



*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

**Dunluce School
Bushmills**

September 2013

FOLLOW-UP TO THE STANDARD INSPECTION OF DUNLUCE SCHOOL, BUSHMILLS, CO ANTRIM, BT57 8QQ (321-0222)

The Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) carried out a standard inspection of Dunluce School in the week of 20 February 2012 when the quality of provision was evaluated as inadequate. The school entered the formal intervention process on 7 March 2012. The areas for improvement identified in the original report were the need: for all of the teachers to work collaboratively to improve the inadequate standards achieved by the pupils; for leaders at all levels, particularly the senior leadership team, to develop and sustain a consistent focus on improving the quality of learning and teaching as the means of raising the standards achieved by the pupils; and to improve the inadequate leadership and management across the school, particularly through more rigorous and systematic monitoring and evaluation and a more coherent school development plan (SDP), to ensure that efforts to improve the provision result in higher standards and outcomes in most of the subjects.

An interim follow-up visit by ETI on 19 March 2013 identified that the school was beginning to address the key issues for improvement identified in the original report.

A follow-up inspection was carried out on 23 and 24 September 2013 and, while a number of significant steps taken to address the areas for improvement have led to some important improvements, the quality of provision remains inadequate.

In the interval since the standard inspection, the following actions, changes and circumstances which affect the work of the school have taken place:

- following the retirement of the principal, and a period of leadership provided by the vice-principal acting as principal, a new principal was appointed and took up post at the start of June 2013;
- under the leadership of the acting principal, individual members of the senior leadership team have taken the lead in working with groups of teaching staff to take forward actions relating to the areas for improvement;
- in the short period of time since his appointment, the principal, working with the senior leadership team, has conducted audits and formed an accurate analysis of the progress made since the original February 2012 inspection and of the work remaining to be done to raise standards; and
- the school has received effective assistance from the Curriculum Advisory and Support Service of the North-eastern Education and Library Board and from C2k.

A considerable amount of work has been done to put in place appropriate and relevant arrangements, procedures, and processes to address the issues identified in the original inspection report. These include:

- the introduction of vocational programmes which have resulted in the percentage of pupils achieving 5 or more GCSEs, and equivalent subjects, at grades A*-C rising to 53%;
- new monitoring processes have been introduced which include formal lesson observations by the teachers and regular reviewing of the quality of the pupils' written work;
- new management information systems have been introduced across the school to record the pupils' assessment outcomes, behaviour and attendance more closely than before and to track their progress in learning;

- the introduction of intervention strategies, including pupil mentoring, based on assessment outcomes, including the recently introduced use of a range of standardised tests; and
- the development of a new school development plan which is based upon a more consultative and realistic assessment of the needs of the pupils and how to address them.

The school has correctly identified those areas where progress has been made and where further action is required. However, the school development plan needs further development of intended monitoring procedures and of specific, measurable success indicators in relation to the pupils' learning and outcomes. The board of governors need to take a stronger role in driving forward these aspects of school improvement, in conjunction with the senior leadership team, in the interests of the learners.

The school, as a result of the important preparatory work and through school leadership, which is now satisfactory, is well placed to address the remaining areas for improvement.

The pupils have benefitted from the more robust monitoring practices that have been introduced to improve attendance rates and to provide early and appropriate intervention.

However, there is a need to review the timetable arrangements and, in particular, the hours of attendance by pupils on Fridays¹ and the hours taught by teachers² in line with Department of Education (DE) regulations, in order to meet effectively the needs of all of the pupils.

After the original inspection, whole school standards in GCSE (five subjects at grades A*-C, including English and mathematics) dropped, but improved slightly in 2013 to 18% which is well below the average for similar non-selective schools.

The quality of education provided by the school remains inadequate overall; the areas for improvement outweigh the strengths in the provision.

The follow-up inspection has identified areas for improvement in standards and for continued improvement in learning and teaching which need to be addressed urgently if the school is to meet effectively the needs of all of the pupils.

The remaining areas for improvement are to:

- raise urgently the inadequate standards being achieved by the pupils, in particular to improve the low percentage of pupils attaining five GCSEs at grades at A*-C including English and mathematics, and also the outcomes in the majority of the individual subjects where the performance at GCSE at grades A*-C is 10 percentage points or more below the corresponding three year Northern Ireland average;
- build the capacity of the governors to offer a stronger challenge function to support the leadership team in bringing about improvement; and
- address, with urgency, those areas of the action plans which are currently partially implemented, or have not yet been addressed, in order to increase the pace of change.

The Education and Training Inspectorate will monitor and report on the school's progress in addressing the areas for improvement, over the next 12 month period.

¹ Secondary Schools (Grant Conditions) (Northern Ireland) 1973 paragraph 14 (1) (b) and DE Circular: 2013/09 Teaching Days and Hours Of Attendance, paragraph 8

² Teachers' (Terms and Conditions of Employment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1987 schedule 3, paragraph 4 (c)

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