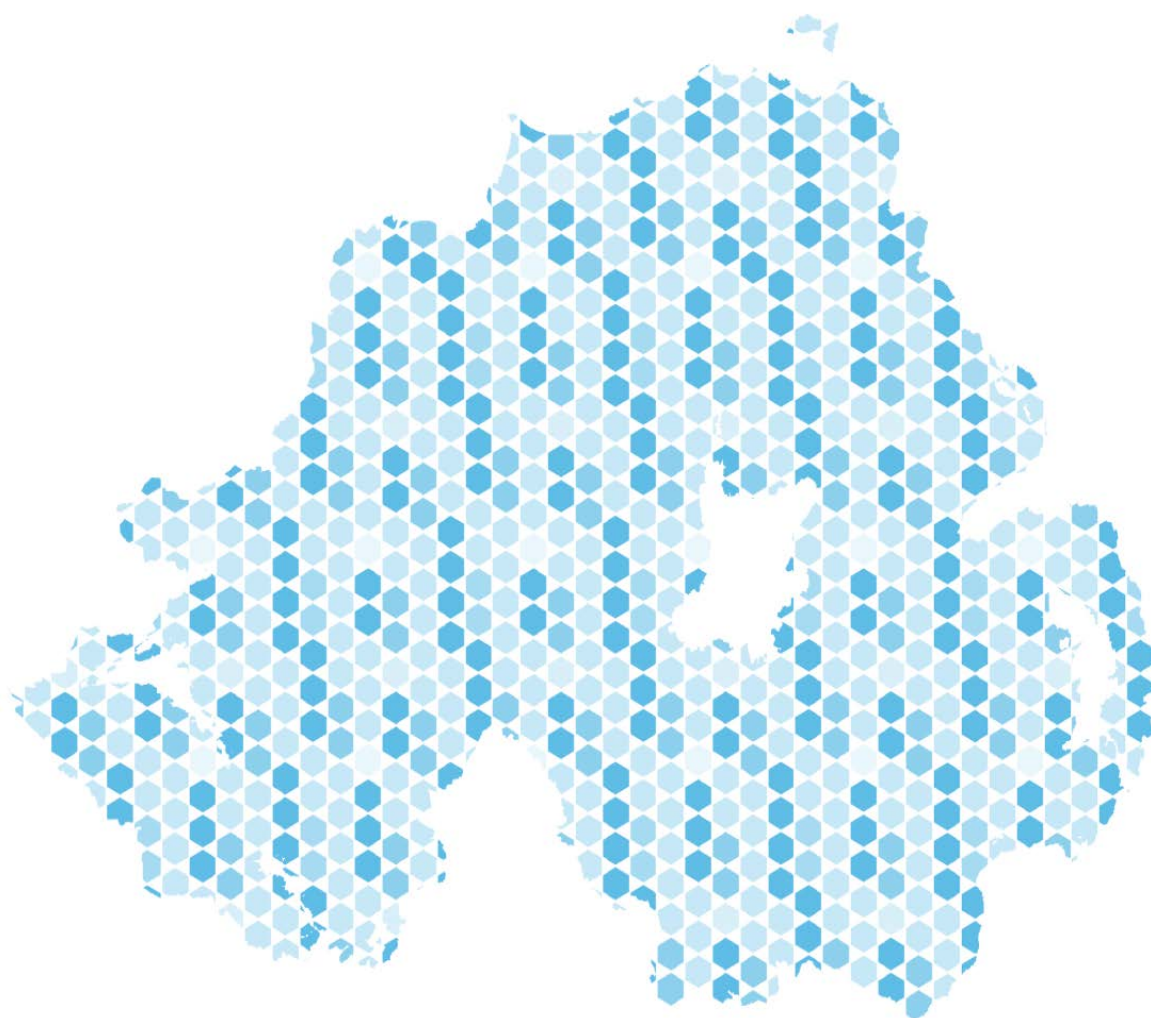


INDEPENDENT INSPECTION 2014



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Hollywood Rudolf Steiner
Independent School

