

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

**Subject Inspection in German**

**REPORT**

<b>Ainm na scoile / School name</b>	Loreto College
<b>Seoladh na scoile / School address</b>	Mullingar Co Westmeath
<b>Uimhir rolla / Roll number</b>	63290Q

**Date of Inspection: 30-04-2018**



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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 German 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.

## INSPECTION ACTIVITIES

<b>Date of inspection</b>	30-04-2018
<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 three class periods</li><li>• Examination of students' work</li><li>• Feedback to principal, deputy principals and relevant staff</li></ul>

### School context

Loreto College, Mullingar is a voluntary Catholic secondary school. The current enrolment is 827 and the Transition Year programme is optional.

## SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

### Findings

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is excellent and a wide variety of effective teaching methodologies ensured maximum student engagement and learning in all lessons.
- Strategies associated with the principles of Assessment for Learning (AfL) were used to optimal effect in all lessons and student-teacher rapport was most positive and conducive to high-quality learning.
- Whole-school support and provision for the subject is exemplary with highly effective practices in the area of leading learning evident, and the uptake for the subject has increased significantly.
- Teacher commitment to availing of a wide range of continuing professional development (CPD) opportunities is excellent and the benefits are evident in the excellent classroom practice observed.
- The quality of individual lesson and subject department planning is excellent and is supported through very effective school self-evaluation (SSE) processes.

### Recommendations

- Students should be encouraged to further exploit the German department's correction code to record the frequency of types of errors made with a view to enhancing students' ability for self-assessment.
- To build on the very good SSE practices teachers should consider engaging in peer lesson visits with a view to sharing the excellent practice observed in the course of the evaluation.

## DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 1. TEACHING, LEARNING, AND ASSESSMENT

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment was excellent.
- Teachers' use of the target language was very good and this provided students with a rich linguistic input which facilitated their acquisition of German. Students' use of the target language was very good and students were given lots of meaningful opportunities to use German.
- A wide variety of highly effective teaching methodologies was used to foster student engagement and to promote successful learning. The use of current up-to-date materials in multimedia formats was exemplary.
- The well-established student routines contributed to successful learning. Students all take a dictionary on entry to the classroom and all lessons begin with speaking and writing the day, date and time in German. In the acquisition of new vocabulary, students were always encouraged to break down the new word into sub components to help with both pronunciation and comprehension.
- Particularly noteworthy was the very good use of group work which enabled students of a range of abilities to learn collaboratively. The tasks assigned for group work were well thought out and provided very good opportunities for students to scaffold their learning. It was evident that students are accustomed to engaging in this methodology effectively.
- Assessment practices were excellent. In particular the use of strategies associated with the principles of AfL were underpinned by clear rationale for their use and provided a platform for the teacher to improve student learning. The use of exit slips, peer assessment and self-assessment was very good.
- Learning intentions were stated at the beginning of lessons and outstanding practice was noted where students engaged with the learning intentions to produce their own success criteria. This resulted in very high levels of student engagement and understanding of their own learning.
- Student engagement was excellent and there was clear evidence of students making effective progress in their learning. A range of methods was used to affirm and praise students. In addition to frequent verbal affirmation, the use of written comments and colourful stickers all served to make the learner experience very positive.
- The learning environment was exemplary. A wide range of attractive posters, colourful student work, maps and resources to support autonomous learning was available to students.
- Very good differentiation was evident in lessons. In line with best practice, teacher awareness and knowledge of students' additional learning needs and learning targets in student support files was comprehensive. To support differentiated learning needs, very good use of scaffolding, graphic organisers, effective questioning strategies and teacher circulation were all noted in lessons.
- Students' written work is very well monitored and corrected using a correction code which encourages learner self-assessment. To build on this, students could be encouraged to regularly record which errors they make to establish if the frequency of such errors is decreasing. This will serve to improve learner self-reflection and progress learning further.

- The student-teacher rapport was excellent. A safe and positive classroom environment was established in all lessons and students responded very well to this. Students were very well managed and student behaviour was exemplary.

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

- There is very good provision for German and whole-school support for the subject is most effective. The numbers taking the subject are increasing and this is very positive.
- There are very good co-curricular activities to support the teaching and learning of German. These include a German language exchange programme, German debating club and international food tasting activities. The German department has put significant effort into arranging activities to promote German language learning outside the classroom.
- The senior management team provides highly effective leadership for learning and teacher CPD is prioritised and supported. The German department has engaged in a significant range of CPD opportunities and is proactive in seeking innovative CPD. The benefits of this commitment to professional learning are evident in the exemplary classroom practice observed.
- Teacher deployment is very good and, in light of the increase in uptake of the subject, the senior management team has been very proactive in ensuring that capacity is built and expanded in the German department.
- The senior management team has effectively led the SSE process and the benefits of this are evident in the German department and in classroom practice. To progress SSE it is suggested that peer lesson visits should take place to share the excellent practice evident in the course of this evaluation.

## **3. PLANNING AND PREPARATION**

- The quality of individual planning for lessons was exemplary. All materials were carefully prepared in advance and many of these were created by the individual teacher. Student tasks and activities were very well thought out in the planning phase and included a pre-activity and post-activity to ensure learning was well scaffolded and consolidated.
- The quality of subject department planning is excellent. Significant work has been done to incorporate the development of literacy and numeracy strategies into the plan. The plans are focused appropriately on learning outcomes and corresponding methodologies to ensure that these are realised.
- There is good collaboration across the modern language departments and this is to be encouraged.
- Very good use is made of SSE processes and good analysis of student outcomes informs planning. This analysis shows that student attainment in certificate examinations is very good and above expectations.

The draft findings and recommendations arising out of this evaluation were discussed with the principal, deputy principals and subject teacher at the conclusion of the evaluation. 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.

## 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;

# **Appendix**

**SCHOOL RESPONSE TO THE REPORT**

**Submitted by the Board of Management**

## **Area 1 Observations on the content of the inspection report**

The Board of Management is extremely pleased to accept the findings of the inspection report and particularly welcomes the following findings:

- The excellence of teaching, learning and assessment
- The wide variety of highly effective teaching methodologies
- The well-established student routines contributing to successful learning
- The exemplary learning environment and the excellence of student engagement

## **Area 2 Follow-up actions planned or undertaken since the completion of the inspection activity to implement the findings and recommendations of the inspection.**

- The recommendation to exploit the German Department's use of correction codes has been incorporated into our School Improvement Plan. All subject teachers have been provided with a correction code template and encouraged to embed this as part of their classroom practice.
- As part of the School Improvement Plan (SIP), the Board of Management is actively supporting peer lesson visits and team teaching with a view to sharing the excellent practice observed in the course of the evaluation. A successful initiative already in place to share teacher practice is being further developed and supported through the SIP.