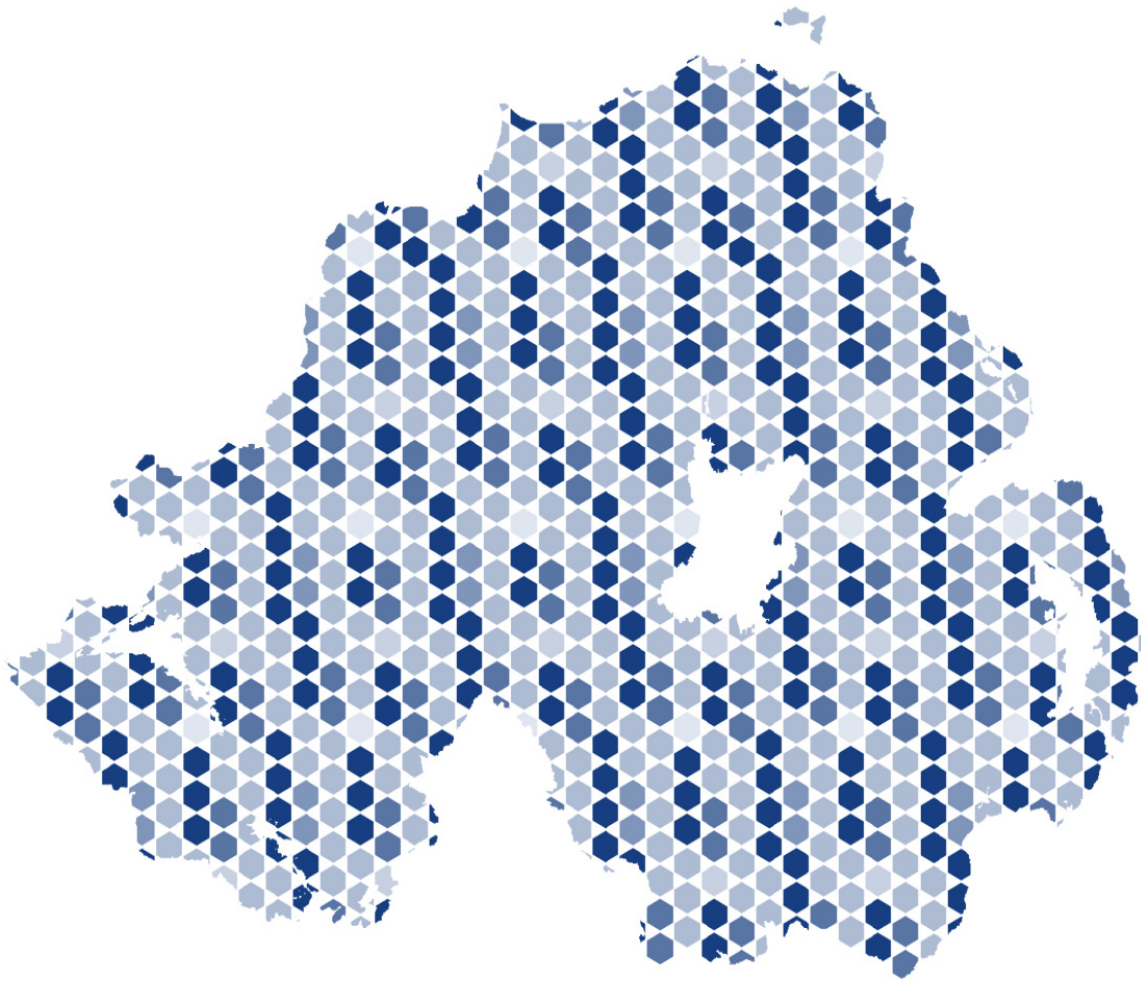


POST-PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Saintfield High School Co Down

Controlled Non-Selective 11-16 school

Report of an Inspection
in January 2012



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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%

In assessing the various features of the provision, Inspectors relate their evaluations to six descriptors as set out below:

DESCRIPTOR
Outstanding
Very Good
Good
Satisfactory
Inadequate
Unsatisfactory

GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THE REPORT

The term '*similar schools*' refers to schools in the same free school meal category as defined by DE, whether they are selective or non-selective.

