, and written feedback included positive comments and suggestions for improvement.

2. SUBJECT PROVISION AND WHOLE SCHOOL SUPPORT

- The overall quality of provision and whole-school support for languages is very good with both French and German provided in junior and senior cycle, while Latin is also offered.
- The allocation of class-contact time for French across the three years of junior cycle is in line with the requirements of the specification, and provision in senior cycle is also appropriate.

- The teachers have participated in the relevant professional development for the Modern Foreign Language (MFL) specification for Junior Cycle. A variety of co-curricular and extra-curricular activities are organised by the teachers, including a well-established student exchange with France, the celebration of World Languages Day, a poster competition, and visits to the annual French film festival.

4. PLANNING AND PREPARATION

- The quality of individual and collaborative planning is very good.
- Subject department meetings for French are held at the start of the school year, while short meetings are held on a more regular basis. Planning is led by the subject coordinator who organises and chairs the meetings and acts as a link with senior management.
- Collaborative planning with regard to the implementation of the MFL specification is ongoing and includes the development of a comprehensive subject plan for each year group. The plan covers key areas such as units of learning, learning intentions and resources as well as numeracy and literacy strategies. This represents good practice, and the language department is also engaged in discussion on new assessment practices such as portfolio preparation and classroom-based assessments.
- An analysis of levels of student uptake and attainment in the certificate examinations is undertaken each year by the subject department. The results are used to inform planning and the tracking of student progress. This represents good practice.

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 of 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. 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;

Appendix

SCHOOL RESPONSE TO THE REPORT

Submitted by the School Manager

Part A Observations on the content of the inspection report

The Board of Directors welcomes the findings of the French Inspection in Regina Mundi College. We are pleased that the good and very good practice of teaching, learning and assessment in French was acknowledged. Students of Regina Mundi College enjoy French and this was noted in the very good relationships observed between teachers and students at all times.

Part B Follow-up actions planned or undertaken since the completion of the inspection activity to implement the findings and recommendations of the inspection.

The French department have already begun planning to implement the recommendations contained in the report.