An Roinn Oideachais agus Óige
Department of Education and Youth

Subject Inspection: Computer Science and Digital Subjects
REPORT

Ainm na scoile/School name	Ramsgrange Community School
Seoladh na scoile/School address	Ramsgrange New Ross Co Wexford
Uimhir rolla/Roll number	91431Q
Dáta na cigireachta/ Date of evaluation	27/11/2025
Dáta eisiúna na tuairisce/Date of issue of report	04/03/2026

What is a 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.

The board of management of the school was given an opportunity to comment on the findings and recommendations of the report; the board chose to accept the report without response.

How to read this report

During this inspection, the inspector evaluated learning and teaching in Computer Science and Digital Subjects 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.

Included in this subject inspection report is a student-friendly page that provides information for the children/young people in your school about the inspection that occurred recently. It outlines for them some of the main findings and recommendations.

Actions of the school to safeguard children and prevent and tackle bullying

<table>
<tr><td colspan="2">During the inspection visit, the following checks in relation to the school's child protection and anti-bullying procedures were conducted:</td></tr>
<tr><td>Child Protection</td><td>Bí Cineálta</td></tr>
<tr><td>1. The name of the DLP and the Child Safeguarding Statement (CSS) are prominently displayed near the main door of the school / in the reception area. Following the school's adoption of the updated procedures 2025, it is also required to display a student-friendly version incorporating the name of the DLP beside the CSS.
2. The school's child safeguarding statement has been ratified by the board and includes an annual review and a risk assessment.
3. All teachers visited were aware of who to go to if they had a child protection concern.</td><td>1. The school has developed an anti-bullying policy using Appendix A of Bí Cineálta, it is reviewed annually (or earlier if required) and includes a student/pupil friendly version that is displayed where students/pupils and the school community can see it.
2. The school's anti-bullying policy is published on its website and/or is readily accessible to board of management members, staff, parents and students/pupils.
3. The board of management minutes record that the principal provides an update to the board at each ordinary board meeting that meets the requirements of Bí Cineálta.</td></tr>
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The school met the requirements in relation to each of the checks above.

Subject inspection

Dates of inspection	26/11/2025 and 27/11/2025
Inspection activities undertaken • Review of relevant documents • Discussion with principal and key staff • Interaction with students, including focus groups	• Observation of teaching and learning during four lessons • Examination of students' work • Feedback to principal and relevant staff

School context

Ramsgrange Community School is a co-educational, post-primary school with 639 students serving the community of South County Wexford. The school offers the following programmes: Junior Cycle (JC), Junior Certificate School Programme, an optional Transition Year (TY), Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme, Leaving Certificate Applied (LCA), 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 Youth for educational inclusion.

Summary of main findings and recommendations:

Findings

- The overall quality of teaching and learning was very good in Computer Science and digital subjects.
- Computer Science was taught highly effectively, fostering creativity and problem-solving through purposeful design and programming tasks.
- Teachers modelled high levels of enthusiasm for digital subjects and high expectations were set in terms of knowledge and skills development that students would achieve.
- Very good formative assessment practices supported students' understanding with teachers regularly providing very effective positive support with constructive, feedback on students' work.
- Subject provision and whole-school support were very good and students were offered a very good range of digital subjects at both junior and senior cycle.
- Preparation and planning for lessons was of a high quality; schemes of work for digital subjects were detailed and comprehensive complemented by carefully planned, engaging lessons that stimulated the learners.

Recommendations

- In order to meet the increasing number of students choosing Computer Science, senior management should seek to further build specialist computer science teaching capacity within the staff.
- To enhance assessment of students' progress, teachers should reframe learning intentions in terms of the specific knowledge, understanding and skills students are expected to acquire during the lesson.
- Teachers should encourage all students to regularly add annotated comments to their code to improve readability and understanding.

