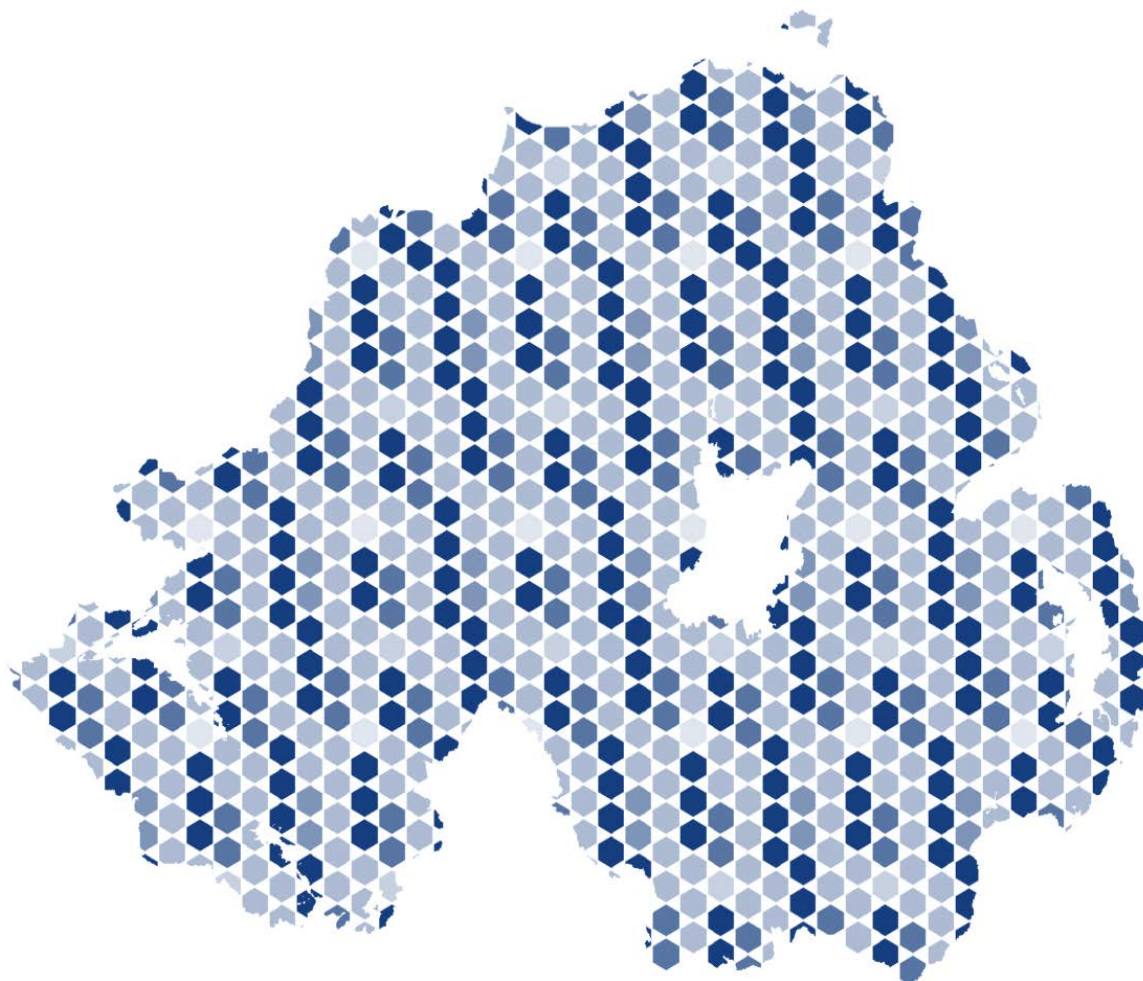


# POST-PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training  
Inspectorate

Campbell College, Belfast

All Boys' Voluntary Grammar School

Report of a Follow-up Inspection  
(Involving Action Short of Strike)  
in March 2017



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## **FOLLOW-UP TO THE INSPECTION OF CAMPBELL COLLEGE, BELFAST, BT4 2ND (142-0020)**

The Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) carried out an inspection of Campbell College, Belfast in October 2015<sup>1</sup> which concluded that the school needed to address important areas for improvement<sup>2</sup> in the interest of all the learners.