CEIAG	Careers Education Information Advice and Guidance
DE	Department of Education
EF	Entitlement Framework
ETI	Education and Training Inspectorate
FSM	Free School Meals
GCSE	General Certificate of Secondary Education
HOD	Head of Department
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IEP	Individual Education Plan
KS	Key stage
LLW	Learning for Life and Work
LSC	Learning Support Centre
NI	Northern Ireland
SDP	School Development Plan
SEELB	South Eastern Education and Library Board
SEN	Special Educational Needs
SENCO	Special Educational Needs Coordinator
SLT	Senior Leadership Team
STEM	Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics

1. CONTEXT

1.1 The majority of the pupils come from the town of Saintfield and the wider rural community. The year 8 enrolment is capped; the school has been oversubscribed for the past seven years. At the end of year 12, approximately one-third of the pupils continue their education at a selective school. The current enrolment, of 369, includes 30 pupils with an SEN statement.

1.2 Over the past four years, the percentage of pupils in the year 8 intake achieving KS2 outcomes at Level 4 and above in both English and mathematics has increased significantly and, in 2011, reached well above the corresponding NI average.

1.3 The overall school attendance is above the NI average.

Saintfield High School	2008	2009	2010	2011
Enrolment	353	358	364	369
FSM (Band 1) Percentage				
% (No) of pupils on SEN register	82 (23.23)	100 (27.93)	104 (28.57)	118 (31.98%)
<i>No. of pupils with statements</i>	20 (5.66)	22 (6.14)	28 (7.69)	30 (8.13)
<i>No. of newcomers</i>	0	0	0	0
Intake				
% of Y8 pupils with L5 English	2.67%	1.33%	1.32%	5.41%
% of Y8 pupils with L5 mathematics	16.00%	8.00%	9.21%	12.16%
% of Y8 pupils with L4 English	60.00%	62.67%	80.26%	83.78%
% of Y8 pupils with L4 mathematics	62.67%	70.67%	81.58%	79.73%

Source: Data held by the school.

2. OVERALL FINDINGS OF THE INSPECTION

2.1 In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by the school is very good. The school is meeting very effectively the educational and pastoral needs of the pupils; and has demonstrated its capacity for sustained self improvement.

2.2 It will be important that the employing authority, college governors and the staff plan for, and manage, issues related to the sustainability of the school provision and budget in order to address the current and future needs of the pupils and the staff.

3. ACHIEVEMENTS AND STANDARDS

3.1 Overall the standards achieved by the pupils are very good

KEY FINDINGS

The pupils are well motivated and settle quickly to their work. Most of the pupils in each year group are responsive and confident in their learning and are making good progress across the curriculum.

GCSE and GCSE Equivalent Subjects - following permitted exclusions	2009	2010	2011
Comparisons based on FSM Band percentage			
Percentage of Year 12 taking GCSE & Equivalents in at least 5 subjects	100	100	100
Percentage of Year 12 obtaining Grades C or above in at least 5 subjects including English and Mathematics	54.55	59.68	49.25
Comparison with the NI average for similar schools in the same FSM category	Well above average	Well above average	Well above average
Percentage of Year 12 obtaining Grades C or above in at least 5 subjects	72.73	82.26	62.69
Comparison with the NI average for similar schools in the same FSM category	Well above average	Well above average	Below average
Percentage of Year 12 obtaining Grades E or above in at least 5 subjects	96.97	98.39	97.01

Source: Data on Year 12 (KS4) performance as held by the school, with DE benchmarks.

The percentage of pupils obtaining grades A* to C in five or more subjects at KS4, including GCSE English and mathematics is well above the NI average for similar schools.

The percentage of pupils obtaining grades A* to C in five or more subjects at KS4, was well above the NI average for similar schools in two out of the past three years; there was a drop in 2011 to below the NI average.

Over the past three years, 48% of the pupils attained grade A*-C in GCSE English, which is above the NI average for similar schools and 54% attained grade A*-C in GCSE mathematics, which is well above the same average.

