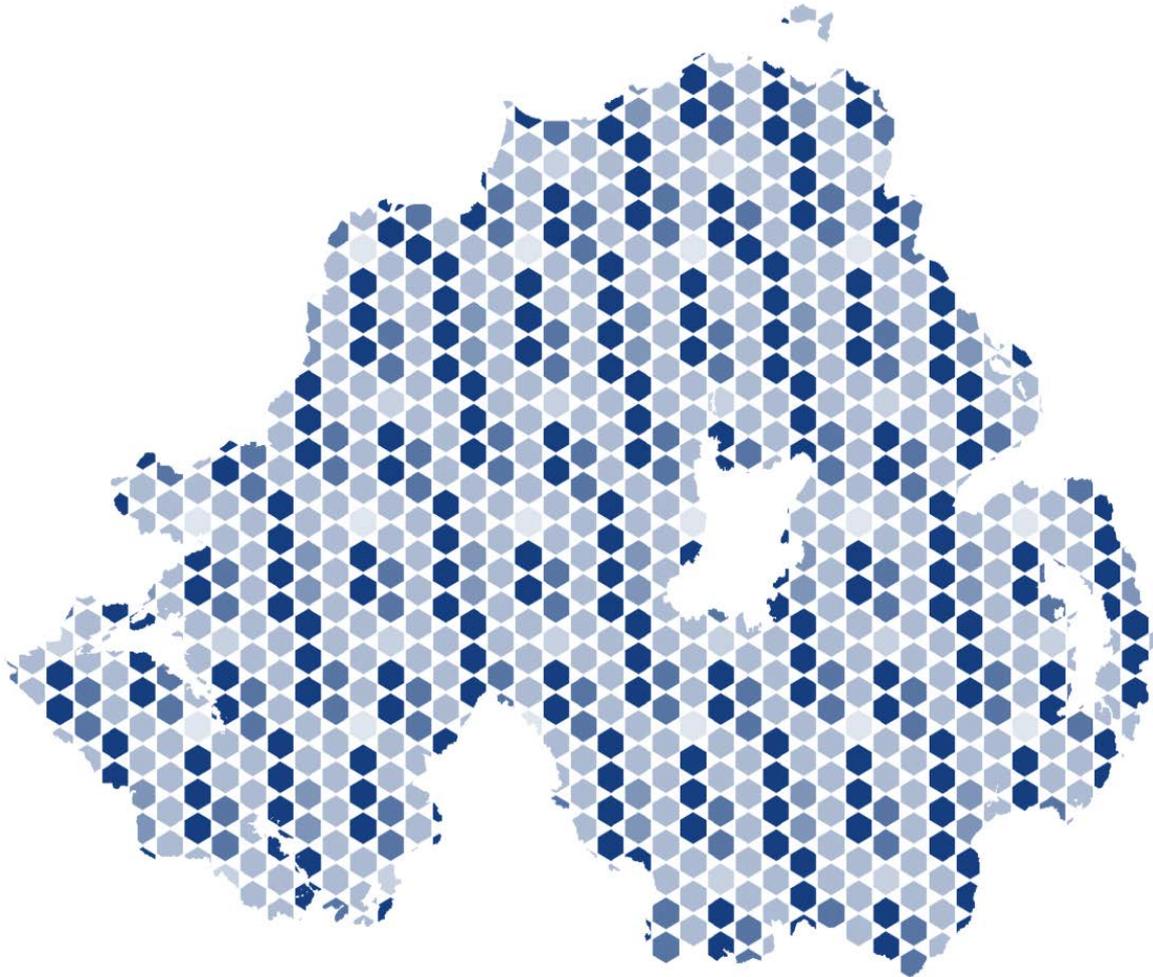


Education and Training Inspectorate POST-PRIMARY INSPECTION



Dominican College, Portstewart, County Londonderry

Voluntary grammar, 11-18, co-educational school DE Ref No: 342-0068

Report of an Inspection (Involving Action Short of Strike) in
October 2019



The Education and Training Inspectorate
Promoting Improvement

Providing inspection services for:

Department of Education
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1. Context

Dominican College attracts its pupils from a wide catchment area. The school's enrolment has increased notably over the past two years due predominantly to the recent closure of a nearby post-primary non-selective school. The school participates as a member of the Coleraine Area Learning Partnership and recently hosted an area learning careers event. The school collaborates closely with a number of other post-primary schools through its shared education partnership.