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection were the need to:

- continue to raise the standards achieved by the pupils in public examinations;
- improve the quality of planning and assessment at all levels to meet more effectively the learning needs of all the pupils; and
- further develop and embed the self-evaluation processes, across the subject departments, to ensure the learning experiences are of a consistently high standard for all the pupils.

The school's action plans were of a good quality and outlined a number of key actions to take forward the improvement work of the school.

The ETI carried out an interim follow up visit in May 2016.

Twenty one percent of parents (179) responded to the re-issued parental questionnaire; almost all of the respondents were in agreement that the school is well-led and managed at all levels. The written comments expressed, in particular, high levels of satisfaction with: the quality of the pastoral care; the dedication and support for the pupils demonstrated by the teachers; and the extensive range of extra-curricular opportunities for the pupils to acquire and develop confidence and leadership skills. The small number of issues raised in the questionnaires were discussed (maintaining the confidentiality of the respondents) with the governors and the principal.

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 nonco-operation with the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI). Prior to the inspection, the school informed the ETI that none of the teachers, except those in senior leadership, would 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.

In the interval since the initial inspection, the following actions or changes which affect the work of the school have taken place:

- the school has introduced a suite of assessment tools to better inform target-setting, self-evaluation and planning at whole-school, department and individual pupil level;
- there has been a comprehensive review of schemes of work;
- a virtual learning platform is improving communication with parents/carers and developing online learning forums to support further the pupils' learning; and
- the school enrolment has increased to 920 pupils.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.etini.gov.uk/sites/etini.gov.uk/files/publications/post-primary-inspection-campbell-college-belfast.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> Prior to September 2015, the term 'satisfactory' was used in inspection reports for overall conclusions where there were important areas for improvement.

## Key findings

The senior leadership team works collegially to lead on the improvement work of the school. More effective links have been established with middle managers to ensure self-evaluative processes are robust and based on first-hand evidence, including analysis of performance data, classroom observations and scrutiny of the pupils' work.

The curriculum review process has led to a broadened the curriculum offer with the introduction of new subjects at key stage (KS) 4 and post-16 that are more commensurate with the pupils' abilities, needs and aspirations.

The school has introduced strategies, including the use of pupil surveys, to monitor and evaluate the impact of the broadened curriculum offer on the quality of the pupils' learning experiences and the outcomes they attain.

The careers education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG) programme has been reviewed at KS 4; consequently, there is a more structured approach to planning for careers as a discrete subject but with an important cross-curricular focus. The provision has been enhanced considerably by the introduction of discrete careers classes at KS 3, "work inspiration" at KS 4 and more opportunities for the pupils to attend careers events related to the current labour market.

Planning at subject level has been reviewed extensively to facilitate a consistency of approach that ensures progression in the development of the pupils' skills and is tailored to meet their individual needs. The review process has been founded upon an agreed understanding of effective learning and teaching and is supported by a well-aligned staff development programme that is customised to teachers' professional needs and areas of interest, and to the school's actions to promote improvement.

Significant work has been undertaken to improve the target-setting and assessment process, with the introduction of pupil tracking at KS 3 which is now underpinned by an adept analysis of qualitative and quantitative data, including standardised scores. The fusion of the pastoral and academic structures ensures that pupil progress across the school is measured at regular intervals leading to early intervention to address potential underachievement.

Since the last inspection, the percentage of pupils attaining seven or more GCSE examinations or equivalent at grades A\* to C including English and mathematics has declined. This decline is in line with the school's analysis of internal performance data and targeted projections for this particular cohort. The level of attainment by the pupils remains significantly below the corresponding Northern Ireland average for similar schools. There remains undue variation at individual subject level performance at grades A\* to B, although the outcomes attained by the pupils in GCSE English language and mathematics have improved since the last inspection.

At GCE A level or equivalent, the percentage of pupils attaining three or more grades at A\* to C has declined by almost nine percentage points.

Owing to action short of strike, the ETI was unable to evaluate fully the extent to which the following areas for improvement have been addressed by the school, namely:

- to continue to raise the standards achieved by the pupils in public examinations;
- to improve the quality of planning and assessment at all levels to meet more effectively the learning needs of all the pupils; and

- to further develop and embed the self-evaluation processes, across the subject departments, to ensure the learning experiences are of a consistently high standard for all the pupils.

Consequently, there remains a need for Campbell College to address the important areas for improvement.

## **Conclusion**

Owing to the impact of the action short of strike being taken by the teachers, the ETI is unable to assure parents/carers, 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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