



An Roinn Oideachais
Department of Education

Subject Inspection: History

REPORT

Ainm na scoile/School name Coláiste Treasa

Seoladh na scoile/School address Kanturk
Co Cork

Uimhir rolla/Roll number 71000A

Dáta na cigireachta/
Date of evaluation 11/02/2025

Dáta eisiúna na
tuairisce/Date of issue
of report 03/06/2025

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.

How to read this report

During this inspection, the inspector(s) evaluated learning and teaching in History 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.

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.

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

During the inspection visit, the following checks in relation to the school's child protection and anti-bullying procedures were conducted:	
<i>Child Protection</i>	<i>Anti-bullying</i>
<ol style="list-style-type: none">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.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The school has developed an anti-bullying policy that meets the requirements of the <i>Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (2013)</i> or <i>Bí Cineálta (2024)</i> and this policy is reviewed annually.2. The school's current anti-bullying policy is published on its website and/or is readily accessible to board of management members, teachers, parents and students.

The school met the requirements in relation to each of the checks above.

Subject inspection

Date of inspection	11/02/2025
Inspection activities undertaken <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review of relevant documents• Discussion with principal and key staff• Interaction with students, including a focus group	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Observation of teaching and learning during five lessons• Examination of students' work• Feedback to principal and relevant staff

School context

Coláiste Treasa is a co-educational post-primary school under the patronage of the Cork Education and Training Board (CETB). At the time of the evaluation, the school had an enrolment of 624 students. The school offered the Junior Cycle programme, an optional Transition Year programme (TY), the Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme (LCVP), and the Leaving Certificate (Established) (LCE).

Summary of main findings and recommendations:

Findings

- Teaching, learning and assessment were very good overall.
- The linking of students' lived experience with historical events was notable in all lessons.
- The History department showed significant strengths in the use of technology in lessons.
- The use of sources, primary and secondary, visual, written and audio-visual was widespread in lessons.
- The quality of subject provision and whole-school support for History was very good.
- The planning and preparation for lessons by teachers was very good.

Recommendations

- While all lessons began with learning intentions, they were not always returned to at the close. To improve the use of learning intentions, teachers should regularise their use by having them on display during all lessons and returning to them when the lessons are concluded.
- The planning documents shared by the History department were content based in the main. History teachers should further integrate aspects of their lesson planning into the department plans.

Detailed findings and recommendations

1. Teaching, learning and assessment

- Teaching, learning and assessment were very good overall. The subject and pedagogical knowledge of teachers was of a high standard. This was notable because it was the source of the strong relationships built with students. The understanding developed over time between teachers and students was of benefit to all, as it laid the foundations for a positive atmosphere in lessons. The way both teachers' and students' knowledge of the locality was used in lessons was particularly notable.
- The room in which all lessons were observed was dedicated to History. The provision of a subject-specific space in this instance meant that printed history related resources, as well as student work, could be used to support teaching and learning. The room also had models of historically significant buildings on display. The room was a further support for establishing an atmosphere of learning in the lessons observed.
- Students were placed at their centre of their learning in all lessons. This was achieved with activities which encouraged them to empathise with people in history, and to consider their local history in the context of national and international events. In all lessons teachers made links between events in the wider world and events locally, or between their lives today, and the lives of the people they were studying. This supported student learning by making connections between local, personal or family history and wider national and international personalities, issues and events, as the junior cycle History specification sets out in learning outcome 2.11. This linking of students' lived experience with historical events was notable in all lessons.
- The History department showed significant strengths in the use of technology in lessons. The use of tablets for student engagement and learning in lessons and for backing up their work and homework, and communication between teachers and students was universal. In history lessons the devices were used, variously, to access archives, census records, and military service records. In the focus group students spoke of the support technology gave them in research, in junior cycle during their CBAs, and in Leaving Certificate when completing the research study report (RSR). The tablets were also used during lessons to summarize information, recall prior learning and motivate learners with quizzes and tests.
- The structure of lessons was familiar and clear to students in a focus group. They spoke of most lessons beginning with the sharing of learning intentions. On observation of lessons, it was noted that while all lessons began with learning intentions, they were not always returned to at the close. To improve the use of learning intentions, teachers should regularise their use by having them on display during all lessons and returning to them when the lessons are concluded.
- In the majority of lessons, the linking of learning intentions to the learning outcomes from the junior cycle History specification was a notable approach. The linking of the learning for the lesson to the wider specification is a technique that should be modelled within the department to introduce this linkage to all lessons.
- Students were also aware that in most lessons time was assigned to recall previous learning. In the lessons observed this recall linked prior learning with the new learning planned for in the lesson.

