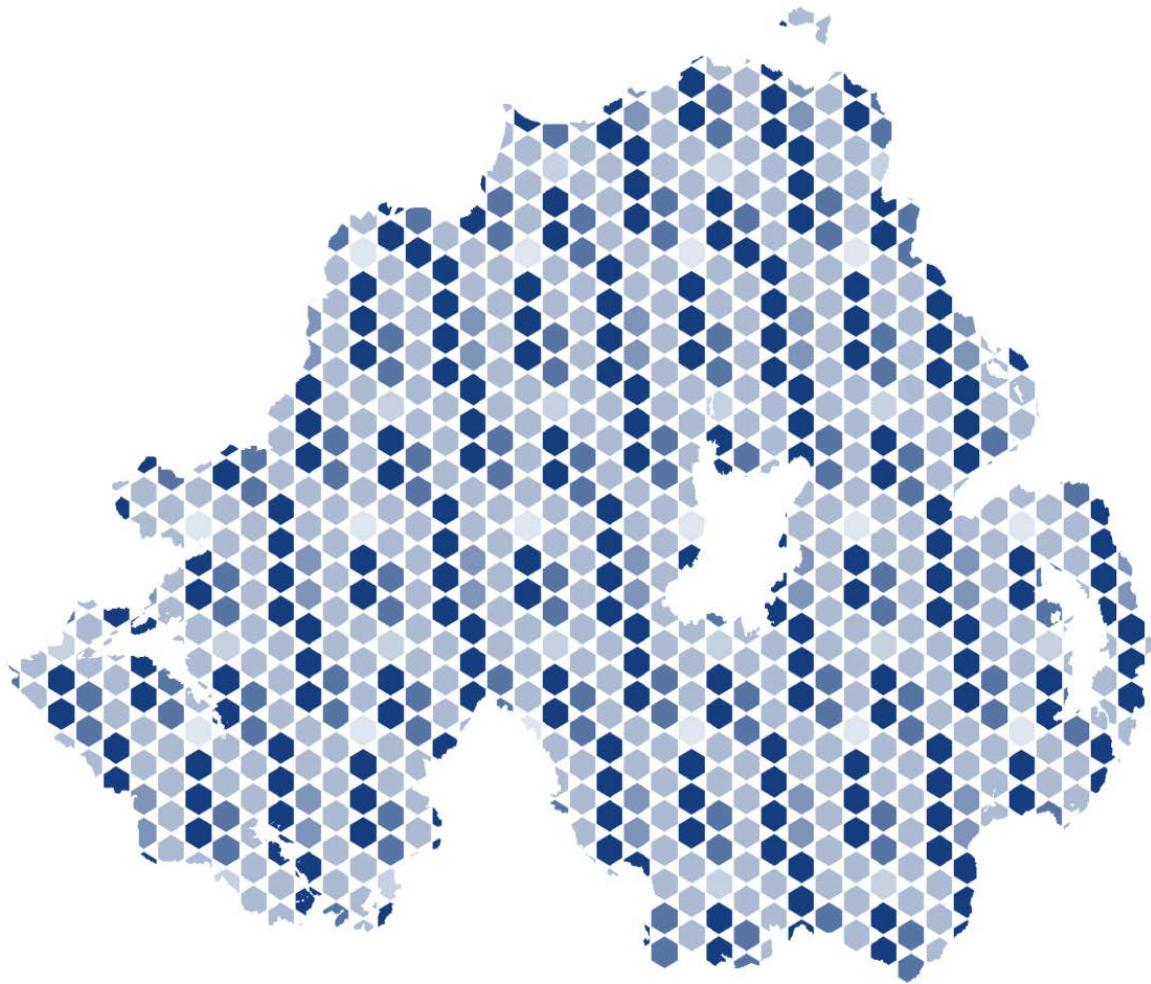


# POST-PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training  
Inspectorate

Cullybackey College, Ballymena,  
County Antrim

Controlled, non-selective, co-educational 11 -19 school

Report of an Inspection (Involving  
Action Short of Strike) in  
January 2018



The Education and Training Inspectorate  
Promoting Improvement

Providing inspection services for:

Department of Education  
Department for the Economy  
and other commissioning Departments



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## 1. Context

Cullybackey College is situated on the outskirts of Ballymena. The pupils are drawn from the village of Cullybackey and the wider rural area. Over the past three years, the school's enrolment has remained stable and the proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals has increased. This year, the school will celebrate its fiftieth anniversary.

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 only the senior leaders would be co-operating with the inspectors. The ETI has 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 addition to the focus on English/literacy and mathematics/numeracy, there was a supplementary subject focus on science in this inspection.

