



*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**

November 2013

A THIRD 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 standards, the dissemination of good practice, and more rigorous monitoring and evaluation of learning, teaching and pastoral care.

The ETI carried out follow-up inspections (FUI) in December 2010 and again in October 2012, and found that on both occasions the quality of the provision remained satisfactory. The areas for improvement identified in October 2012 were:

- to improve the overall quality of learning, teaching and assessment to raise further the standards attained by all the pupils;
- 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; and
- to address the lack of access to a broad and balanced curriculum at key stage (KS) 4.

The report also highlighted unsustainable provision at KS4. The pupils had insufficient access to a broad curriculum and a decline in numbers at KS4 impacted significantly on the budget, staffing and the ability of the school to meet the pupils' needs at KS3.

The ETI carried out a third FUI in November 2013 at which time, a development proposal for the amalgamation of the school with St Mary's High School and St Michael's Grammar School had been submitted to the Department of Education.

The following changes, which affect the work of the school, have taken place in the interval since October 2012: a reduction of four members of staff in August 2013; increased collaboration with other schools enabled the pupils to access four additional subjects; and the development of a more coherent pupil-centred approach has enabled the pupils to have a greater say in the life and work of the school.

There have been significant staff changes in the English department since the original inspection in 2008 when the quality of provision was evaluated as good. In the intervening period the standards attained by the pupils in English at GCSE rose to 47% in 2012 and dropped significantly to 7% in 2013, and, as a consequence so did the percentage attaining five GCSE including English and mathematics. The school has put in place a support programme for the English department focused on raising standards at GCSE with external support from the Curriculum Advisory and Support Service of the Southern Education and Library Board.

The most important improvements since October 2012 are:

- the positive working relationships between the pupils and teachers in the lessons observed during the FUI, in particular, the opportunities for the pupils to take greater responsibility for their own learning;

- the good or better quality of most of the teaching observed, particularly, the improvement in the pupils' willingness to give extended responses, ask questions, work independently, in pairs and in groups to complete challenging tasks in most of teaching observed;
- the quality of the arrangements for pastoral care which is now very good;
- the significant increase in the proportion of pupils attaining grades A*-C in five or more subjects at GCSE, from 23.26% in 2011 to 43.9% in 2012 to 60.6% in 2013 which is just above the average for similar schools;
- the sustained improvement in the proportion of pupils attaining grades A*-C in five or more subjects including mathematics from 21% in 2011 to 36.4% in 2012 to 39% in 2013;
- the significant increase in the proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational need attaining grades A*-G in five or more subjects at GCSE including English and mathematics, from 26% in 2011 to 57% in 2012 to 60% in 2013; and
- the effectiveness of the senior leadership team and middle managers in bringing about improvement in the overall standards attained by the pupils attaining grades A*-C in five or more subjects at GCSE through the more rigorous approach to self-evaluation and intervention strategies to meet better the needs of the pupils.

The remaining area for improvement is:

- to raise the standards attained by the pupils in English at GCSE.

CONCLUSION

In the areas inspected, the quality of education 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 which the school has demonstrated the capacity to address. The ETI will monitor the school's progress on the area for improvement.

© CROWN COPYRIGHT 2014

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part, except for commercial purposes or in connection with a prospectus or advertisement, provided that the source and date thereof are stated.

Copies of this report are available on the ETI website:
www.etini.gov.uk