Detailed findings and recommendations

1. Teaching, learning and assessment

- The overall quality of teaching and learning in the lessons observed was very good
- Teachers modelled high levels of enthusiasm for digital subjects, by often drawing on their own relevant personal experiences and authentic real-world examples. Lessons were well-paced, engaging, and helped students to value their learning. These approaches contributed to the establishment of a positive and respectful learning environment, where high expectations of students were set in terms of knowledge, skills development and enjoyment.
- Learning intentions were shared at the beginning of lessons and the learning was reviewed at the end, which is effective practice. To enhance assessment of students' progress teachers should engage in further student discussion of learning intentions to describe with greater clarity the knowledge, understanding and skills the students will acquire during the lesson. This would broaden the opportunities for assessment and reflection.
- Computer Science lessons were highly effective, fostering creativity and problem solving through purposeful design and programming tasks. Students worked confidently both individually and collaboratively, demonstrating strong programming skills and using subject-specific language to explain their solutions. In one very good lesson, novice programmers successfully demonstrated best practice by predicting, running, and modifying code to deepen their understanding of key concepts.
- Good programming techniques were promoted by teachers in all lessons by sharing well-commented code samples; however, there remains scope for some students to improve this aspect of their coding. Teachers should continue to emphasise and encourage the consistent use of comments in students' code to enhance clarity, maintainability, and facilitate effective review and peer assessment.
- In all lessons, teachers demonstrated excellent subject expertise and consistently provided clear, high-quality instructions and demonstrations for lesson tasks. This enabled students to engage fully with assigned activities. A range of effective teaching and learning strategies was employed, making topics relevant and supporting a strong understanding of the required learning outcomes.
- During the students' focus group, the learners stated that Computer Science is an exciting and accessible subject that combines hands-on coding activities together with an exploration of engaging topics such as cybersecurity, artificial intelligence and the history of computing. They reported that their skills had been developed through the many inter related topics from the specification. The students praised their teachers for providing clear guidance and valuable resources, which made learning Computer Science well-structured and enjoyable, and helped them to be prepared for the future digital world.
- During all lessons, teachers circulated around the classroom to monitor and support students as they worked on their tasks. Teacher and student interactions observed were very supportive and meaningful. The teachers provided very good oral feedback, encouraging students to analyse problems and develop their own solutions. Overall, these highly effective practices led to improved learner outcomes.
- Very good practice was observed in the provision of formative written feedback to students through assignments submitted on the digital learning platform. This constructive approach significantly supported students' learning, it helped them to build on their strengths and understand how to improve.

2. Subject provision and whole-school support

- Subject provision for Computer Science and other digital subjects was very good, with a broad range of options available at both Junior and Senior Cycle. The TY programme included a bespoke, compulsory Computer Studies course covering digital skills, digital

portfolios, and a fifth-year taster module in coding and student-led modules on topics such as video production. In addition, commendably the school designed their own Computer Studies module for all first-year students to upskill on using the digital platform and covering digital wellbeing.

- Computer Science is a popular subject at senior cycle and the uptake is very high and increasing every year. To meet the growing demand for digital subjects, senior management should consider building further teaching capacity in Computer Science across the staff.
- Currently, five teachers are deployed to teach digital subjects and this is very good provision. The digital subject team were a very cohesive, collegial and reflective team with a dedicated focus for improvements in teaching and learning. Senior management team has fostered and developed this focus for improvement among staff.
- The specialist room was very well equipped and created an inviting, positive and vibrant learning environment. There were many interesting visual and interactive displays linking to contemporary and historical events affecting computers and society. These stimulated student interest and curiosity and helped them connect what they were learning in class to real-life. provided a positive and welcoming learning environment with interesting visual and interactive displays. There are two specialist computer rooms for digital subjects, both maintained and equipped to a high standard. Four device trolleys are also available: one for Computer Science, one for LCA and two for general school use. In addition, the school has introduced individual student devices for all subjects to the current TY group. This is a pilot project with a view to extending the initiative more widely in future, which would further support the development of digital skills for all students.
- Students benefited from a wide range of extra-curricular activities that fostered interest in the subject and provided real-world relevance to their learning. Some initiatives had developed organically, such as the twice-weekly coding club for both junior and senior-cycle students. The school also created student leadership opportunities through initiatives like the ‘Tech Support Team,’ where senior students volunteered to resolve everyday technical issues. Teachers are commended for facilitating these valuable learning experiences.
- Senior management actively encouraged and supported the subject department in engaging with relevant professional learning. Staff had availed of a wide range of opportunities to keep their digital and subject-specific expertise up to date. Teachers were specialists in Computer Science and were pursuing further third-level qualifications in the field. In addition, they had benefited from the in-service training provided by Oide, the national support service for teachers and school leaders, to support the implementation of the new specification.

