



*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

**Newtownbreda High School
Belfast**

October 2013

FOLLOW-UP TO THE STANDARD INSPECTION OF NEWTOWNBRED A HIGH SCHOOL, BELFAST, BT8 6PY (421-0183)

The original standard inspection of Newtownbred A High School in November 2006 evaluated the provision as satisfactory and identified the need for improvement in a number of key areas, including in the standards achieved in public examinations and in the development of the arrangements for self-evaluation leading to improvement.

In the intervening period, the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) has carried out four follow-up inspections (FUI) in March 2009, in November 2010, in September 2011 and again in December 2012 in each of which the quality of the provision continued to be evaluated as satisfactory and the school continued to work on the areas for improvement. A fifth FUI was conducted in October 2013, at which time provision was evaluated as good.

The following are the most important changes since December 2012 which have affected improvement:

- the appointment of an acting vice-principal for pastoral care and the appointment of a new member of the senior leadership team;
- an increased focus on staff development, in particular for leadership capacity building among senior and middle managers;
- the introduction of a well-structured quality assurance programme;
- an increased focus on effective communication and engagement with parents and carers leading to a better cohesion between the pastoral and curricular provision;
- the development of closer links with neighbouring schools including sharing courses at post-16;
- a slight increase in the rate of attendance which is almost in line with the NI average; and
- the opening of a new sports facility.

During the FUI in October 2013 the teaching observed ranged from outstanding to satisfactory with almost one-half of the lessons being very good or outstanding.

The improvements since the fourth FUI in December 2012 include the:

- sharper and more productive focus on capacity-building in self-evaluation leading to improvement, for senior and middle leaders, which is evident in a sustained overall rise in standards;
- increased effectiveness of the use made of the pupils' tracking system, leading to interventions, such as mentoring, in which the majority of pupils identified attained at least five grades A*-C at GCSE level;
- further increase in the percentage of pupils gaining GCSE grades A*-C in five or more subjects which almost doubled to 61% in 2013 and is above the average for similar non-selective schools;

- percentage of pupils gaining GCSE grades A*-C in five or more subjects, including English and mathematics, being sustained in line with the Northern Ireland (NI) average;
- percentage of pupils achieving A*-E in any five or more GCSE subjects increasing from 70% in 2010 to 81% in 2013;
- percentage of pupils gaining 2 GCE A levels at A*- E being sustained in line with the NI average for non-selective schools; and
- the number of pupils requiring additional support with their learning falling significantly, due to the effectiveness of the strategies introduced to help them overcome barriers to learning, and, as a result, making good progress.

The quality of education provided by the school is good. The school has important strengths in most of the educational provision.

The inspection has identified the following area for improvement which the school has demonstrated the capacity to address:

- the need to raise further the percentage of pupils achieving well in both GCSE English and in GCSE mathematics by ensuring greater consistency in the quality of the provision for learning.

ETI will continue to monitor, through district inspection activity, the school's continued progress.

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