Cullybackey College	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
Year 8 Intake	106	111	137	112
Enrolment	654	632	646	647
% Attendance (NI Average)	91.6% (92% )	92.6% (93.5%)	92.3% (n/a)	N/A (n/a)
FSME Percentage <sup>1</sup>	27.98%	31.80%	33.28%	35.86%
% and (Number) of pupils on SEN register	33.48% (219)	34.96% (221)	32.97% (213)	33.85% (219)
No. of pupils with statements of educational need in the mainstream school	31	35	33	28
No. of newcomers	*	*	5	6

**Source:** data as held by the school.

\* fewer than 5

N/A not available

## 2. Views of parents and staff

Three percent of parents (17) responded to the online questionnaires; most of the responses were positive about the life and work of the school. The responses to the staff questionnaires were both positive and supportive of the work of the school, with almost one-half of the teachers responding and expressing their appreciation of, for example, the strong pastoral ethos in the school and the approachability of the senior leaders. Any issues raised in the written comments were discussed with the principal and representatives of the governors.

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<sup>1</sup> The term 'FSME Percentage' refers to the percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals.

### 3. Focus of the inspection

In order to promote improvement in the interests of all pupils, the purpose of a post-primary inspection is to:

- evaluate the quality of the provision and the outcomes for the pupils;
- evaluate the school's leadership and management and its capacity to effect and sustain improvement in its provision and standards; and
- inform the school's planning for improvement.

As a result of the industrial action by the teachers, the ETI was unable to evaluate fully:

- the quality of the provision and the overall outcomes for the pupils;
- the school's leadership and management and its capacity to effect and sustain improvement in its provision and standards;
- the quality of the provision in English, mathematics and science; and
- the quality of the provision for the care, welfare and support of the pupils.

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

### 4. Overall findings of the inspection

<b>Overall Effectiveness</b>	<b>Unable to assure the quality of education</b>
<b>Outcomes for learners</b>	No performance level available
<b>Quality of Provision</b>	No performance level available
<b>Leadership and management</b>	No performance level available

### KEY FINDINGS

#### 5. Outcomes for learners

- The proportion of pupils attaining five or more GCSEs or equivalent at grades A\* to C has increased from a low base that was well below but which is currently above the Northern Ireland (NI) average for similar schools.
- Over the past three years, the proportion of pupils attaining five or more GCSEs or equivalent at grades A\* to C including English and mathematics has been below the NI average for similar schools. The proportion of pupils who have free school meals entitlement has increased and, currently, their attainment is broadly in line with the NI average for similar schools in the same free school meals band.

- At post-16 over the past three years, the proportion of pupils attaining A\* to C grades in at least two GCE A levels or equivalents has increased from 70% to 80%. The proportion of pupils attaining A\* to C in at least three GCE A levels or equivalents has, however, remained well below the NI average for similar schools for two out of the past three years.
- The proportions of pupils staying on from year 12 to year 13 and then from year 13 to year 14 are below the corresponding NI averages.

The ETI was unable to evaluate:

- the standards attained by the pupils in English, mathematics and science;
- the progression made by the pupils in their learning; and
- the pupils' wider skills and dispositions.

## **6. Quality of provision**

- Changes to the curriculum at key stage (KS) 4 have supported improved attainment as evidenced by the upward trend noted in outcomes at five or more GCSEs at grades A\*-C. However, there remains insufficient flexibility in the KS4 pathways to meet the needs and aspirations of all of the pupils. Currently at post-16, there is a limited range of qualifications available to the pupils, restricting their opportunities for progression into further and higher education and employment. Consequently, there is a need to review further the range of subjects available to all pupils at KS4 and post-16.
- In discussions with the inspectors, the pupils expressed their appreciation of the support provided by their teachers and of the range of enrichment and extra-curricular opportunities available to them.

The ETI was unable to evaluate fully:

- the impact of the curriculum review on the pupils' learning;
- the effectiveness of the guidance and support (including careers education, information, advice and guidance) in bringing about high quality individual learning experiences;
- the effectiveness and impact of planning, teaching and assessment in promoting learning;
- the quality of provision in English and literacy, mathematics and numeracy, and science across the school; and
- the impact of care and welfare on teaching, learning and outcomes for pupils.

## **7. Leadership and management**

- The senior leadership team has consulted widely to inform the current school development plan. However, the improvement planning process is insufficiently underpinned by rigorous self-evaluation. The associated action plans lack clear baselines and measureable and time-bound targets. As a consequence, leadership at all levels are unable to monitor and track improvement accurately.
- The school has identified appropriately the need to use assessment data more effectively to inform learning and teaching in order to improve further the pupils' learning and the standards they attain.
- Based on the evidence available at the time of inspection, the ETI's evaluation is that there can be confidence in the aspects of governance evaluated. The governors have utilised well their challenge function to assist the leadership in key recruitment and pastoral decisions. The governors now need to be better informed about using data more adeptly to support further improvement in the standards attained by the pupils.

