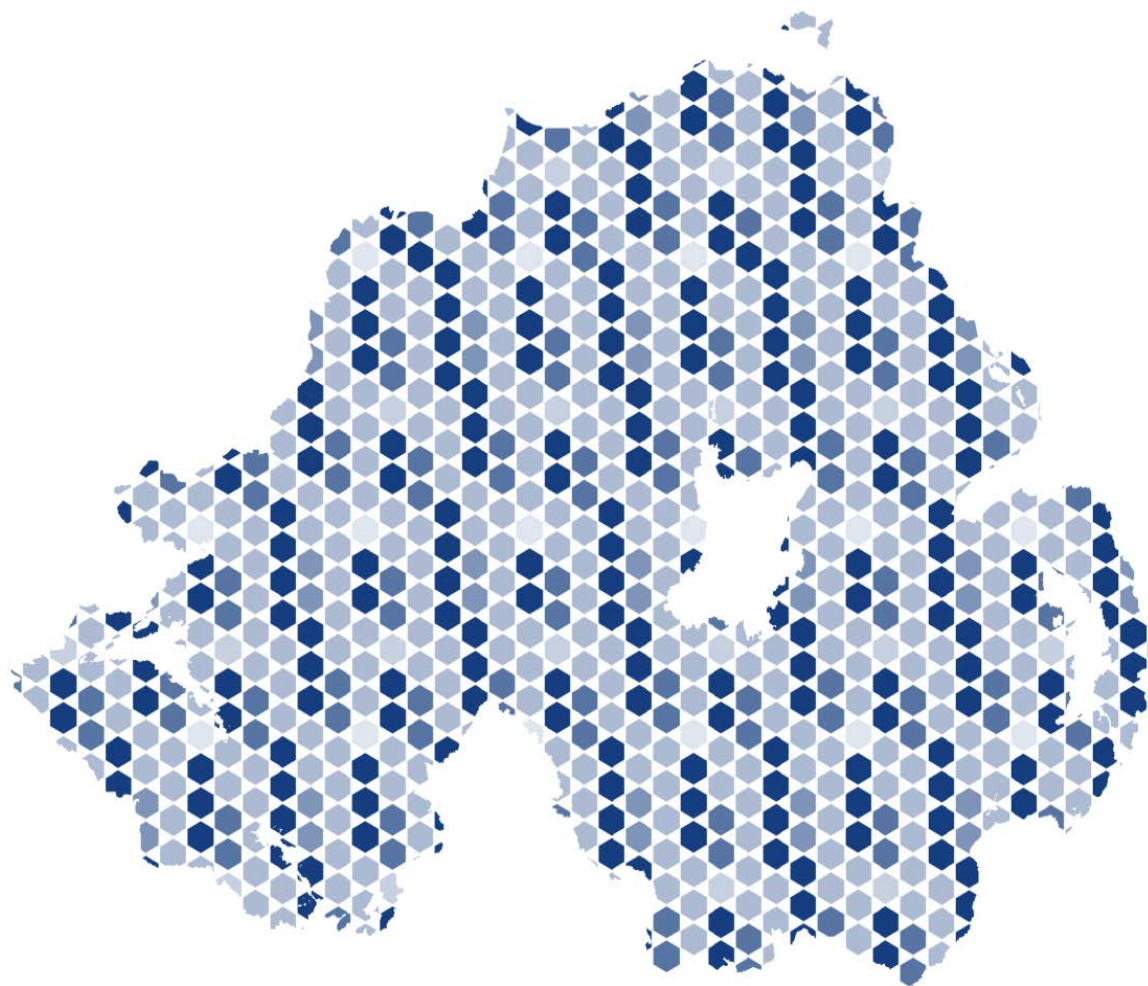


POST-PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

St Joseph's College, Belfast

Co-educational maintained 11 – 18 school

Report of an Inspection (Involving
Action Short of Strike) in
March 2017



The Education and Training Inspectorate
Promoting Improvement

Providing inspection services for:

Department of Education
Department for the Economy
and other commissioning Departments



Contents

Section	Page
1. Context	1
2. Views of parents and staff	2
3. Focus of the inspection	2
4. Overall findings of the inspection	2
5. Outcomes for learners	3
6. Quality of provision	4
7. Leadership and management	4
8. Overall effectiveness	5

Appendices

- A. Second follow-up to the inspection of St Joseph's College Learning Support Centre (St Vincent's)
- B. Examination performance and other statistical data
- C. Inspection methodology and evidence base
- D. Reporting terms used by the Education and Training Inspectorate
- E. Accommodation/health and safety

INTRODUCTION

1. Context

St Joseph's College draws its pupils from a wide catchment area across South and East Belfast. Over the past four years, enrolment to the school has increased steadily; the enrolment in sixth form has also increased. The principal has been in post for eighteen months.

