

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

**Subject Inspection in French**

**REPORT**

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| <b>Ainm na scoile /<br/>School name</b>       | Celbridge Community School             |
| <b>Seoladh na scoile /<br/>School address</b> | Moortown<br>Maynooth Road<br>Celbridge |
| <b>Uimhir rolla /<br/>Roll number</b>         | 91614B                                 |

**Date of Inspection: 13-09-2018**



## **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.

## **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

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| <b>Dates of inspection</b>   | 12-09-2018 and 13-09-2018   |
| <b>Inspection activities undertaken</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Review of relevant documents</li><li>• Discussion with principal and key staff</li><li>• Interaction with students</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Observation of teaching and learning during four class periods</li><li>• Examination of students' work</li><li>• Feedback to principal and relevant staff</li></ul> |

### School context

Celbridge Community School is a co-educational post-primary school opened in September 2015 under the trusteeship of Educate Together and Kildare and Wicklow Education and Training Board. The school has an enrolment of 396 students. The junior cycle, Junior Certificate, and a compulsory Transition Year (TY) programme are currently offered to students. Going forward, TY will become an optional programme within the school.

### SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

#### Findings

- The overall quality of teaching and learning in all lessons observed was of a very high standard.
- Teacher use of the target language was excellent in all lessons and students engaged actively in the spoken language, both with their teachers and with each other.
- Excellent practices observed in the lessons included a wide variety of active learning methodologies and comprehensive formative assessment strategies.
- A variety of language skills received due attention; tasks aimed specifically at furthering aural skills development featured to a lesser extent.
- The quality of provision and whole-school support for French is very good.
- Individual and collaborative planning and preparation is very good.

#### Recommendations

- Tasks aimed at furthering aural skills development should feature to a greater extent within lessons.

## DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 1. TEACHING AND LEARNING

- The overall quality of teaching and learning in the lessons observed was of a very high standard.
- Teacher use of French was optimal throughout the lessons observed and their capacity in the target language served to provide students with highly effective linguistic models.
- Students were given ample opportunity in lessons to progress their oral skills and they engaged in such tasks with confidence and enthusiasm. Teachers paid sensitive attention to individual and whole-class pronunciation throughout the lessons observed. This assisted in the creation of conditions favourable for the promotion of oral skills development.
- A strong focus on purposeful active learning methodologies featured in every lesson. These included placemat tasks, think-pair-share, pair and group work and brainstorm activities. These interactive learning experiences were well designed, timed and paced.
- Teachers presented clear, specific and, in most instances, differentiated learning intentions at the start of lessons. These served to challenge students appropriately. A plenary was provided at the end of each lesson to review and assess the learning and assessment also featured at various stages within the lesson structure. Success criteria was referenced repeatedly and readily understood by students. This is all excellent practice.
- Teachers ensured that sociocultural knowledge and inter-cultural awareness featured through a variety of tasks, including references to famous French monuments and typical French products. Cross-curricular and language awareness links were also noted in various references to comparisons with Gaeilge.
- The integrated approach to language teaching received good attention with, for instance, grammar carefully integrated. To enhance this good practice, tasks aimed specifically at aural skills development, which were not a recurring feature of the lessons observed, should receive greater attention. This would assist in further developing students' receptive language skills.
- A sample inspection of copybooks indicated that students receive regular homework and that such work is monitored. Furthermore, it was noted that teachers' provide comprehensive written feedback on such work; this served to identify strengths and guide students towards improvement.
- More generally, the wide use of formative assessment strategies observed was exemplary and included regular 'check-in' tasks to assess learning, as well as 'post-it' tasks, 'lollypop sticks' and 'traffic light' strategies. Students were also required to engage in self-assessment as means to improve their learning. This enhanced the overall learning experience for students.
- Regular formal assessment of students takes place and there is an appropriate system of reporting on students' progress to parents. An in-house oral assessment is in place for all students and the optional Junior Certificate oral examination is also established practice within the school. This is very good practice.

- Information and communications technology (ICT) featured within each lesson, for example, through use of tablet devices to assist in revision and self-reflection.
- Classroom management was excellent in all lessons and teachers regularly affirmed learners for their positive engagement.
- The classrooms observed were print-rich, with various posters, expressions and relevant materials on display. Classroom seating arrangements are optimal for the promotion of the best conditions for a student-centred learning environment.

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

- The quality of provision and whole-school support for French is very good.
- The school operates hour long lessons; within that context, there is an appropriate spread of lessons across the week to ensure regular contact time with the language. There is also an appropriate allocation of time to meet the requirements of the recently introduced specification for modern foreign languages.
- Teachers organise an annual European day of languages celebration, a 'crêpe' morning, cinema trips and a French club in order to maintain interest for the subject amongst students.
- A variety of additional plans are also in place to further promote the subject within the school; these include the pending arrival of a French-language assistant and the establishment of an exchange programme with a school in France at which one of the teachers was previously employed. These initiatives are commendable and should lead to furthering student engagement with the language and culture of the French-speaking world.

## **3. PLANNING AND PREPARATION**

- The quality of individual and collaborative planning and preparation is very good.
- Schemes of work have been reviewed in line with the recently introduced specification for modern foreign languages. It is particularly positive to note the level of engagement with the specification, evident in the detailed and considered schemes of work that reflect recent changes.
- Minutes of subject department meetings contain very clear evidence of agendas that specifically target issues related to teaching and learning. This is very good practice.
- Students recently completed their first certificate examinations at junior cycle. The teachers intend to review and analyse the emerging data and to respond appropriately through the development of targeted actions, as may be required.
- The modern foreign languages department within the school has recently experienced a significant expansion, growing from a single teacher department to one that now encompasses four teachers. This expansion also includes the introduction of German to the school curriculum, which serves to provide students with a choice of language options. The teachers rightly view this as an excellent opportunity to form a single modern foreign languages department and have taken steps to ensure that this becomes a reality within the school. Commendably, links have also been established with the school's Gaeilge department in order to exchange best practice.

- Commendably, there are plans to regularly rotate the position of subject co-ordinator, in light of the expansion of the subject department and with a view to further developing leadership capacity.

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 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.

## 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 in each area.

| Level               | Description   | Example of descriptive terms  |
|---------------------|---|---|
| <b>Very Good</b>    | <b>Very good</b> 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 <b>outstanding</b> 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 |
| <b>Good</b>         | <b>Good</b> 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   |
| <b>Satisfactory</b> | <b>Satisfactory</b> 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  |
| <b>Fair</b>         | <b>Fair</b> 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   |
| <b>Weak</b>         | <b>Weak</b> 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;   |