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 none of the teachers would be co-operating with the inspection. Members of the senior leadership and a representative of the board of governors, co-operated with the inspection in relation to safeguarding responsibilities. 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.

2. Pupils', parents' and staff questionnaire responses

As a result of the action short of strike, the online questionnaire information was not distributed to pupils, parents and staff. Therefore, it is not possible to report on their views.

3. Focus of the inspection

In order to promote improvement in the interest of all learners, the inspection linked internal and external approaches to:

- evaluate the quality of the provision and the outcomes for the learners;
- 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.

In addition to the focus on English/literacy and mathematics/numeracy, there was a supplementary subject focus on art in this inspection.

The ETI was unable to evaluate:

- 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 provision in English and literacy, mathematics and numeracy, and art;
- the quality and impact of the provision for care, welfare and support of the pupils.

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

4. Overall findings of the inspection

Overall effectiveness	Unable to assure the quality of education
Outcomes for learners	No performance level available
Quality of provision	No performance level available
Leadership and management	No performance level available

5. Outcomes for learners

The ETI was unable to evaluate:

- the standards attained by the pupils in English and literacy and mathematics and numeracy and art;
- the progression in the pupils' learning; and
- the pupils' wider skills and dispositions.

6. Quality of provision

The ETI was unable to evaluate:

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

7. Leadership and management

The ETI was unable to evaluate:

- the effectiveness and impact of the senior leadership of the school;
- the effectiveness and impact of middle leadership; and
- the effectiveness of action to promote and sustain improvement.

8. Safeguarding

During the inspection, the school provided evidence that the arrangements for safeguarding pupils reflect broadly the guidance from the Department of Education (DE). However, owing to the action short of strike, the ETI was unable to evaluate the outworking of the arrangements for safeguarding in the school, including through talking with the pupils.

The school is currently working on aligning and updating further a very small number of pastoral policies to reflect the most recent DE guidelines more comprehensively.

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 pupils. The school is a high priority for future inspection with no further notice.

Inspection methodology and evidence base

The ETI's Inspection and Self-Evaluation Framework publication is available on the [ETI website](http://tinyurl.com/ISEF-Post-Primary): <http://tinyurl.com/ISEF-Post-Primary>.

The arrangements for this inspection included meeting with members of the senior leadership and a representative of the board of governors to discuss the school's arrangements for safeguarding the pupils; review of documentation; and the opportunity for all pupils, parents, teaching and support staff to complete a confidential questionnaire.

Questionnaire	Number returned
Pupil	As a result of the action short of strike, the online questionnaire information was not distributed to pupils, parents and staff.
Parents	
Teacher	
Support staff	

GCSE Grading 2019

The Department of Education has indicated there are no plans to change school performance measures at A*-C with the introduction of the new C* grade. For GCSEs graded 9-1 this performance measure will be 9-4. For the ETI, data on performance in public examinations continues to be only one of the measures that contributes to the evaluation of outcomes for learners.

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 ETI use the following performance levels when reporting on outcomes for learners, quality of provision and leadership and management¹:

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

The ETI use the following levels when reporting on governance:

High degree of confidence
Confidence
Limited confidence

The ETI use the following levels when reporting on safeguarding:

Reflects the guidance
Reflects broadly the guidance
Unsatisfactory

The ETI use the following levels when reporting on care and welfare:

Impacts positively on learning, teaching and outcomes for learners
Does not impact positively enough on learning, teaching and outcomes for learners

¹ And the overall provision in a subject area or unit, as applicable.

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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