The pupils with a wide range of challenging SEN and additional needs make very good progress. All pupils, for example, identified with significant literacy difficulties in year 8, achieve well and are successful in public examinations by the end of KS4.

4. PROVISION FOR LEARNING

4.1 The quality of the provision for learning is very good.

The provision in English, mathematics and in modern languages is very good.

KEY FINDINGS

The quality of the lessons observed during the inspection ranged from good to outstanding; the majority were very good and a minority were outstanding.

The teachers use an appropriately wide range of strategies for assessing learning, including self and peer-assessment. During group work and paired work, the pupils interact well with one another to share and consolidate their learning. In class discussions, they talk openly and with confidence about what they are learning and recall prior learning experiences across the curriculum that they had enjoyed.

The staff and pupils have very good working relationships; there is a caring, supportive and pupil-centred ethos where the pupils' achievements and positive behaviours are promoted at all levels throughout the school.

All members of staff have engaged recently in an effective action-based research programme to evaluate their learning and teaching methodologies and to disseminate their good practice with colleagues.

The quality of provision for SEN is very good.

The pupils who receive additional help from the learning support teachers benefit from carefully structured support which enables them to become more secure, confident and motivated in their learning. The SEN planning is informed by the sound knowledge which the teachers have of individual pupils and the early assessment of their needs.

For those pupils with more significant challenges, a range of diagnostic tests provides detailed information which is used well to target areas for withdrawal and in-class support at KS3. Since 2008, the school has provided significant additional resources to create a new Learning Support teaching space; two teachers facilitate very effective team teaching and withdrawal sessions as part of this provision.

At KS4, the pupils receive good support both in class and after school as they work on their examination accreditation.

4.2 The quality of the care, guidance and support of pupils is very good.

KEY FINDINGS

During the inspection, the pupils were friendly, welcoming and demonstrated exemplary behaviour. The emotional health and well-being of the pupils is a high priority for all staff. The pupils engage well in programmes which support their personal and social development, and enjoy a very good range of extra-curricular activities, tailored appropriately to their needs and interests. The pupils who participate in the school's 'Student Voice' project are making collective decisions to improve their school community, such as working together and consulting with their peers to agree a code of behaviour.

The personal development programme is delivered primarily through LLW; the programme, particularly in KS3, is sufficiently flexible to meet issues arising for the pupils both within and outside of school.

4.3 The quality of the curricular provision for the pupils at KS3 and KS4 is very good.

The school provides a suitably broad and balanced curriculum at KS3 and KS4. The KS4 curriculum meets the requirements of the EF and supports well the ability and career aspirations of most of the pupils.

The school has developed good links with training organisations to offer qualifications in equine studies and land-based machinery training. A significant minority of pupils, who are interested in pursuing a career in construction and agriculture in the local rural area benefit from these additional programmes.

The school is collaborating well at KS4 with the local regional college; collaboration with other schools within the Ballynahinch Learning Community has been limited.

The quality of the provision for CEIAG is very good.

The pupils benefit from very high-quality careers guidance and support which enables them to make appropriate career decisions. They have a sound knowledge of the career pathways open to them, including the alternative routes and the associated examination grades which are required. The very good range of career learning activities, which are well integrated into the curricular provision, meet the needs and interests of most of the pupils. There are very good arrangements in place to monitor and evaluate the quality of the CEAG provision.

5. LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.1 The leadership and the management are very good.

KEY FINDINGS

The Principal provides effective leadership. She has a broad and strategic vision for the school, centered on a set of values agreed by the school community to meet the educational and welfare needs of all the pupils and staff. During her eight years in post, she has established a culture of teamwork amongst the staff, developed a distributive leadership structure to manage the changing needs of the school, and worked hard to inspire and empower teachers to lead and coordinate learning areas across the curriculum.

The principal is supported ably by the hard work and commitment of the newly appointed Vice-principal who leads and manages successfully the provision for both pastoral care and English.

Building leadership capacity through leadership and management training, and succession planning is given a high priority and is well developed in the school.

There are appropriate and well-developed policies for literacy and numeracy and it is timely for the SLT to consider how best to organise the leadership and management of the continuing monitoring, implementation and development of literacy, numeracy and ICT across the curriculum.

