



*The Education and Training Inspectorate -
Promoting Improvement*

**Providing Inspection Services for
Department of Education
Department for Employment and Learning
Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure**



Education and Training Inspectorate

Report of a Follow-up Inspection

**Banbridge High School
Co Down**

September 2014

A FOLLOW-UP TO THE STANDARD INSPECTION OF BANBRIDGE HIGHSCHOOL, CO DOWN, BT32 3EW (521-0047)

The Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) carried out a standard inspection of Banbridge High School in February 2012 and in March 2013¹, when the quality of provision, including the quality of the provision in English, geography and for pastoral care was evaluated as satisfactory². In order to raise standards, the inspection identified the need for improvement in important aspects of leadership and management and in the quality of learning and teaching.

The school development plan was adjusted appropriately in light of the inspection findings and the action plan produced by the school was of a very good quality.

ETI carried out two interim follow-up visits during 2013 and a follow-up inspection in September 2014. Since the original inspection visits, the senior leadership team (SLT) has been reorganised to positive effect, with responsibility for key areas of improvement clearly defined and allocated within the team and new heads of geography, science and sixth form appointed. The sixth form has increased from 66 in 2012 to 90 in 2014, with a further 36 pupils accessing sixth form provision through effective collaboration within the Banbridge Area Learning Community. Appropriate changes have been made to the curriculum which now meets much more effectively the needs interest and abilities of the pupils. The inappropriate examination entrance policy has also been reviewed, with all pupils now entered for GCSE and equivalent qualifications. The school timetable has been restructured to facilitate pupils to take responsibility for their own learning.

A number of significant improvements demonstrate the progress made by the school in resolving many of the issues raised at the time of the original inspection.

- Leadership responsibilities are now shared equitably across the school and links between the SLT and middle management are now effective in bringing about improvement.
- The dissemination of good practice throughout the school has resulted, to good effect, in more challenging and active learning for all pupils. The above-average quality of lessons observed shows consistent and sustained improvement in learning and teaching; all lessons observed were good or better, with two-thirds very good.
- Achievement and standards in English and geography have improved; the quality of provision for English, geography and pastoral care is now good.
- The percentage of pupils achieving 5 or more GCSE or equivalent subjects at grades A*-C has increased from 54% in 2012 to 69% in 2013 and has been sustained at 67% in 2014, which is well above the average for similar schools. When English and mathematics are included, the GCSE average increased from 31% in 2012 to 40% in 2013 and is currently 36%, which is in line with the average for similar schools, although considerable scope for continued improvement remains.
- The percentage of pupils staying on from year 13 to 14 has grown from 26% in 2012 to 92% in 2014 and, at the same time, the percentage of pupils achieving

¹ The inspection was conducted in two parts due to teacher industrial action, short of strike.

² Standard Inspection Report, Banbridge High School, 2013 www.etini.gov.uk

any three or more A Levels at grades A-C over the same period has risen from 19% to 34%, although it is still below the average for similar schools. However, attainment in any three subjects at grades A*-E has improved from 54% in 2012 to 80% in 2014 and all pupils obtained grades E or above in at least two A levels in 2014 which is above the average for similar schools.

In the areas inspected in the original inspection, considerable progress has been made to overcome the issues raised in 2012 and 2013. The overall quality of education is now good. The follow-up inspection has identified, as a continued area for improvement, the need to sustain and raise further the standards attained by the pupils in public examinations at GCSE level, and particularly at post-16. The school can now demonstrate that it has the capacity to continue to effect the improvements necessary.

The ETI will continue to monitor, through district inspector visits, the school's progress in addressing the area for improvement.

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