

**An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna**

**Department of Education and Skills**

**Follow-Through Inspection  
REPORT**

**St Louis High School,  
Rathmines, Dublin 6  
Roll No: 60890C**

**Date of inspection: 4 March 2016**



<b>Date of publication/issue of original report</b>	<b>January 2014</b>	<b>Type of original report</b>	<b>Subject Inspection of Science and Physics</b>	<b>Date of FT inspection</b>	<b>4 March 2016</b>
<b>Follow-through inspection activities</b>					
<p><i>The following activities took place in the course of the follow-through inspection</i></p> <p>Meeting with principal and senior management team  Meeting with subject coordinator and relevant teachers  Observation of teaching and learning  Interaction with students  Review of school documentation and records and students' work  Review of resources and facilities</p>					
<b>Recommendation in original inspection report</b>		<b>Progress achieved to date on implementation of recommendation</b>			
Strategies should be developed to engage students more actively in some lessons and the pace of delivery should support this process.		<p><b>Very good progress</b></p> <p>There was a high level of student activity observed in lessons during the follow through evaluation and the pace was appropriate for effective learning. Students were actively engaged in investigative practical activities. In addition, students were appropriately challenged and developed good quality observation, problem solving and critical thinking skills. Methodologies utilised by teachers supported effective differentiation and inclusivity of students.</p>			
Subject planning, schemes of work and Transition Year (TY) planning require further development and review.		<p><b>Very good progress</b></p> <p>Subject planning has progressed to include long-term targets for subject development and analysis of state examination results. The schemes of work are developed using a well-designed template which addresses prioritised areas including literacy, numeracy, assessment, evaluation and differentiation. TY planning includes appropriate focus on skills development for students and good evaluation strategies. Some further development of planning is necessary as outlined later in this report.</p>			
Assessment for learning (AfL) strategies should be more fully integrated into students' learning experiences, and in particular, the practice of providing formative written feedback to students should be expanded.		<p><b>Good progress</b></p> <p>Teachers provided high quality verbal feedback to students on their work during the practical lessons observed. Question and answer sessions were well integrated into lessons and were aimed at maximising full participation of students. Questions were invited from students and this strategy aided comprehension of key ideas by students. Formative written feedback will require further development and the quality of some students' written work will require further monitoring.</p>			
<b>Summary of findings</b>					
<p>Teachers and school management have made very good progress with the implementation of the majority of key recommendations made in the subject inspection report.</p> <p>Some overarching issues which impact on the quality of science educational provision were discussed with senior management and teachers during the evaluation. The school has three science laboratories to cater for the practical science needs of 633 students. Science is a core subject at junior cycle. Physics, Chemistry and Biology are offered in TY and in senior cycle. Laboratory access for students is therefore quite restricted. Currently, due to restricted laboratory access, teachers favour single class periods which are timetabled for Science in first year and second year. Double periods in laboratories provide sufficient time for extensive investigative and inquiry-based learning and assessment in Science. Therefore, school management should address this deficit in provision for Science as resources allow.</p> <p>Science is a core subject in junior cycle and there is a very high uptake of science subjects in senior cycle. Science is promoted through successful student participation in co-curricular and extra-curricular activities and competitions.</p>					
<b>Recommendations</b>					
<p>Some further development is recommended to fully achieve two of the recommendations made in the previous report. TY planning should be further developed to include a programme based on a common agreed template focused on student skills' development with inbuilt assessment and evaluation strategies. Subject planning should include reflections and proposed actions based on the examination results analysis, added focus on health and safety in the</p>					

laboratory and on the integration of school self-evaluation into Science practice. Formative written feedback for students on the quality of their work requires further development.

The board of management 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.

# **Appendix**

**SCHOOL RESPONSE TO THE REPORT**

**Submitted by the Board of Management**

## **Part A Observations on the content of the inspection report**

The Board of Management very much appreciates the affirmation given to the school in relation to the follow-through inspection of Science and Physics.

The DES inspectorate's recognition of the following aspects is particularly gratifying:

- that very good progress has been made to develop strategies to engage students more actively and to address the pace of delivery of content in the classroom.
- that very good progress has been made in the area of planning, schemes of work and that good progress has been made in integrating AfL strategies into students' learning experiences.
- that a wide range of co-curricular and extra-curricular activities are provided for the students.
- that Science is a core subject in Junior Cycle and that there is a very high uptake of science subjects in senior cycle.

## **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 Science Department will further develop TY planning and subject planning and enhance formative written feedback. Management looks forward to working in conjunction with the DES to address the issue of restricted laboratory access.