

An update on the work of ETI: September 2023 – January 2024

November 2023

Programme of Work

Schools / organisations	Development of Inspection, including pilot inspections across a range of phases.
Schools / organisations	Follow-up inspections for a proportion of organisations in ETI's follow-up process.
Schools and EOTAS centres	An Evaluation of the Statementing Process.
Schools and EOTAS centres	Emotional Health and Wellbeing Framework - case studies of effective practice.
Post-primary Schools/Special Schools/Further Education	Review of the Entitlement Framework Policy.
Post-primary Schools	An Evaluation of the Qualification Support Programme.
Post-primary Schools	A Review of Large-Size Qualifications.
Independent Schools	Registration and re-registration visits.
Work-based learning	Scrutiny of Quality Improvement Planning.
European Social Fund	European Social Fund 2013-2023: Summative Evaluation of Inspection Activity.
Youth	Planning for the Review of the Priorities for Youth Policy Framework.
Broader Inspection work	Follow-up Independent Reviews of Progress in Prisons.
Professional Learning for Impact	Planning for potential Empowering Improvement II Programme.
Professional Learning for Impact	Dissemination of the evaluations of: Teacher Professional Learning to support pupils with special educational needs; Digital Skills in the Curriculum; and, Future Ready Digital Learning.

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Schools/Organisations: Development of Inspection, including pilot inspections

Feedback from the consultation around the development of inspection has been analysed and considered in depth (see: [ETI publishes findings from a consultation on the development of inspection](#)) and has informed the new inspection process, including function and purpose of inspection, and the development of the new models. Pilot inspections, informed by the prototype inspections which took place in 2022/23, are taking place this term, across the early years, work-based learning and youth phases.

Schools/Organisations: Follow-up inspections for a proportion of organisations in ETI's follow-up process

Follow-up inspections of schools/organisations will continue to take place during this term. To assure schools/organisations and their respective community, parents, the Department of Education (DE) and other stakeholders that improvement is being achieved in the best interests of the learners, a proportion of the organisations currently within the follow-up process will be prioritised for a follow-up inspection by ETI.

Schools and EOTAS centres: An Evaluation of the Statementing Process

This work focuses on assessing whether the current statementing process meets the needs of children and young people with special educational needs (SEN) in schools, with particular reference to the practicalities of the statementing process and the implementation of the statement.

It will include visits to schools and engagement with practitioners through focus groups. The visits to schools will take place between 20 November and 8 December 2023, and will include discussions with relevant staff with responsibility for SEN and parents/carers of children involved in the process. This is an opportunity to provide feedback on the current process, highlighting the strengths and also the challenges for all involved in progressing the statementing process to support those children with specific needs. There is no requirement to produce additional information or documentation specifically for the purposes of this visit.

Schools and EOTAS centres: Emotional Health and Wellbeing Framework

In collaboration with schools and EOTAS centres, ETI is producing informative case studies to exemplify the excellent work which is taking place to support children and young people who have emotional health and wellbeing needs. It is hoped that these case studies will be useful to practitioners who are reflecting on their own practice in this area.



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Post-primary schools/Special schools/Further Education: A Review of the Entitlement Framework Policy

DE has commissioned ETI to provide policy advice in this area. The main objective of the review of the Entitlement Framework (EF) is to ascertain to what extent the aims and objectives of the EF, as set out in the 2010 document 'Delivering the Entitlement Framework by 2013' have been achieved, are still relevant and are working as intended. The ETI will be engaging with schools to harness the views of school leaders, practitioners and learners to inform this work.

Post-primary schools: An Evaluation of the Qualification Support Programme

DE has commissioned ETI to provide policy advice in this area. The main objective of this work is to evaluate the effectiveness of the programme in supporting young people to prepare for public examinations in the summer series 2023. District Inspectors will be engaging with practitioners, leaders and young people to hear their views on the planning and implementation of the Programme.

Post-primary schools: A review of large-size level 3 qualifications

DE has commissioned ETI to provide policy advice in this area. The main objective of this work is to review the provision of large-size level 3 qualifications in the context of the statutory requirement to deliver a broad and balanced curriculum.

Independent Schools: Registration and re-registration visits

The ETI undertook revised re-registration inspections in a small number of independent schools during 2022-23. In this term, ETI inspectors will be engaging with the leaders of a sample of these schools to review the new arrangements to assess how we can improve our services going forward.

