An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna

Department of Education and Skills

Subject Inspection in Guidance

REPORT

Ainm na scoile / School name	Coláiste Aindriú
Seoladh na scoile / School address	Muine Bheag Co Carlow
Uimhir rolla / Roll number	70430U

Date of Inspection: 12-10-2018

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 Guidance 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 was given an opportunity to comment in writing on the findings and recommendations of the report; a response was not received from the board.

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	11-10-2018 and 12-10-2018
Inspection activities undertaken • Review of relevant documents • Discussion with deputy principal and key staff • Interaction with students	• Observation of teaching and learning during three class periods • Examination of students' work • Feedback to deputy principal and guidance counsellor

School context

Coláiste Aindriú is a co-educational post-primary school under the auspices of Kilkenny and Carlow Education and Training Board (KCETB) with a current enrolment of 71 students. The school provides Junior Cycle, Junior Certificate School Programme, compulsory Transition Year (TY) programme, and the established Leaving Certificate. The school participates in Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools (DEIS), the action plan of the Department of Education and Skills for educational inclusion.

SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

Findings

- Teaching and learning was satisfactory with limited active learning and formative assessment.
- At the time of the inspection, the guidance provision was insufficient to provide appropriate guidance for students, as there was no time available for one-to-one guidance counselling; this has been since rectified by the school through consultation with KCETB.
- Whole-school support for personal, educational and career guidance is good; the school provides a valuable range of activities for students, which promote all three aspects of guidance.
- Student welfare is given a high priority and an appropriately constituted and effective student support team meets weekly to discuss interventions for students.
- Guidance planning requires significant improvement, both whole-school guidance programme planning and guidance curricular planning and are less than satisfactory.
- A very good critical incident management plan and a pastoral care policy have been recently developed.

Recommendations

- When planning lessons, all teachers should incorporate active methodologies and develop formative assessment practices.
- Senior management should exercise oversight of whole-school guidance and convene a cross-curricular team to progress guidance planning.
- A comprehensive guidance plan, including a curricular and co-curricular plan, should be developed and sent to the board of management annually for ratification.

DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. TEACHING, LEARNING, AND ASSESSMENT

- Teaching and learning was satisfactory with limited active learning and formative assessment.
- The teacher was well prepared for all lessons. A variety of resources were available including worksheets, video clips, self-assessment sheets and slide shows. Appropriate topics were selected by the teacher which included work skills analysis, study skills, and preparation for attendance at an upcoming college open day.
- While the teacher shared the learning intentions in most lessons, there was little or no reference to them during the lesson or as part of a recap and consolidation of learning at the conclusion of the lesson. It is recommended that teachers assess students' attainment of the learning intentions using formative assessment techniques.
- Some lessons were predominately teacher led with limited opportunities for students to share their opinions and learning. There was scope to facilitate students to work in groups to generate and discuss ideas, rather than work individually. In planning lessons, teachers should incorporate appropriate group and pair activities that are active and collaborative and linked to the learning intentions.
- Students were observed effectively engaging with the tasks assigned to them and individually completing the self-assessment worksheets. However, there was no discussion of the results of the self-assessment work skills analysis. Teachers should facilitate students to evaluate their strengths and areas for development as part of setting meaningful personal goals.
- During all lessons, the teacher circulated and provided good individual support to students by answering their questions and monitoring their individual work. Students complete a small number of guidance-related assignments including a career investigation which they present to their class. This is good practice and helps to build students' confidence; the teacher should consider offering students further opportunities to develop their research and presentation skills.
- A good range of psychometric tests are used including career interests, learning styles, values questionnaires and various standardised abilities tests.

2. SUBJECT PROVISION AND WHOLE SCHOOL SUPPORT

- At the time of the inspection the guidance provision was two hours which was insufficient to provide appropriate guidance for students as there was no time available for one-to-one guidance counselling. This has been since rectified by the school through consultation with KCETB and an agreement has been reached to provide more time for students to access the guidance counsellor in line with Circular 009/2018.
- Senior management has effectively utilised the available guidance hours by timetabling the guidance counsellor for one day per week to deliver guidance lessons. The third year, TY and senior cycle students have a weekly guidance lesson. Students have good access to the computer room which supports development of information, communication, and technology skills and facilitates students to engage in online career research.

- Student welfare is given a high priority and an effective student support team meets weekly to discuss interventions for students. There are very good links between the home-school community liaison officer, the School Completion Programme (SCP) co-ordinator, year heads, and the senior management team.
- The link between the guidance counsellor and other programme co-ordinators is not effective. As part of a whole-school guidance approach, the guidance counsellor and the TY co-ordinator should collaborate more purposefully when planning open days, work experience and guidance-related speakers.
- The school has developed very good working relationships with local external partners such as the National Educational Psychological Service, Carlow Youth Services and the Youth Centre Bagenalstown. As a result, students benefit from a range of supports including counselling and personal development programmes.
- Teachers organise a valuable range of whole-school guidance activities which promote wellbeing, including healthy eating, cyber bullying, Mensana, and Aware talks. The Friends for Life programme, which promotes resilience, is effectively delivered by the SCP co-ordinator to first and second year students. It is commendable that some senior cycle students are participating in a health promoting programme in conjunction with students from the Institute of Technology, Carlow.
- Beneficial education and career guidance activities take place to support Science, Technology, Engineering, and Maths (STEM). Events such as maths and science week, college awareness week and short courses in coding and digital animation are an effective way to raise students' interest and understanding of STEM opportunities.
- It is evident from the school's renewal plan that useful co-curricular guidance activities are planned by teachers. These include visits to local colleges and a careers fair, career and educational talks including apprenticeship routes, interview skills, careers in the defence forces and study skills.
- There is a good range of effective supports for parents through home visits, meetings and talks on various guidance-related issues such as applying to college and subject choices. However, students are not fully aware of the access routes to higher education and there is scope to develop both students' and parents' understanding of the available options and supports to promote progression to further and higher education.
- Worthwhile personal development opportunities for students include the new Meitheal leadership training programme delivered by members of staff. The co-ordinators of this programme should consider how the student mentors could participate in the induction programme for incoming first years

4. PLANNING AND PREPARATION

- Individual planning and preparation for lessons was good. Teachers prepared appropriate worksheets and video clips in advance of lessons.
- Whole-school collaborative guidance planning is poor. Significant focus is required to improve both the planning process and the guidance plan. There was no comprehensive guidance plan available at the time of the inspection. Senior management should exercise oversight of whole-school guidance and convene a cross-curricular team to progress guidance planning. A comprehensive guidance plan, including a curricular and co-curricular plan, should be developed and sent to the board annually for ratification.

- The guidance curricular plan is fair, lacks detail and requires further development. The inclusion of clear learning outcomes for all year groups and assessment strategies would greatly enhance it.
- Appropriate evaluation of guidance has begun with a recent survey of teachers' opinions on what is working well and areas for development in Guidance. When designing the guidance programme, it is recommended that the views students and parents be included during the planning and evaluation phases.
- It is commendable that the school has prioritised and recently developed a pastoral care policy and an up-to-date critical incident management plan. However, there are a number of policies, including the anti-bullying policy, which are in need of immediate review. School management should prioritise policy development.
- The school does not have an agreed policy or recording templates for one-to-one meetings with students. It is suggested that a one-to-one policy and appropriate data protection compliant recording templates be developed for use by all staff who meet students on an individual basis.

The draft findings and recommendations arising out of this evaluation were discussed with the deputy principal and guidance counsellor 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 *very good* 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;