Just over one-quarter of the pupils require additional support with aspects of their learning. Over the last three years, the proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals has risen to 54%. Over the same period, while attendance has improved from 88% to 91%, this remains below the NI average. The school is proud of the diversity of its community and achieved the Investors in People Silver Award in 2016.

The Learning Support Centre (St Vincent's) was inspected separately in December 2013 and had a follow-up inspection in December 2015. A second follow-up inspection was conducted at the same time as this inspection of St Joseph's College (see appendix A).

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 all 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.

St. Joseph's College Belfast	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
Year 8 Intake	100	113	123	112
Enrolment	571	634	629	631
% Attendance (NI Average)	88% (92.0%)	89% (92.0%)	90.7% (93.5%)	N/A (N/A)
FSME Percentage ¹	32.92	44.16	50.87	54.52
% and (Number) of pupils on SEN register	27.15% (155)	17.5% (111)	22.10% (139)	26.15% (165)
No. of pupils with statements of educational needs in the mainstream school	30	50	41	47
No. of pupils with statements of educational need in the Learning Support Centre (if appropriate)	20	27	29	28
No. of newcomers	89	92	88	68

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

2. Views of parents and staff

Four percent of parents (26) and 9% of staff (8) responded to the online questionnaires. The responses to the parental questionnaires indicated high levels of satisfaction with the life and work of the school. The written comments affirmed, in particular, the extra support that the teachers provide for the pupils and the varied range of revision opportunities and techniques which help the pupils achieve their best. The responses to the staff questionnaires were also positive, highlighting the school's welcoming and pupil-centred ethos. The issues raised in the questionnaires, which were around deficiencies in the accommodation, were discussed with the principal and governors (whilst maintaining the anonymity of the respondents).

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

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

KEY FINDINGS

5. Outcomes for learners

- The pupils are friendly, well-mannered, speak highly of their teachers and are respectful of one another. There are opportunities for the older pupils to assume leadership roles through, for example, supportive mentoring of the younger pupils. The senior pupils carry out their duties with maturity and with growing confidence.
- Over the past three years, although the percentage of pupils attaining five or more GCSE qualifications or equivalent at grades A* to C, including English and mathematics, has decreased from 53% to 45%, this figure remains well above the Northern Ireland (NI) average for similar non-selective schools. It is of note that the similar percentage for pupils entitled to free schools meals has increased significantly, from 37% in 2014 to 50% in 2016. The outcomes attained by the pupils at GCSE level in English, mathematics and science are a particular strength of the work of the school.
- Over the past three years, the percentage of pupils attaining three or more GCE A levels or equivalent at grades A* to C has decreased from 59% to 15% and is now considerably below the NI average for non-selective schools. The senior leadership need to address this issue as a key priority for improvement.
- A majority of the subjects at GCSE grades A* to C are above the corresponding three-year average for similar schools. At GCE A level, while two-fifths of the subjects are above the respective subject averages, three-fifths of them are below the subject average. The pupils attain consistently high standards in the small number of vocational subjects offered.
- The proportion of pupils progressing to higher education courses is below the NI average. Over the past two years, a majority of the year 12 pupils progressed to post-16 provision in the school and almost all of them stayed on from year 13 to year 14.
- Through a range of effective strategies the school has begun to address underperformance and improve the outcomes attained by the pupils; this work needs to be implemented consistently across the subject departments.

The ETI was unable to evaluate:

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

6. Quality of provision

- The most effective planning scrutinised includes adept analysis of data, focuses on the pupils' skill development, builds on their prior learning and incorporates a variety of teaching and active learning strategies. This work, however, needs to be shared across the subject departments and areas of learning, and the planning should incorporate further the pupils' views on their learning experiences.
- The register for the pupils who require additional support is maintained well and interventions are tracked effectively. The classroom assistants benefit from a well-planned professional development strategy leading to a wide range of development opportunities.
- The pupils have access to a range of extra-curricular activities and spoke positively about their learning in the drama club and the mathematics club in particular.
- The curriculum planning and review process is a priority for the school. The emphasis on increasing the number of applied subjects at key stage (KS) 4 is appropriate. It is important that the curriculum offer at KS3 and KS4 maintains sufficient breadth to keep career pathway options open. At post-16, the pupils can access a good range of GCE A level subjects and equivalents in combination with their school and the South Belfast Area Learning Community. To help the process move forward, an inclusive and detailed review of the curriculum offer and provision is required to meet more effectively the needs of all of the pupils and raise further the outcomes attained. Consultation with parents and pupils will be important factors in the curriculum review process.