3. Planning and preparation

- The quality of individual lesson planning and preparation was very good overall. In all lessons, teachers integrated a wide range of well-prepared resources, including slides, handouts, and engaging activities that effectively stimulated and enhanced learning. Lessons were well paced with smooth transitions to different activities that engaged the learner.
- Digital subject plans were highly effective, well developed and comprehensive. They clearly outlined intended learning outcomes aligned with the specification and included appropriate timelines. These highly effective plans functioned as living documents, showing evidence of ongoing reflection and were readily reusable by any digital subjects’ teacher to deliver lessons.
- The subject department made highly effective use of a digital platform. It was evident that teachers had clearly invested considerable time in creating and sourcing a wide range of innovative, relevant resources, which were readily shared with students. Learners themselves reported that they greatly valued this platform, as it supported their studies and gave them the opportunity to take responsibility for their own learning.

The draft findings and recommendations arising out of this evaluation were discussed with the principal and subject teachers at the conclusion of the evaluation.

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For the students of Ramsgrange Community School about their learning in Computer Science and Digital Subjects

Dates of inspection: 27/11/2025 and 28/11/2025

What kind of inspection did your school have?

A subject inspection was completed in your school. The inspector observed lessons and spoke with the principal and teachers. The inspector met with a group of students to talk to them about their learning in Computer Science.

What were the main findings of the inspection?

- The overall quality of teaching and learning was very good in Computer Science and digital subjects.
- Computer science lessons were very good, allowing students to be creative and to problem-solve through purposeful tasks and coding.
- Teachers were very enthusiastic about digital subjects and set high standards for students in terms of developing skills, knowledge, and enjoyment.

What did the inspector recommend to make teaching and learning better in Computer Science?

- Since Computer Science is a popular subject, management, should increase the specialist computer science expertise within the staff.
- To improve students' progress, teachers should always begin by clearly outlining the specific knowledge, skills, or understanding that students are expected to achieve in each lesson.
- Teachers should encourage all students to regularly add comments to their code to improve readability and understanding.

Thank you for taking the time to read this page.
Special thanks to the students who participated in the focus group.

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 of each area.

Level	Description	Examples of descriptive terms
Excellent	**Provision that is excellent** is exemplary in meeting the needs of learners. This provision provides an example for other schools and settings of exceptionally high standards of provision.	Excellent; exemplary; outstanding; exceptionally high standard; with very significant strengths
Very good	**Provision that is very good** is very effective in meeting the needs of learners and is of a very high standard. There is potential to build on existing strengths to achieve an excellent standard.	Very good; of a very high quality; very effective practice; highly commendable; very successful
Good	**Provision that is good** is effective in meeting the needs of learners. There is need to build on existing strengths in order to address the aspects to be developed and achieve a very good standard.	Good; of good quality; effective practice; competent; useful; commendable; good standard; strengths outweigh the shortcomings; appropriate provision although some possibilities for improvement exist
Requires improvement to achieve a good standard	**Provision that requires improvement to achieve a good standard** is not sufficiently effective in meeting the needs of learners. There is need to address certain deficiencies without delay in order to ensure that provision is good or better.	Fair; less than effective; less than sufficient; evident weaknesses that are impacting on learning; experiencing difficulty; shortcomings outweigh strengths; must improve in specified areas; action required to improve
Requires significant improvement to achieve a good standard	**Provision that requires significant improvement to achieve a good standard** is not meeting the needs of learners. There is immediate need for significant action to address the areas of concern.	Weak; poor; ineffective; insufficient; unacceptable; experiencing significant difficulties; serious deficiencies in the areas evaluated; requiring significant change, development and improvement to be effective