

**An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna**

**Department of Education and Skills**

**Subject Inspection of Social, Personal and Health  
Education  
REPORT**

**C.B.S. Secondary School  
James's Street, Kilkenny  
Roll number: 61550G**

**Date of inspection: 28 November 2014**



**AN ROINN | DEPARTMENT OF  
OIDEACHAIS | EDUCATION  
AGUS SCILEANNA | AND SKILLS**

**REPORT**  
**ON**  
**THE QUALITY OF LEARNING AND TEACHING IN SOCIAL, PERSONAL AND**  
**HEALTH EDUCATION (SPHE) AND RELATIONSHIP AND SEXUALITY**  
**EDUCATION (RSE)**

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**INFORMATION ON THE INSPECTION**

<b>Dates of inspection</b>	27 and 28 November 2014
<b>Inspection activities undertaken</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Review of relevant documents</li><li>• Discussion with principal and teachers</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 teachers</li></ul>

**MAIN FINDINGS**

- The quality of teaching and learning ranged from good to very good in the lessons observed.
- Students were actively engaged in their learning, contributed well in class and their personal and social skills were appropriately developed.
- There is very good subject provision for SPHE in line with the junior cycle requirement however, RSE is not provided for fifth-year students.
- There is very good whole-school support for student welfare and wellbeing which is enhanced through a range of co-curricular and extra-curricular activities.
- Very good explicit attention was given to literacy and numeracy development in some lessons.
- Very good progress has been achieved in developing the subject plan which includes comprehensive schemes of work.

**MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS**

- The provision of a timetabled developmental programme of RSE for fifth-year students in accordance with Circular M27/2008, the *RSE Interim Curriculum and Guidelines* and the *Senior Cycle SPHE Draft Curriculum Framework* should be implemented as a priority.
  - A planned systematic and incremental approach to the development of teachers' knowledge and skills for the teaching of SPHE and RSE should now be implemented.
  - The assessment policy for SPHE and RSE should be reviewed and further developed, informed by the *SPHE Junior Cycle Guidelines for Teachers*
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## **INTRODUCTION**

CBS Secondary School, Kilkenny, is a voluntary secondary school for boys with a current enrolment of 667 students. It provides a range of programmes including the Junior Certificate, the established Leaving Certificate and the Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme. An optional Transition Year (TY) programme is offered to students.

## **TEACHING AND LEARNING**

- The quality of teaching and learning ranged from good to very good in the lessons observed. A good variety of teaching strategies was used with an emphasis on active experiential learning facilitated through collaborative and independent learning opportunities.
- Overall, lessons were well planned and prepared and generally, were well sequenced. Learning outcomes were shared with students and were most effective when they were framed in terms of what the student would know and be able to do by the end of the lesson. The good practice of referring to the learning outcomes at the end of the lesson to assess learning was seen in some lessons and this practice should be extended.
- A good range of teaching resources including information and communication technology (ICT), textbooks and worksheets were used to support learning. The chosen textbook was used effectively to support rather than lead learning in most lessons, though some reliance on the textbook content was noted in a small few instances. PowerPoint presentations and video clips were used to good effect in engaging students, however it would have been more effective if the content of the some of the clips was more student-centred. In one lesson, high levels of student motivation and engagement were very effectively elicited when the lesson material related to their interests. The greater use of student-centred scenarios is recommended in all lessons.
- A very good rapport was maintained between teachers and students with an effective learning environment being facilitated. Very good attention was given to differentiation.
- Students were motivated and were confident in participating in and contributing to discussion, responding to teachers' questions and carrying out group and pair work activities. Students were listened to respectfully and their efforts and contributions were appropriately affirmed.
- SPHE displays of students' work and relevant posters were very good in some classrooms and were not evident in others. Consideration should be given to providing SPHE boards in all classrooms to display the agreed class ground rules, posters and students' work.
- Very good planned explicit attention was given to literacy and numeracy development in some lessons. The further development of agreed literacy and numeracy strategies in lesson planning for second and third-year students is recommended.
- In all lessons, very good use was made of lower order and higher-order questions, drawing out students' opinions, developing their understanding and critical thinking skills as well as facilitating assessment of their learning.
- The consistent focus by all teachers on the achievement of the reflection task at the end of each lesson is commended, especially as it supports the development of the students' self-assessment skills.

- The very good and beneficial practice of providing written developmental comment was evident on some of the students' work seen. A systematic approach to the provision of written formative comment on significant pieces of work should be implemented.
- Continuity between lessons is facilitated through the setting of home tasks which is good practice. The provision of written comments on students' progress in SPHE in school reports should be progressed.

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

- SPHE, which includes RSE as an integral component of the programme, is timetabled as required for all junior cycle students.
- While RSE is delivered as a ten week module to students in sixth year as part of Religious Education, it is not currently provided to fifth-year students. The provision of a timetabled developmental programme of RSE for fifth-year students in accordance with Circular M27/2008, the *RSE Interim Curriculum and Guidelines* and the *Senior Cycle SPHE Draft Curriculum Framework* should be implemented as a priority.
- Very good whole school commitment to student welfare and wellbeing was evident through, an additional optional first-year personal development class and a valuable TY module in Health Education.
- A policy for visiting and guest speakers, taking account of Circular M23/2010, *SPHE and RSE Best Practice Guidelines for Post-Primary Schools* should be developed.
- A reflective committed core team of teachers is in place which is led by an experienced coordinator. Some teachers have been deployed without having completed the basic SPHE training. Management should ensure the completion of introductory training by all teachers assigned to teach SPHE and RSE.
- A planned systematic and incremental approach to the development of teachers' knowledge and skills for the teaching of SPHE and RSE should be implemented. Training of senior cycle RSE teachers in the use of the '*TRUST*' resource should be prioritised.
- A good range of co-curricular themed weeks supports the provision of SPHE.

#### **PLANNING AND PREPARATION**

- Subject planning is well established and there has been very good progress in developing the subject plan which includes comprehensive common schemes of work. Structures are in place to support collaborative subject planning however, not all teachers can attend subject department meetings due to concurrently held subject department meetings. The timing of meetings should be reviewed by school management so that all teachers can attend a meeting at the beginning and the end of the school year. Consideration could be given to meetings of year-group teachers in the interim period, overseen by the coordinator, to discuss teaching and learning.
- The assessment policy for SPHE and RSE should be reviewed and further developed. The *SPHE Junior Cycle Guidelines for Teachers* should inform the overall approach adopted. The subject department should agree the assignments on which written formative comment

will be provided for each year group. An agreed set of assessment criteria to inform the provision of comment on school reports should be developed.

- To support the development of students' skills development, at least three skills should be identified and prioritised for development for each year group.
- A good range of resources are available to teachers however, the senior cycle RSE resources should be updated to include the *TRUST* resource.

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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 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**

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

The Board of Management of C.B.S. Kilkenny acknowledges the very positive nature of this Inspection report on Social, Personal and Health Education.

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

We appreciate the numerous aspects of school life commended throughout the report. The SPHE team are committed to responding positively to the observations of the Inspectorate and to implementing their recommendations.