The ETI was unable to evaluate fully:

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

7. Leadership and management

- There is a clear and shared vision for the future development of the school. The school development plan details priorities for school improvement and has been informed to good effect by wide and meaningful consultation. There is variability in the quality of the associated whole-school action plans and these should be reviewed. The middle managers need further development, through working collaboratively with the senior leaders, to put in place more effective processes for monitoring and evaluating the impact of the improvement plans. The continuing professional development of the teaching and support staff is afforded a high priority in the school and is linked closely to the whole-school priorities for improvement.

- Based on the evidence presented at the time of inspection, the ETI's evaluation is that there can be confidence in the aspects of governance evaluated. The governors are committed to the life and the work of the school; they are informed, insightful and highly supportive of the positive impact of the new principal. They understand well the challenges and opportunities facing the school, make very good use of their analysis to plan strategically for further school improvement and recognise the need to keep a clear focus on improving the school's accommodation.
- During the inspection, the school provided evidence that satisfactory arrangements are in place for safeguarding learners which broadly reflect the guidance issued by the relevant Departments. The pupils reported that they feel safe and secure in school. They know what to do and who to talk to if they are concerned about their safety or well-being. 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.

The ETI was unable to evaluate fully:

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

CONCLUSION

8. 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. This will be reflected in future inspection activity.

SECOND FOLLOW-UP TO THE INSPECTION OF ST JOSEPH'S COLLEGE LEARNING SUPPORT CENTRE (ST VINCENT'S) BELFAST, CO ANTRIM

The Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) carried out a follow-up inspection of St Joseph's College Learning Support Centre (St Vincent's) in December 2015², which concluded that the school needed to address urgently the significant areas for improvement identified in the interest of all the learners.³

The areas for improvement include the need:

- for the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools (CCMS), the Education Authority(EA) and the management and governors of St Joseph's College to agree on the remit of the centre;
- to improve the resources and provision for ICT within the centre to a comparable level to that within mainstream schools;
- to progress the teachers' professional development, skills and care and support to address more effectively the complex barriers to learning and challenging behaviours of the pupils; and
- to provide pupils with access to the full statutory curriculum and opportunities to integrate with their peers in the mainstream 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 none of the teachers 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 follow-up inspection, actions which affect the work of the Learning Support Centre (St Vincents's) include:

- the management and governors of St Joseph's College have met with the EA to discuss the remit and future of the Learning Support Centre (St Vincent's) but have not yet met with CCMS; and
- the building has been redecorated and its appearance internally has improved; and
- work is progressing to rewire the building and install new fire alarm systems.

Key Findings

² <https://www.etini.gov.uk/publications/follow-inspection-st-joseph%E2%80%99s-college-learning-support-centre-st-vincent%E2%80%99s-belfast>

³ From September 2015, the overall effectiveness of a school previously evaluated as inadequate will now be reported as 'address urgently the significant areas for improvement.'

The school have not yet provided opportunities for the pupils to integrate with their peers in the mainstream school and consequently have access to the full statutory curriculum.

The centre staff are at an early stage in using baseline assessment systems to identify factors that identify barriers to pupil achievement.

Owing to action short of strike, the ETI was unable to evaluate fully the extent to which the areas for improvement have been addressed.

Consequently, there remains a need for St Joseph's College Learning Support Centre (St Vincent's) to address urgently the significant areas for improvement. It may require external support to do so.

Examination performance and other statistical data

GCSE and equivalent examination results from 2013-14 to 2015-16

Based on data held by the school in SIMS⁴ and verified with the ETI, the table below compares the percentage of year 12 pupils in St Joseph's College achieving five or more GCSE's (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 band⁵.

GCSE and GCSE equivalent subjects - *following permitted exclusions	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
*Percentage of Year 12 taking GCSE & Equivalents in at least 5 subjects	95.69	91.76	88.46
*Percentage of Year 12 obtaining Grades C or above in at least 5 subjects	80.88	75.29	73.08
<i>The NI average for similar schools in the same free school meals category⁶</i>	<i>72.0</i>	<i>74.5</i>	N/A
*Percentage of Year 12 obtaining Grades C or above in at least 5 subjects including GCSE English and GCSE Mathematics	52.94	51.76	44.87
<i>The NI average for similar schools in the same free school meals category</i>	<i>43.5</i>	<i>45.4</i>	N/A
*Percentage of Year 12 obtaining Grades E or above in at least 5 subjects	95.59	89.41	88.46
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)	36.8	25	50

GCE A level examination results at grades A* to C from 2013-14 to 2015-16

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 St. Joseph's College achieving three or more GCE A levels at grades A* to C, and two or more GCE A levels at grades A* to E.