Report of an Inspection in
October 2014

Quantitative terms

In this report, proportions may be described as percentages, common fractions and in more general quantitative terms. Where more general terms are used, they should be interpreted as follows:

Almost/nearly all	-	more than 90%
Most	-	75%-90%
A majority	-	50%-74%
A significant minority	-	30%-49%
A minority	-	10%-29%
Very few/a small number	-	less than 10%

Performance levels

The Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) use the following performance levels in reports:

DESCRIPTOR
Outstanding
Very Good
Good
Satisfactory
Inadequate
Unsatisfactory

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1. Inspection method and evidence base

The key questions and quality indicators which guide inspection and self-evaluation of primary and post-primary schools, which were applied to this inspection, are available in the Inspectorate's publication *Together Towards Improvement: a process for self evaluation* at: <http://www.etini.gov.uk/index/together-towards-improvement/together-towards-improvement-primary.htm>.

Inspectors observed teaching and learning, scrutinised documentation and the pupils' written work and held formal and informal discussions with children, teachers and staff with specific responsibilities.

The arrangements for this inspection included:

- a meeting with representatives from the School Management Council; and,
- meetings with groups of pupils from the lower and senior schools.

2. Context

The Hollywood Steiner School is situated on the outskirts of Hollywood in Co. Down. It was established on the current site in September 1975 as a co-educational, integrated, independent school and registered with the Department of Education. The school provides education for pupils in its kindergarten (ages 4-6), lower school (ages 6-13) and upper school (ages 14-17). The pupils in the upper school take a range of GCSE examinations.

The school is part of a large international network of schools, including 35 in the United Kingdom, which follow the Steiner-Waldorf curriculum. The curriculum is designed to work in harmony with the different phases of the pupil's development which are marked by significant and specific developments in physical, psychological and spiritual maturation. The core subjects are taught in thematic blocks and there is a common pedagogical approach to enable a balance of artistic, practical and intellectual content. In the upper school, the Steiner-Waldorf curriculum is taught alongside GCSE specifications.

The enrolment has fluctuated since the time of the last inspection in February 2008 and is currently 110 pupils. The inspection in 2008 identified the need to develop appropriate safeguarding and pastoral care policies and procedures, for leadership and management to develop strategies to monitor and evaluate the quality of learning and teaching throughout the school, and for the teachers to improve the quality of their planning for learning.

Hollywood Rudolf Steiner Independent School	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Enrolment	115	129	115	110
% Attendance	93.5%	93.1%	92.6%	n/a
FSME Percentage ¹	0	0	*	0
% (No) of children on SEN register	n/a	17%	22%	22%
No. of children with statements of educational needs	0	*	*	*
No. of newcomers	0	0	*	*

Source: data as held by the school.

* fewer than 5

¹ The term 'FSME Percentage' refers to the percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals.

3. Focus of inspection

The inspection focused on:

- the learners' achievements and standards;
- the accommodation, including health and safety standards;
- the provision in the school, with a particular focus on the implementation of the procedures for safeguarding and pastoral care; and
- the leadership and management.

Key findings of the inspection

4. Achievements and standards

- The majority of the children are well settled; they work independently, in small groups and in larger groups when provided with the opportunity. They are curious about their learning, engage readily with their teachers and turn to them when they require support and guidance. The pupils report that they become increasingly independent and self-reliant as they progress through the school and feel ready for the next stage of their education or employment.
- In 2014, the small number of pupils who took GCSEs, gained qualifications in a range of subjects including; art and design, classical civilizations, English language, English literature, geography, German, learning for life and work (LLW), mathematics, physical education, science and additional science. In addition, qualifications were offered in Essential Skills (English and mathematics), Creative Crafts and Entry Level science. An analysis of the GCSE outcomes shows that in two of the last three years most of the examination entries resulted in an A*-C grade. The percentage of entries attaining an A* and A grade has increased over the past three years to just above one-third. Over the past three years, approximately two-thirds of the school leavers go on to take a range of courses in further education colleges and approximately one-quarter progress to other schools to take A level or equivalent qualifications.