The leadership and the management of the SEN provision are very good. The policy for SEN and inclusion reflects a significant commitment to meeting the full range of additional and special needs. The SENCO co-ordinates and manages well the team of very effective classroom assistants.

The SDP meets the requirements of the School Development plan regulations (NI) 2010. It identifies through systematic and open consultations with staff, pupils and governors, appropriate priorities for school improvement. The school has made good use of the development planning indicators outlined within the DE policy, Every School a Good School, to improve further the cohesion and focus of the plan. It is appropriate that the school, through its own processes of self-evaluation, has begun to make better use of the wide range of internal and external performance data. This is having a positive impact on the action planning process designed to improve learning and teaching, and target setting.

The school has very good, comprehensive arrangements in place for safeguarding children. These arrangements reflect the guidance issued by the Department of Education.

The pupils interviewed feel safe and secure in school and all are well aware what to do if they have any worries about their safety and well-being.

The governors are well informed about the life and work of the school; they work effectively with the Principal to ensure that the school is well managed and provide challenge where needed.

Given the findings of the inspection, the school meets the needs and expectations of the school community very effectively.

The school's accommodation is good and recent refurbishments contribute well to the attractive and inclusive learning environment throughout the school.

6. CONCLUSION

6.1 In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by this school is very good. The school is meeting very effectively the educational and pastoral needs of the pupils; and has demonstrated its capacity for sustained self improvement.

6.2 It will be important that the employing authority, school governors and the staff plan for, and manage, issues related to the sustainability of the school provision and school budget in order to address the current and future needs of the pupils and the staff.

STATISTICAL INFORMATION

- 1.1 i. School: Saintfield High
 ii. School Reference Number: 421-0063
 iii. Age Range: 11-16
 iv. Status: Controlled
 v. Date of Inspection: W/C 30/01/12
 vi. Area of Study: Standard Inspection

1.2 Intake/Enrolment

School Year	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Year 8 Intake	75	75	75	76	78
Total enrolment	343	348	353	358	364
369					

1.3 Attendance

Year 2010/11	8	9	10	11	12	Average 2010/11	NI Average 2009/10
% Attendance	96	94	94	91	95	94	91

- 1.4 i. Total Number of Teachers: 24 iii. Contact ratio (percentage of timetabled time in direct class contact): 0.79
- ii. PTR (Pupil/Teacher Ratio): 15.29

Year 2011/12	8	9	10	11	12	TOTAL
Enrolment: Boys	40	48	45	45	38	216
Enrolment: Total	34	28	31	29	31	153
PTR	17.7	18.055	17.936	12.801	11.996	

1.5 Leavers' Destinations

2009/10	Year 12	NI%
Total Number of Leavers	66	
Another School	32%	
Employment	0%	
Full-time Further Education	56%	
Full-time Higher Education	N/A	N/A
Full-time Training	9%	
Seeking Employment/Unemployed	3%	
Unknown/Long Term Sick/Pregnant	0%	

