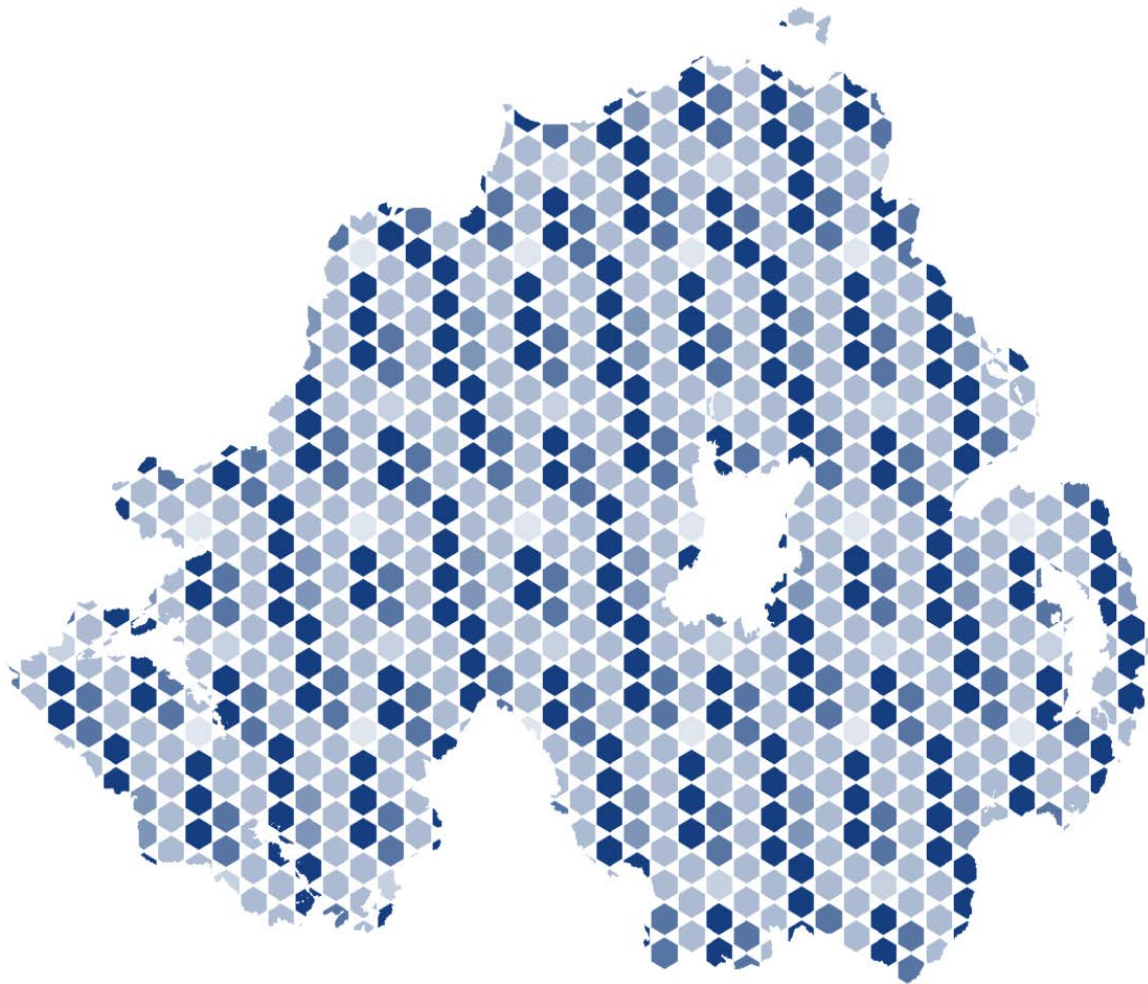


POST-PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

St Patrick's Grammar School,
Armagh

Non-selective, boys voluntary grammar school

Report of a Baseline Monitoring
Inspection (Involving Action Short
of Strike) in April 2017



The Education and Training Inspectorate
Promoting Improvement

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Department of Education
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Baseline Monitoring Inspection of St Patrick's Grammar School, Armagh (542-0268)

Introduction

The aim of the Monitoring Inspection is to evaluate the extent to which the leadership and management has set up effective self-evaluation processes to inform the development planning process in order to bring about improvement. The outcome of the inspection will inform future inspection activity.

St Patrick's Grammar School, Armagh expanded in September 2015 as a result of a joint development proposal to cease provision at St Brigid's High School, Armagh. Since September 2014, the school no longer uses academic selection for entry to the school.

Four of the teaching unions which make up the Northern Ireland Teachers' Council (NITC) have declared industrial action primarily in relation to a pay dispute. This includes non-co-operation with the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI). Prior to the inspection, the school informed the ETI that a majority of the teachers would not be co-operating with the inspectors. The ETI have a statutory duty to monitor, inspect and report on the quality of education under Article 102 of the Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 1986. Therefore, the inspection proceeded and the following evaluations are based on the evidence as made available at the time of the inspection.

Focus of the inspection

The inspection focused on evaluating actions to promote improvement and their impact on learning and teaching and outcomes attained by the pupils. The school also provided evidence of provision for safeguarding as part of the inspection.

During the inspection, lines of enquiry were selected from the priorities identified in the school development plan; the school was asked to demonstrate how the actions taken have led to improvement for the pupils. The two key lines of enquiry focused on the school's actions to:

- use effectively a range of data to improve the learning experiences of the pupils and the outcomes they achieve; and
- provide a broad and balanced curriculum with appropriate pathways for all pupils.

Where it has been possible to evaluate aspects of the foci, they have been reported below.

Key findings

- The school is developing well the use of data to track the pupils' progress in their learning and to ensure they and their parents are well informed on this. The school now needs to ensure that all of this available information is used better to inform planning for high quality learning and teaching. The school has begun to implement a range of intervention programmes, which it now needs to monitor rigorously in order to evaluate their impact and overall effectiveness.

- The recent and on-going review of the curriculum provision has led to a greater range of subjects being offered at key stage 4 and post-16 in order to meet better the needs, interests and abilities of the pupils. Going forward, it will be important for the school to monitor and evaluate the impact of the revised curriculum offer, particularly in relation to the learning experiences of the pupils and the outcomes they achieve. The lack of progression for a minority of pupils from year 13 to year 14 is not appropriate and needs to be reviewed.

Owing to the school's participation in industrial action the inspection was unable to evaluate fully action to promote improvement.

Safeguarding

During the inspection, the school provided evidence that arrangements for safeguarding reflect the guidance issued by the relevant Departments. The pupils reported that they feel safe in school. They know what to do and who to talk to if they are concerned about their safety or well-being.

Conclusion

Owing to the impact of the action short of strike being taken by a majority of teachers the ETI is unable to assure parents/carers, and the wider school community and stakeholders of the quality of education being provided for the pupils. This will be reflected in future inspection activity.

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