## **8. Safeguarding**

- During the inspection, the school provided evidence that the arrangements for safeguarding pupils reflect broadly the guidance from the Department of Education. However, owing to the action short of strike, the ETI was unable to evaluate fully the outworking of the arrangements for safeguarding in the school. In discussions with the inspectors, the pupils reported that they feel safe and are aware of what to do if they have any concerns about their safety or welfare.

## **9. Overall effectiveness**

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 children. This will be reflected in future inspection activity.

**Health and safety/accommodation**

1. There is insufficient disabled access throughout the college.

## Examination performance and other statistical data

### GCSE and equivalent examination results from 2014-15 to 2016-17

Based on data held by the school in SIMS<sup>2</sup> and verified with the ETI, the table below compares the percentage of year 12 pupils in Cullybackey College achieving five or more GCSEs (A\* to C and A\* to E) and equivalent subjects, and the percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals with the NI average for non-selective schools in the same free school meals band<sup>3</sup>.

<b>GCSE and GCSE equivalent subjects - *following permitted exclusions</b>	<b>2014-15</b>	<b>2015-16</b>	<b>2016-17</b>
*Percentage of Year 12 taking GCSE & Equivalents in at least 5 subjects	94	97	100
*Percentage of Year 12 obtaining Grades C or above in at least 5 subjects	51.97	64.08	78.57
<i>The NI average for similar schools in the same free school meals category<sup>4</sup></i>	<i>75.7</i>	<i>72.3</i>	N/A
*Percentage of Year 12 obtaining Grades C or above in at least 5 subjects including GCSE English and GCSE Mathematics	37.01	37.86	40.82
<i>The NI average for similar schools in the same free school meals category</i>	<i>51.7</i>	<i>43.5</i>	N/A
*Percentage of Year 12 obtaining Grades E or above in at least 5 subjects	79.53	91.26	96.94
Percentage of Year 12 entitled to free school meals achieving 5 or more GCSEs Grades A* to C or equivalent (including GCSE English and GCSE Mathematics)	8	21.43	35.48

### GCE A level examination results at grades A\* to C from 2014-15 to 2016-17

Based on data held by the school in SIMS and verified with the ETI, the table below shows the percentage of year 14 pupils in Cullybackey College achieving three or more GCE A levels, or equivalent, at grades A\* to C, compared with the NI average for non-selective schools in the same free school meals band.

<b>GCE A Level or equivalent</b>	<b>2014-15</b>	<b>2015-16</b>	<b>2016-17</b>
Percentage of Year 14 taking A2 levels & Equivalents in at least 3 subjects	83	100	82
Percentage of Year 14 obtaining Grades C or above in at least 3 A2 levels	35.59	45	35.90
The NI average for similar schools in the same free school meals category	45.9	46.7	N/A
Percentage of Year 14 obtaining Grades E or above in at least 2 A2 levels	92.68	95	97.44

Source: Data as held and verified by the school, with DE benchmarks.

<sup>2</sup> SIMS: School Information Management System

<sup>3</sup> See benchmarking data and guidance contained in the annual DE Circulars on: 'School Development Planning and Target-Setting'.

<sup>4</sup> See benchmarking data and guidance contained in the DE Circular 2011/03: 'School Development Planning and Target-Setting'.



**Attainment of pupils in individual subjects at GCSE level (over the past three years)  
Grades A\* to C**

	<b>2014-15</b>	<b>2015-16</b>	<b>2016-17</b>
Number of pupils in Year 12 cohort	127	103	98

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Number of entries</b>	<b>School Three-year average at A* to C %</b>	<b>Northern Ireland Three year average at A* to C %</b>
Art & Design	59	93.2	76
Business Studies	32	50	61
Construction	42	85.7	80
D&T Graphic Products	43	58.1	72
Engineering	44	70.5	56
English Language	278	61.9	66
English Literature	63	87.3	85
French	14	78.6	76
Geography	77	66.2	63
HE: Child Development	60	80	68
History	133	78.9	63
Hospitality	59	78	61
ICT	164	84.8	73
ICT (Short Course)	15	66.7	64
Learning for Life	211	60.2	75
Mathematics	292	55.1	51
Media Studies	139	41	65
Motor Vehicle Studies	44	95.5	53
Music	17	47.1	80
PE	44	36.4	68
Performing Arts	14	50	65
Portuguese	1	100	N/A
Religious Studies (Short Course)	257	59.9	39
Science (Double Award)	139	93.2	88
Science: Single Award	189	60.3	70