5. Provision for learning

- The staff are committed to delivering the Steiner-Waldorf curriculum. All of the teaching staff are educated to at least degree level, approximately one-third have a recognised teaching qualification and a further one-third have a qualification in Steiner-Waldorf education, accredited through the Association of Steiner-Waldorf Teacher Educators.
- Since the last inspection, the staff have worked collegially to develop a common approach for short, medium and long term planning across the school. In the most effective practice observed during the inspection, the lessons were well structured and suitably differentiated; the pupil's behaviour was managed in a calm and positive manner; and the pupils were given time to think, reflect on, and discuss their learning using precise and appropriate language.

- In the less effective practice in approximately one-fifth of the lessons observed, the teachers missed opportunities to engage the pupils more actively and purposefully in their learning and there was an overemphasis on managing the behaviour of the pupils.
- The school, with support from appropriate agencies, has identified approximately one-fifth of the pupils that require additional support with aspects of their learning. The teachers communicate regularly with these parents and where possible the school provides additional support as required. The school has limited access to support from external agencies and other professionals in addressing the specific requirements of those children who have a statement of Special Educational Need (SEN). The staff have identified the need for additional training on a range of SEN matters pertaining to the school.
- The staff are supportive of the children and are committed to their wellbeing. In discussions with the inspectors, the pupils reported that they are happy in school, feel safe and know what to do if they have any concerns. The pupils in the upper school are involved, through the school council, in making decisions about aspects of school life that affect them. They have been consulted on the development of the positive discipline policy and have been provided with opportunities to take on roles and responsibilities, for example, the mentoring of the younger pupils.
- The school grounds are used well to enhance particular aspects of the pupils' learning and development. Within the classrooms, there are limited resources to extend and develop the pupils' learning. The displays should be used more effectively to stimulate the pupils' interests and celebrate their achievements. The school management team have identified the need to develop the use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) to support the GCSE pupils.
- Recently, the school has put in place a health and safety team which reports to the management team. They need to conduct a risk assessment of the current accommodation and to address the specific health and safety issues outlined in appendix one.

6. Leadership and management

- Following a recent review of governance, the school has undergone significant re-structuring of the leadership and management to provide greater levels of support and accountability and to enable the teachers to focus more on developing the quality of learning and teaching. A range of action teams has been established to promote greater levels of associated leadership and an online management tool has been introduced with a view to ensuring more collegial working and systematic monitoring and evaluation across the school. The action teams are currently identifying priorities for further school development over the next three years and the specific actions which are required to promote improvement within their areas of responsibility.

- On the basis of the evidence available at the time of inspection, the school has satisfactory arrangements in place for safeguarding children. Since the last inspection the school has developed an appropriate range of safeguarding policies and procedures to guide the staff and training has been provided for all staff on recognising and responding to child protection issues. In taking this work forward the school needs to:
 - develop further the use of risk assessments for school outings;
 - ensure that written permission is sought from parents to allow the staff to attend to the intimate care needs of the younger pupils; and
 - ensure that safeguarding messages are incorporated more fully and explicitly into the curriculum.

7. Conclusion

On the evidence available, at the time of the inspection, in relation to the accommodation, safeguarding and health and safety, the quality of provision in Holywood Steiner School is satisfactory.

The school should continue to build on the improvements since the last inspection by developing further the arrangements for safeguarding to address the areas above and conduct a risk assessment of the accommodation to address health and safety issues.

The Education and Training Inspectorate recommends that the Department of Education continues to register the Holywood Steiner School.

Health and safety

- The doors to the main buildings are unlocked during the day.
- Waste material in areas of the school grounds presents a potential hazard.
- The perimeter fence is not robust and secure in places.
- Pathways to the school are uneven and could present trip hazards.
- Not all the classrooms have visual access panels.

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