

**eti**

*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**



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

## **Education and Training Inspectorate**

### **Area-Based Inspection**

**Castletower School  
Ballymena**

**February 2009**

## **AREA-BASED INSPECTION - BALLYMENA AREA 2009: STRATEGIC PLANNING, COHERENCE IN LEARNING EXPERIENCES AND TRANSITIONAL ARRANGEMENTS**

The Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI), carried out an area-based inspection in Castletower School during February 2009.

### **The strengths include:**

- the very good strategic leadership and planning within the school, in continuing to meet well the challenge of transition in the context of a very recent and complex amalgamation;
- the commitment and involvement of staff and Governors;
- the outstanding links the school has developed with local post-primary schools, through Ballymena Learning Together (BLT), to ensure that their pupils have access to a wide range of programmes provided under the Entitlement Framework;
- the very good range of appropriate accreditation opportunities for pupils;
- the good quality of care, guidance and support for the individual needs of the pupils;
- the very good educational provision which promotes pupils' interest, achievement and enthusiasm for their work;
- the good quality formal and informal learning experiences to promote the pupils' social awareness and personal development; and
- the good informal and formal communication and support arrangements for parents, and in particular the involvement of parents in their children's education.

An area for improvement is the need to review strategically the post-16 provision, in collaboration with the North-Eastern Education and Library Board, the Northern Regional College and the local training providers; this review is necessary to ensure equity of provision and appropriate educational opportunities for all pupils.

While only one specific area for improvement has been identified in this report, the composite report from the area-based inspection raises broader issues which need to be addressed by all of the schools and organisations visited.

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