



Findings from the Chief Inspector's Report

2006-2008

Choosing a Career



In some areas of N. Ireland, schools and colleges are working well to provide better career opportunities and a wider choice of education for young people in the 14-19 age range.

Young people are better prepared for a wider range of careers and they have a wider range of subjects which they can choose to study. Careers advice is improving, but most young people still need more help in planning for their future job.

The curriculum within post-primary schools is changing to allow more choice for young people who want to follow a particular career. In the future young people may go to more than one school or college or training organisation in a town or area to complete their education. The co-operation between schools and colleges is improving in many areas but they still need to work together more.

Further Education (FE) and Training

There have been major changes in FE with the formation of six new area-based colleges. Instead of going to university or straight into employment, more young people are studying in FE colleges or taking training programmes to prepare for their career. In both of these sectors there are increasing opportunities to develop practical skills for future jobs.

More learners are staying on and completing their courses. The colleges and training suppliers are providing improved support in the essential skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT.

FE colleges are also improving the way they provide access and suitable courses for young people with learning difficulties or disabilities.

The majority of training suppliers have improved the way they support and guide trainees. The teachers and trainers still need to include more use of computers in their training programmes and to make sure that trainees and apprentices are well prepared for employment.



Youth Work

Almost one-third of young people choose to go to some type of youth provision. The full-time, part-time and volunteer youth workers provide a safe and supportive environment for young people. The majority of the young people develop new skills and interests; they have the opportunity to develop skills which will help them when they are looking for, and when they find a job. There should be better links between what the young people do in youth organisations and what they learn in schools and colleges.



Organisations Funded by DCAL

There is a wide range of organisations such as the Public Libraries, museums and the Public Records Office of Northern Ireland which provide good resources for young people and adult learners. Some other organisations support the development of sports, arts and the use of digital technology to make films. These organisations can provide schools with important expertise and resources to help the young people in their learning, or simply to develop their interests and knowledge. Inspectors have said that there should be closer links between what these organisations do and what schools, colleges and youth organisations do.



CONCLUSION

There is much good work in the education, training and youth sectors. A majority of children, young people and adult learners continue to achieve well. Inspectors recognise the good work of many teachers, lecturers, youth workers, and of officers who work for a wide range of support organisations. There are still about one in five young people who do not achieve as well as they should. All of those involved in the education, training and youth sectors must work together to ensure that all young people have the same opportunities to achieve their best.

If you want to read the full report from the Chief Inspector, please go to the Inspectorate's website at www.etini.gov.uk.



Department of
Education
www.deni.gov.uk



Department for
**Employment
and Learning**
www.delni.gov.uk



Department of
**Culture, Arts
and Leisure**
www.dcalni.gov.uk

WHAT IS THE WORK OF THE EDUCATION AND TRAINING INSPECTORATE?

The Education and Training Inspectorate (the Inspectorate) works mainly across three government Departments – the Department of Education (DE), the Department for Employment and Learning (DEL) and the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure (DCAL).

As part of their work, Inspectors carry out inspections in all types of schools, colleges of Further Education, training organisations, teacher training, youth centres and organisations, and sports and arts organisations. Inspectors visit classes and lectures; they talk with principals and leaders, teachers and other staff, governors, parents, children and young people; they write and publish reports which evaluate the quality of what they have seen. As a result of their work, the Inspectorate has a unique overview of the educational experiences of children, young people and adult learners.

In reporting on what they have seen, Inspectors use the following words:



You can read the details of any inspection reports by visiting the Inspectorate's website at www.etini.gov.uk.

WHAT IS THE CHIEF INSPECTOR'S REPORT?

Stanley Goudie has been the Chief Inspector since September 2008. The Chief Inspector issues a report every two years. It gives details of what has been happening in the education, training and youth sectors. The purpose of this report is to let government Departments, the organisations inspected, parents and young people know about the quality of the work observed in education, training and youth provision.

Here are some of the findings from the two-year period 2006 –2008 which may interest you.

Changes in the Curriculum

The curriculum within primary and post-primary schools is changing to provide children and young people with skills which will be useful for the world of work and later life. Many teachers have been trained in how to build on the ways they teach pupils and develop these skills. Most schools are making good progress in this area.

Pre-school education

There are three types of pre-school provision – nursery schools, nursery units which are attached to a primary school and voluntary playgroups. The Inspectors found that the quality of the work in almost all types of pre-school was satisfactory and, on occasions, very good to outstanding. Nursery schools generally had better standards and resources. Primary schools are starting to take more account of the learning which the children have had in pre-school, which helps the children's progress.



It is important that DE looks at ways in which it can help all children to have the best possible pre-school experience and a good start to their education.

Primary schools



Most primary school children have a good education and do well.

One-third of primary schools need to improve how they plan the work of the school to make sure that all of the children are able to do their best. There are very good and outstanding principals in most of the primary schools visited. In one-quarter of the schools, the Principal and those who organise the different areas of learning need to plan better for all of the children.

The work in English and mathematics needs to improve. Children who have difficulties, especially with English and mathematics, need more support to help them do better.

Post-primary schools

Most parents, teachers and many children are still uncertain and anxious about what will happen in post-primary schools in the next few years. Many pupils do well in our post-primary schools.



Those who have to work harder to keep up with other pupils of the same age need better support. Schools also need to give more support to young people who do not want to go to school.

Inspectors saw good teaching in most of the post-primary schools which they visited. In almost one-third of lessons the teachers need to plan better and to think of more interesting ways to help their pupils learn.

The Principal and management team, including the heads of departments, are good or better at their jobs in two-thirds of the post-primary schools visited. In one-third of schools they need to make better use of the results from tests, homeworks and what has been learned in lessons to plan their work.



Special schools

Just under 5,000 pupils attend special schools. Almost three-quarters of the special schools inspected are good or better. They develop the social and life skills of the pupils to prepare them well for adult life. More young people are going on to further education and training although there is still a need to increase these opportunities.

The education and health sectors need to work more together to provide better support for pupils in special schools and their families.

Using information and communication technology (ICT)

Many young people have the opportunity to use computers to help them in their learning. Teachers and lecturers are using the interactive whiteboard in more lessons. Teachers and young people need to use computers more often and in more subjects.