

# An update on the work of ETI: November 2021 – January 2022

November 2021

## Early Years and Special: Outdoor Learning Environment

The ETI thematic paper *'Pre-school and foundation stage: Delivering the curriculum outdoors'* published on 4 November to coincide with National Outdoor Classroom Day. Outdoor learning is one of the themes which district inspectors will continue to focus on during the rest of term 1, including in Special Schools.

## Primary: Reading and Outdoor Play in the Foundation Stage

A proportion of the district visits to primary schools will focus on how schools are:

- developing a range of reading strategies in the foundation stage to address individual learning needs and raise the standards of the children's reading; and
- developing the outdoor learning experiences and facilities for children in the foundation stage.

## Post-primary: Learning and Teaching, and Curriculum Provision

A proportion of the district visits to post-primary schools will focus on how teaching and learning, and curriculum provision are building upon the pupils' interests, needs and prior learning.

## Primary and Post-primary: Learning Support Provision in mainstream schools

This evaluation will focus on the arrangements for, and the quality of the provision in, Learning Support Centres in mainstream schools. District inspectors will carry out visits to a sample of primary and post-primary schools with Learning Support Centre provision.

## Schools and EOTAS Centres: The preventative curriculum and safeguarding practices in schools and EOTAS centres

This evaluation aims to identify the approaches and challenges around delivering effective preventative safeguarding practices in schools and EOTAS centres.

As part of the survey, the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) is inviting all primary (nursery schools not included), post primary, special schools and EOTAS centres, to respond to an online questionnaire. In January 2022, pupils in Year 7, 10, 12 and 14 in a sample of settings will also be invited to complete an online questionnaire.

The ETI will also undertake a series of district visits to review effective safeguarding practices and discuss aspects of the preventative curriculum; visits will also take place to a small sample of schools/centres to develop exemplars of effective practice.



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## Further Education: The work of the Curriculum Hubs

The Department for the Economy has commissioned ETI to provide an evaluation of the work undertaken by the six further education colleges to progress the development and implementation of their Curriculum Hubs.

## Work-based Learning and European Social Fund: Quality Improvement Planning Scrutiny

The Department for the Economy has commissioned ETI to evaluate the effectiveness of recovery-focused quality improvement planning in the training supplier organisations and European Social Fund projects.

## Development work: 'Empowering Improvement - Stepping Forward Together' Project

An invitation to join ETI's capacity-building project 'Empowering Improvement – Stepping Forward Together' has now issued to all pre-school settings, primary, post-primary and special schools, and EOTAS centres. The project reflects ETI's commitment to wide-scale consultation and engagement with schools, organisations and other stakeholders around sustainable capacity-building in the area of self-evaluation leading to improvement. Specifically, the project will focus on self-evaluation:

- leading to whole-organisation improvement (from the perspective of middle leadership); and
- of learning and teaching, encompassing digital learning.

Pre-school settings, schools and EOTAS centres have also been invited to become involved in consultation around the delivery of the capacity-building project as well as the development of an inspection strategy. Over 760 schools and pre-school settings have expressed an interest in participating in the project; the closing date for expressions of interest from EOTAS centres is Friday 5 November.

Over the month of November, we will be in touch with schools and organisations to begin the process of nominating the key staff to become involved with the project and to outline the timetable of activities (January to March 2022). We will also be in touch with those schools and organisations that have been selected to work with us in the two consultation groups.



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## Youth work: Youth Participation and Wellbeing

Youth Participation, in particular evidence taken forward by the Children and Young People team as part of the Participation Project, in relation to listening to the voice of young people. The Education Authority have a leading role, developing standards, working with young people and taking forward their views.

Wellbeing, this will include evidence from the REACH and wellbeing programme (practice in supporting young people during the COVID-19 pandemic). We will also be looking at detached youth work looking at a range of specific issues. Finally, we will be looking at the DE Youth mental health and wellbeing programme being developed.

## Other commissioned work: College of Agriculture, Food and Rural Enterprise's Business Development Groups

The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs has commissioned ETI to provide an evaluation of the College of Agriculture, Food and Rural Enterprise's Business Development Groups. The final phase of this longitudinal evaluation, 2016-2021, is taking place this term.

It is likely that any visit to an organisation will entail: discussions with key staff; looking at the organisation's documentation relating to the provision; observing the provision including lessons; and, discussions with the learners.

No individual institution reports will be published during this term, except in cases where a formal inspection is carried out, for example, if there are safeguarding concerns or if an organisation requests an inspection and it is granted. In most cases, a system-level report will be published, with the participating organisations acknowledged in the appendix to the report.