

eti

*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

**St Paul's Junior High School
Lurgan**

October 2012

SECOND FOLLOW-UP INSPECTION OF ST PAUL'S JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL, LURGAN, CO ARMAGH, BT66 6DL (523-0088)

The Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) carried out a standard inspection of St Paul's Junior High School, Lurgan in September 2008, when the quality of provision was evaluated as satisfactory. The inspection identified a range of strengths and the need for improvement in the standards achieved by the pupils, the dissemination of the good practice, and the more rigorous monitoring and evaluation of the learning, teaching and pastoral care.

The ETI carried out a follow-up inspection (FUI) in December 2010, and found that the quality of the provision remained satisfactory. The report noted an increase in the percentage of pupils achieving grades A* to C in five or more subjects at General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) from 31.8% to 37.8%, the very good quality of the provision for mathematics, the good quality of the teaching observed in the majority of lessons observed, the effective analysis of data to identify underachievement, the good opportunities for appropriate staff development and the systematic monitoring and evaluation of learning and teaching by middle managers.

The first FUI identified the following key areas for improvement:

- to raise urgently the inadequate standards pupils achieve in at least five subjects at grades A* to C at GCSE including English and mathematics;
- to broaden further the curriculum provision at Key Stage (KS) 4 through increased collaboration; and
- to ensure that the strategies in place for promoting positive behaviour are applied consistently at all levels.

The ETI carried out an interim follow-up visit in March 2012 and a second FUI in October 2012.

The action plan produced by the school in response to the FUI findings in December 2010 was of a good quality and the school's development plan has been adjusted in light of the inspection findings.

The following changes, which affect the work of the school, have taken place in the interval since the first FUI in December 2010:

- the introduction of a Business and Technology Education Council Level 2 double award course in physical education;
- a wide range of staff development activities focused on the skills and strategies required for exam success at KS4; and
- the replacement of study leave for year 12 with an intensive study programme prior to the public examinations.

However, the school faces a number of significant challenges, which include:

- limitations to the curriculum as a result of reductions in the teaching staff (from 32 to 30) and insufficient collaboration through the Craigavon Area Learning Community; and

- the fall in pupil enrolment in year 8 from 113 in 2010 to 83 in 2012 and in the number of pupils in year 12 from 73 in 2011 to 45 in 2012 which means that the low performance of a small number of pupils results in fluctuations in the examination results.

The most important improvements since the first FUI are:

- the effectiveness of the tracking of the pupils' progress by the senior management team and staff in order to bring about improvement through appropriate intervention;
- the increase in the proportion of pupils attaining grades A*-C in five or more subjects at GCSE, from 37.8% to 43.9% (while remaining below the average for similar schools¹); and
- the significant improvement in the proportion of pupils attaining grades A*-C in five or more subjects including English and mathematics from 11.6% to 31.8%.

The remaining areas for improvement are:

- to improve the overall quality of learning, teaching and assessment to raise further the standards attained by all the pupils; and
- to review the quality of the arrangements for the pastoral care provision and to address the inconsistent application of these arrangements in order for all the pupils to reach their personal, social and academic potential.

CONCLUSION

Following a second follow-up inspection and in most of the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by this school still remains satisfactory; the strengths outweigh areas for improvement in the provision. The ETI will monitor and report on the school's progress in addressing the remaining areas for improvement.

As a matter of urgency, the employing authority in conjunction with the governors and the staff need to address the unsustainable provision at KS4.

The pupils do not have access to a broad curriculum and the decline in numbers at KS4 impacts significantly on the budget, the staffing and the ability of the school to meet the needs of the pupils at KS3.

¹ non-selective schools in the same free school meals category.

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