GCSE EXAMINATION RESULTS

HEADLINE STANDARDS FOR NON-SELECTIVE SCHOOLS

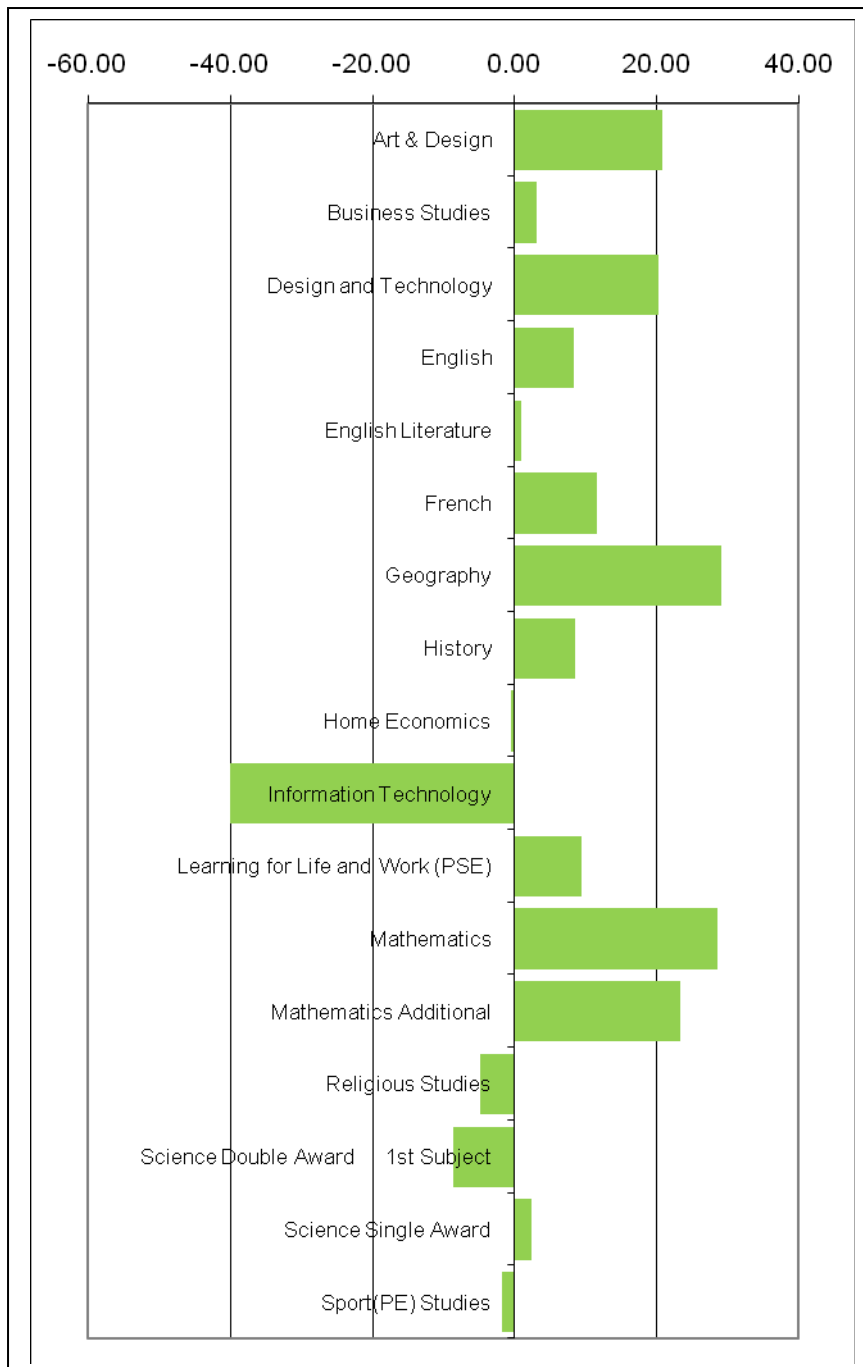
NB: For **non-selective schools**, the NI average for pupils achieving five or more GCSEs or equivalent at grades A* to C in 2010 including English and Mathematics is 34.9%. The corresponding NI average for pupils achieving five or more GCSEs or equivalent at grades A* to C is 59%.

Data on Year 12 (Key Stage 4) performance for non-selective schools (not based on FSM category)

GCSE and GCSE Equivalent Subjects - following permitted exclusions	2009	2010	2011
Comparisons based on FSM Band percentage			
Percentage of Year 12 taking GCSE & Equivalents in at least 5 subjects	100	100	100
Percentage of Year 12 obtaining Grades C or above in at least 5 subjects including English and Mathematics	54.55	59.68	49.25
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Percentage of Year 12 obtaining Grades E or above in at least 5 subjects	96.97	98.39	97.01

Source: Data as held by Department of Education (NI) and as agreed with the school.