## OTHER EXAMINATION RESULTS: KEY STAGE 4

Level 2	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	Total entry over 3 years
	% A*- C	% A*- C	% A*- C	
Agriculture (BTEC L2 – Double Award)	N/A	N/A	100	8
Essential Skills: Communication (L2)	N/A	100	N/A	22
Horse Care (BTEC L2 – Double Award)	N/A	100	N/A	4
Prince's Trust (L2 – Double Award)	N/A	100	100	101

### Attainment of pupils in individual subjects at GCE A level (over the past three years) Grades A\* to C

	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
Number of pupils in Year 14 cohort	41	40	39

Subject	Number of entries	School Three-year average at A* to C %	Northern Ireland Three year average at A* to C %
Applied Science	37	89.2	66.7
Art & Design	9	88.9	92.3
Biology	1	0	83.6
Business Studies	24	37.5	88.4
Catering & Hospitality (BTEC L3)	3	66.7	
Construction (BTEC L3)	2	100	
Engineering	3	100	
English Literature	4	75	84.9
Environmental Science	3	66.7	
Environmental Technology	3	100	
Fine Art	8	100	
Geography	16	87.5	86.1
Health & Social care	42	61.9	84.7
Health & Social Care (Double Award)	6	83.3	79.6
History	35	60	85.6
ICT (A Level)	82	93.9	86.0
Performing Arts	5	40	
Psychology	29	34.5	71.7
Religious Studies	6	100	89.9
Sport Studies (Cam tech L3)	12	100	
Travel & Tourism	5	20	76

Based on data held and verified by the school with ETI, the table below shows the percentage of the pupils who stay on at this school from year 12 to year 13 and then from year 13 to year 14, compared with the NI average for all schools and for the most recent year for which data is available.

**STAYING ON RATE (Percentage staying on from year 12 to 13 and from year 13 to 14)**

	<b>NI Average</b>	<b>School</b>
% Yr 12 staying on to Yr 13	48.4	38.1
% Yr 13 staying on to Yr 14	75.2	71.9

**Leavers' destinations**

Based on data held by the school and verified with the ETI, the table below shows the percentage of all of the pupils from Cullybackey College who leave school to enter further education, higher education or employment, or are seeking employment compared with the average for non-selective schools.

	<b>NI</b>	<b>School (total) 2016</b>	<b>Year 12</b>	<b>Year 13</b>	<b>Year 14</b>	<b>Level 2 (No.)</b>	<b>Level 3 (No.)</b>	<b>Level 4 (No.)</b>
Total Number of Leavers	12996	135						
Employment	1511 (11.6%)	20 (14.8%)	11	1	8			
Institute of Further Education	5745 (44.2%)	54 (40%)	41	9	3		53	1
Institute of Higher Education	3051 (23.5%)	28 (20.7%)			28			28
Work-based Learning (Training)	1976 (15.2%)	16 (11.8%)	14	2				
Unemployed	467 (3.6%)	7 (5.2%)	4		2			
Unknown/ Other (eg other school)	246 (1.9%)	10 (7.4%)	9	1				

Source for NI data: School Leavers Survey

### **Inspection methodology and evidence base**

The ETI's Inspection and Self-Evaluation Framework publication, which is available at: <http://tinyurl.com/ISEF-Post-Primary>.

Inspectors scrutinised documentation, data and held formal discussions with some pupils (in groups).

The arrangements for this inspection included: meetings with SLT, representatives from the governors; and the opportunity for all parents, teaching and support staff to complete a confidential questionnaire.

## Reporting terms used by the Education and Training Inspectorate

### Quantitative terms

In this report, proportions may be described as percentages, common fractions and in more general quantitative terms. Where more general terms are used, they should be interpreted as follows:

Almost/nearly all	-	more than 90%
Most	-	75% - 90%
A majority	-	50% - 74%
A significant minority	-	30% - 49%
A minority	-	10% - 29%
Very few/a small number	-	less than 10%

### Performance levels

The Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) use the following performance levels when reporting on Achievement and standards, on Provision for learning and on Leadership and management:

Outstanding
Very good
Good
Important area(s) for improvement
Requires significant improvement
Requires urgent improvement

### Overall effectiveness

The ETI use one of the following inspection outcomes when evaluating the overall effectiveness of the school:

The school has a high level of capacity for sustained improvement in the interest of all the learners. The ETI will monitor how the school sustains improvement.
The school demonstrates the capacity to identify and bring about improvement in the interest of all the learners. The ETI will monitor how the school sustains improvement.
The school needs to address (an) important area(s) for improvement in the interest of all the learners. The ETI will monitor and report on the school's progress in addressing the area(s) for improvement. There will be a formal follow-up inspection.
The school needs to address urgently the significant areas for improvement identified in the interest of all the learners. It requires external support to do so. The ETI will monitor and report on the school's progress in addressing the areas for improvement. There will be a formal follow-up inspection.

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