GCE A Level or equivalent	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Percentage of Year 14 taking A2 levels & Equivalents in at least 3 subjects	81.82	57.38	41.3
Percentage of Year 14 obtaining Grades C or above in at least 3 A2 levels	59.09	22.95	15.22
Percentage of Year 14 obtaining Grades E or above in at least 2 A2 levels	100.00	73.77	56.52

⁴ SIMS: School Information Management System

⁵ See benchmarking data and guidance contained in the annual DE Circulars on: 'School Development Planning and Target-Setting'.

⁶ 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* - C**

	2013	2014	2015
Number of pupils in Year 12 cohort	68	85	78

Subject	Number of Entries	School Three-year average at A* to C	Northern Ireland Three-year average at A* to C
Art & Design	47	63.83	77.1
Design and Technology	68	69.12	67.1
Drama	30	90.00	73.5
English Language	230	67.83	63.2
English Literature	60	100.00	84.0
Geography	79	59.49	61.1
Health and Social Care	60	41.67	66.7
History	74	87.84	61.7
Learning for Life and Work	187	89.30	74.7
Information Technology	84	42.86	74.2
Mathematics	228	59.65	51.5
Religious Studies	176	63.64	64.6
Science Additional	94	74.47	76.1
Science Single Award	160	79.38	48.5
Business Studies *	12	66.67	59.3
Dance *	7	42.86	70.0
French *	10	80.00	75.2
Irish *	1	100.00	92.7
Italian *	1	100.00	100.0
Media Film and TV Studies *	16	81.25	62.2
Motor Vehicle Studies *	6	50.00	49.9
Music *	5	60.00	79.3
Polish *	19	78.95	89.1
Spanish *	3	100.00	82.0
Sport(PE) Studies *	14	50.00	65.5

* indicates fewer than 30 entries over 3 years

OTHER EXAMINATION RESULTS: KEY STAGE 4

Other courses taken in at least two of the last three years.

Level 2	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	Total entry over 3 years
	% A* - C	% A* - C	% A* - C	
BTEC Science	100	80	93	83
BTEC Construction	100	83.3	100	36

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

Subject	Number of Entries	School Three-year average at A* to C	Northern Ireland Three -year average at A* to C
Health and Social Science (Vocational)	36	86.11	84.3
History	31	74.19	84.9
Mathematics	22	27.27	87.7
Performing Arts (Vocational)	20	100.00	84.0
Religious Studies	37	64.86	88.7
Science (Vocational)	78	82.05	61.9
Art & Design *	9	44.44	90.6
Drama*	16	50.00	86.3
English Literature *	17	52.94	83.7
Geography *	7	42.86	84.6
Home Economics *	1	100.00	88.7
Information Technology *	3	66.67	79.6
Media Film and TV Studies *	1	100.00	87.2
Polish *	3	100.00	85.3

* indicates fewer than 20 entries over 3 years

OTHER EXAMINATION RESULTS: POST-16

Level 3	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	Total entry over 3 years
	% A* - C	% A* - C	% A* - C	
COPE	100	100	-	5
Business Professional (Text processing)	-	68	91	40
CITY & GUILDS ICT Users	-	95	100	39

Staying on rate

Based on data held in SIMS by the school and verified with the ETI, the table below shows the percentage of the pupils who stay on at St. Joseph's College, from year 12 to year 13 and then from year 13 to year 14, compared with the NI average for non-selective schools (from school census returns to the Department of Education for the most recent year for which data is available.)

	NI Average	School
% Yr 12 staying on to Yr 13	47.8	60.2
% Yr 13 staying on to Yr 14	78.2	92.5

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 St Joseph's College who leave school to enter further education, higher education or employment, or are seeking employment compared with the average for non-selective schools.

	School	NI	Level 2 (No.)	Level 3 (No.)	Level 4 (No.)
Total Number of Leavers	114	13157			
Employment	10.53%	10.9%			
Further Education	42.98%	44.5%	22	26	1
Higher Education	11.40%	23.3%	0	0	13
Work-based Learning (Training)	7.89%	15.4%			
Unemployed	5.26%	3.9%			
Unknown	1.75%	2.1%			

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 and informal discussions with pupils (individually and in groups), some teachers and staff with specific responsibilities.

The arrangements for this inspection included a meeting with 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.

Accommodation/health and safety

There are serious deficiencies in the school building which have the potential to impact negatively upon the pupils' learning.

The accommodation for art and design, drama, home economics, music and physical education is not fit for purpose.

The size of the campus means there are insufficient spaces for the pupils to undertake active play at break and lunch times.

The size of the campus means there are insufficient car parking places.

The canteen cannot accommodate sufficiently the numbers of pupils who wish to use it at lunch time.

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