Comparison of the school's 3 year average for GCSE A*-C with the NI average



Other results

OCCUPATIONAL STUDIES

	2011	2010		2009	
Level	N/A				
No entered	N/A	44 (95.45% A* -C)		42 (95.23% A* -C)	
No achieved	N/A	Level 2 42	Level 1 2	Level 2 40	Level 1 2

BTEC FIRST CERTIFICATE IN HORTICULTURE

	2011			2010	2009
Level				N/A	N/A
No entered	32** (100% A* -C)			N/A	N/A
No achieved	Distinction 4	Merit 14	Pass 14	N/A	N/A

****Double award**

PERFORMING ARTS	2011						2010						2009					
Level	GCSE						GCSE						GCSE					
No entered	9 (77.77% A*-C)						8 (100% A* -C)						12 (58.33% A* -C)					
Grade	A	B	C	D	E	F	A	B	C	D	E	F	A	B	C	D	E	F
		3	4	2			2	2	4					5	2	3	2	

HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE	2011						2010						2009					
Level	GCSE						GCSE						GCSE					
No entered	16* (56.25% A* - C)						32** (9.37% A* -C)						34** (47.05% A* - C)					
Grade	A	B	C	D	E	F	A	B	C	D	E	F	A	B	C	D	E	F
		3	6	4	2	1			3	9	14	6		4	12	7	5	6

*Single Award

**Double award

SUMMARY OF THE MAIN FINDINGS FROM THE AREAS UNDER FOCUS

The quality of the provision in English is very good.

The strengths of the work observed include the:

- quality of the strategic leadership and management of the department and the commitment and quality of the teachers, together with their capacity to identify and take forward necessary improvements;
- well-articulated rationale for teaching and learning in English which is reflected throughout all of the classroom practice;
- quality and range of the provision, including the recent introduction of GCSE Journalism, and the engagement by the pupils in a varied and interesting range of learning experiences, including use of drama methods and the school library;
- very good or outstanding quality of almost all of the teaching observed which enables the pupils to develop well their skills and knowledge; and
- the very good achievements in English and the good standards in recent years in GCSE English and English Literature.

The quality of the provision in mathematics is very good

The strengths of the work observed include the:

- the commitment of the teachers, particularly in providing additional lessons to prepare the pupils for examinations;
- the high level of individual support provided for the pupils;
- the good or better quality of teaching in all of the lessons observed;
- the outstanding standards achieved in GCSE examinations; and
- the good leadership and management of mathematics.

The provision for modern languages is very good.

The strengths of the work observed include the:

- sustained use of the target language by the teachers;
- variety of effective and lively teaching approaches that ensure that language is practised and reinforced in meaningful contexts;

- enthusiastic response by the pupils to learning French and their increasing ability to speak using extended language in real life situations;
- competent leadership of the Head of department and the growing culture of self-evaluation leading to improvement; and
- the very good results in GCSE French which are consistently above the average for schools of a similar type.

SCOPE AND METHOD OF THE INSPECTION

The standard inspection of Saintfield High School focused on achievements and standards, learning and teaching, curriculum provision and on leadership and management across the school as a whole. The key questions and quality indicators which guide inspection and self-evaluation in these three aspects of 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-post-primary.htm>

Inspectors scrutinised documentation and the pupils' written work and held formal and informal discussions with pupils, teachers and staff with specific responsibilities. Specialist inspectors paid particular attention to English, mathematics and modern languages, providing detailed oral feedback to the teachers in these areas. Detailed findings are reported in Appendix 3

The inspection also focused on the provision for pastoral care and the arrangements for child protection; the provision for pupils requiring additional support with their learning and their inclusion in all aspects of school life, on CEIAG and on progress towards the EF.

The arrangements for the inspection included:

- the opportunity for the parents, teaching and support staff to complete a confidential questionnaire to the inspection;
- meetings with representatives from the governors; and
- meetings with groups of pupils from years 8, 10 and 12.

Questionnaire	Number issued	Number returned	Percentage returned	Number with comments
Parents	122	70	57.4	35
Teachers	24	20	83.3	16
Support Staff	22	21	95.5	*

Source: Returns from questionnaires to DE * fewer than 5

The returns from the questionnaires sent to the parents, the teachers and the support staff were affirmative in almost all aspects of the work and life of the school. In particular, the parents highlighted the leadership of the principal the approachable and committed staff, and the supportive and caring ethos within the school.

The ETI reported to the Principal and representatives of the governors the small number of issues emerging from the questionnaires and, where appropriate, these have been commented on within the report.

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