Work-based Learning: Quality Improvement Planning Scrutiny

The Department for the Economy (DfE) has commissioned ETI to evaluate the effectiveness of quality improvement planning in work-based training providers it has contracted to deliver the Skills for Life and Work, Training for Success and ApprenticeshipsNI 2021 training programmes.

The DfE introduced the Skills for Life and Work programme in September 2021 to replace Skills for Your Life and Skills for Work Level 1 of Training for Success. It is a programme designed for young people aged 16-17, or under 22 years for those with a disability, and under 24 years for those who qualify under the Children (Leaving Care) Act (NI) (2002). Apprenticeships are currently available at Level 2, Level 3 and Higher Level Apprenticeships from Level 4 upwards.



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European Social Fund: Summative Evaluation of the European Social Fund Programmes 2013/2023

The DfE has commissioned ETI to complete a summative evaluation report of European Social Fund (ESF) inspection activity conducted from 2013 to 2023. The ESF programme was delivered across Northern Ireland. Contracts for the programme were awarded across three calls to promoters and the projects were part-funded through the programme and the DfE.

The strategic aim of the programme was to: combat poverty and enhance social inclusion by reducing economic inactivity; and to increase the skills base of those currently in work and future potential participants in the workforce.

Youth work: Planning for a Review of the Priorities for Youth Policy Framework

The ETI has been commissioned to support DE's Review of the Priorities for Youth Policy Framework; planning for the evaluation will be undertaken this term.

Broader Inspection Work: Follow-up Independent Review of Progress

Independent Reviews of Progress (IRPs) will be conducted concurrently at Magilligan Prison and Maghaberry Prison by the Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland's (CJI) and His Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons (HMI Prisons), in partnership with the Regulatory and Quality Improvement Authority (RQIA) and the ETI. The IRPs are intended to provide assurance of progress made against concerns identified by CJI, HMI Prisons, RQIA and ETI in inspection reports for [Magilligan Prison](#) and [Maghaberry Prison](#).

Professional Learning for Impact: Planning for 'Empowering Improvement II' Programme

The ETI has recently sought expressions of interest for a potential second 'Empowering Improvement – Stepping Forward Together' project. The project will be aimed at senior leaders and will be based on five core questions around whole-organisation self-evaluation. The five questions will be central to all inspections going forward and include an enhanced focus on: the ethos and culture of the school/organisation; its context; its vision and values; and how it creates a community of learning.



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Professional Learning for Impact: Evaluation disseminations

Teacher Professional Learning to support pupils with special educational needs:

In 2022/23, DE commissioned ETI to carry out an evaluation of the effectiveness of teacher professional learning in meeting learners' special educational needs. The purpose of the evaluation was also to identify examples of effective practice, challenges and areas for consideration to inform policy development and practice. The ETI is planning to disseminate its findings this term.

Digital Skills in the curriculum:

In 2022/23, DE commissioned ETI to evaluate the nature and quality of the digital skills curriculum and provision in primary and post-primary schools. In Term 3, inspectors engaged with school leaders and learners across a range of schools to explore how well the digital skills provision enables children and young people to become a digital maker, worker or citizen in a rapidly evolving technological world. Inspectors also engaged with initial teacher education providers and digital industry representatives regarding digital skills provision for career progression needs in these sectors.

In this current term, the inspectors involved in this evaluation work will disseminate the findings to stakeholders and practitioners to inform policy development and stimulate insightful professional debate, to empower improvement in schools' digital skills provision.

Future Ready Digital Learning:

In 2022, through DE funding of circa £20M, the Education Authority (EA) in partnership with Microsoft Ireland and Capita Education, provided new laptops to teachers in over 1,100 schools and Education Other Than at School (EOTAS) settings. The laptops are integral to EA's Education Information Solutions (EDIS) programme which aims to deliver digital services to: facilitate improved learning experiences and outcomes; reduce inequalities for all children and young people; and strengthen educational partnerships.

In 2022/23, ETI undertook an exploratory piece of work to evaluate the progress and emerging impact of the new teacher laptops on the education provision for children and young people.

In this current term, the inspectors involved will disseminate the findings of this exploratory work to stakeholders and practitioners to empower further professional learning and development in this key aspect of provision within schools.