



*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

**Holy Cross College
Strabane**

March 2012

FOLLOW-UP TO THE STANDARD INSPECTION OF HOLY CROSS COLLEGE, STRABANE, CO TYRONE, BT82 9EF (223-0301)

The standard inspection in November 2009 highlighted strengths in the good progress made throughout the amalgamation and the transfer to the new school building, the good quality of pastoral care and the good or better quality of the teaching in a majority of the lessons observed. The inspection identified the need for a more strategic approach to:

- raising the standards achieved by pupils of all abilities;
- providing a more consistently high quality of learning and teaching, particularly for those pupils identified as having special educational needs, through the effective dissemination of the very good practice evident during the inspection; and
- leadership and management at all levels, through a more effective focus on self-evaluation and associated action planning to promote improvement.

In the interval since the inspection, the following actions which affect the work of the school have taken place.

- The school has broadened the curriculum provision in order that it better meets the needs of the pupils.
- The teachers are using performance data to aid the target-setting process and to inform the planning for more effective learning and teaching.
- The arrangements identified in the new Learning Support Policy are in place and the teachers have engaged in high quality staff development.
- The roles and responsibilities for senior and middle managers have been clarified in order that their work is more sharply focused on improving learning and teaching.
- The teachers, led by the senior leadership team, have completed self-evaluation to measure the progress against the priorities identified in the post-inspection action plan.
- The Principal and senior leadership team have maintained rigorous records of evidence arising from effective monitoring and evaluation in order to demonstrate and sustain improvement.

The Education and Training Inspectorate carried out two monitoring visits in 2011 and a follow-up inspection on 22 March 2012.

The action plan produced by the organisation in response to the inspection findings was of a very good quality.

The school's development plan has been adjusted in light of the inspection findings. The development plan meets the statutory requirements as set out by the Department of Education (DE).

The most important improvements since the standard inspection are:

- the high level of engagement of the teachers with the review of development work;
- the good working relationships between the teachers and pupils;
- the quality of teaching which was good or better in almost all of the lessons observed during the follow-up process;
- the very good arrangements for supporting the pupils with special educational needs;
- the increase in the percentage of pupils achieving grades A* to C in GCSE mathematics from 35% in 2009 to 48% in 2011; and
- the very good leadership and management which is focused on effective self-evaluation leading to improvement, particularly in learning and teaching.

There remains a need to:

- improve further the standards achieved by the pupils in public examinations.

CONCLUSION

In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by this school is now good. The school has important strengths in most of its educational and pastoral provision. The follow-up inspection has identified an area for improvement still to be addressed but equally the school has demonstrated the capacity to continue to address this.

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