- The use of sources, primary and secondary, visual, written and audio-visual was widespread in lessons. Students were asked to consider sources for their accuracy or bias, and to reflect on contemporary depictions of and writing on historical events and personalities they were studying. The range and selection of sources were of a very high quality.

2. Subject provision and whole school support

- The quality of subject provision and whole-school support for History was very good. At the time of the evaluation the time allocation for junior and senior cycle History met requirements.
- There was an evident culture of improvement in the History department, demonstrated by the extensive continuing professional development (CPD), including internal CPD, which was facilitated and encouraged by senior management, and workshops provided by Oide, the national support service for teachers and school leaders.
- A teaching and learning group had been established in the school with a core group of teachers involved, and other teachers invited to contribute. The group was examining the reintroduction of team teaching and peer observation. Building capacity in this area was the subject of whole school consideration, through the instructional leadership programme facilitated by Education and Training Boards Ireland (ETBI).
- The efforts made to promote History within the school, and among students, were highly commendable. The teachers supported senior cycle students in entering national competitions. Junior cycle students had attended a dramatic re-enactment of significant events in local history. Transition year students undertook a tour of local historical sites. Links had been established with the local library to display students work in the subject. This was a novel and worthwhile undertaking.
- As part of a whole school focus adopted as a target in the school's self-evaluation (SSE) process, the History department was gathering and sharing keywords in most lessons observed. In some lessons an emphasis on the language of the junior cycle specification was highlighted through keywords. In this way the terminology used in the learning outcomes was highlighted for students. The approaches to collecting keywords implemented in these lessons should be adopted by all teachers in the department.

3. Planning and preparation

- The planning and preparation for lessons by teachers was very good, although some possibilities for improvement exist for the subject department plan.
- The lessons observed were well planned, structured and student friendly in ways that the subject department plan did not reflect. The planning documents shared by the History department were content based in the main. History teachers should further integrate aspects of their lesson planning into the department plans. Furthermore, a space for reflection should be added to the plan so that as teachers complete units of learning, they can note their progress and reflect on teaching and learning. These notes should then become the focus for discussion at department meetings.
- The department folder included separate whole school and subject-specific documents. Good work had been done where the draft whole-school assessment policy had been aligned with the History subject plan. This process should now be adopted with regard to other whole-school documents so that they are mapped onto the experience of students in history.

- The digital learning section of the department's plan did not fully include the depth and breadth of the value teachers and students are gaining by the extensive use of tablets in lessons. This section of the plan should also be brought in line with classroom practice.
- Students' experiences of CBAs were very positive. They spoke in the focus group of the value they placed on self-motivated investigation of topics they chose themselves, and of discovering and researching as historians do. The presentation of CBAs was, in the students' words as 'something you could hold in your hand'. This description is in line with the assessment guidelines provided by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA). Subject learning and assessment review (SLAR) meeting minutes were retained in the department's files.

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.



An Roinn Oideachais
Department of Education

For the students of Coláiste Treasa
about their learning in **History**

Date of inspection:

11/02/2025

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 **History**.

What were the main findings of the inspection?



- The linking of students' lives with historical events was notable in all lessons.
- The History department show significant strengths in the use of technology in lessons.
- The use of sources, primary and secondary, visual, written and audio-visual was widespread in lessons.
- Students' experiences of classroom-based assessments (CBAs) were very positive.

What did the inspector recommend to make teaching and learning better in **History**?



- To improve the use of learning intentions, teachers should have them on display during all lessons and return to them when the lessons are concluded.
- The History department's plans were focussed on content. Teachers should include aspects of their lesson planning in the department plans.

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