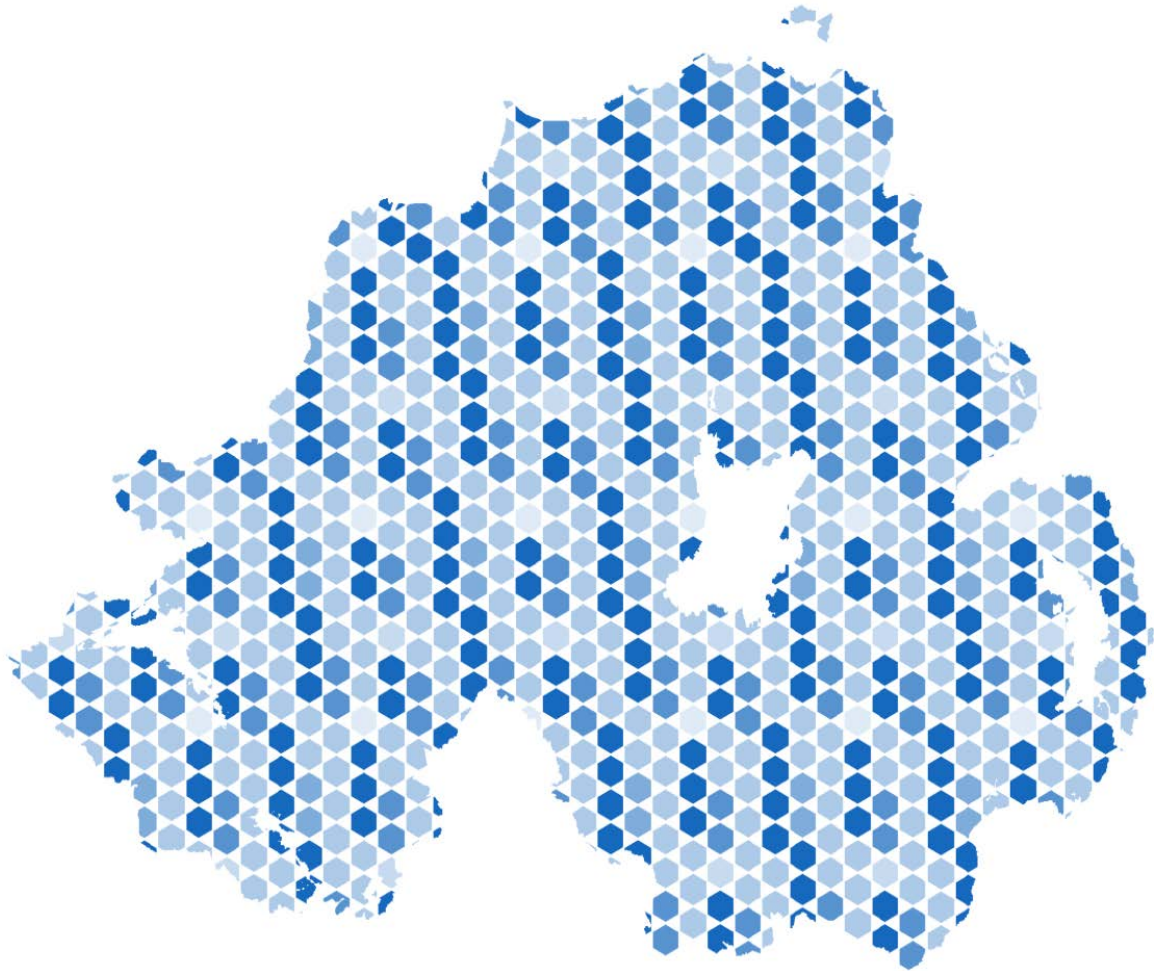


SPECIAL INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Belfast Hospital School,
Belfast

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



The Education and Training Inspectorate
Promoting Improvement

Providing inspection services for:

Department of Education
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1. Context

Belfast Hospital School provides education for pupils receiving medical treatment at the Royal Belfast Hospital for Sick Children and when required at Musgrave Park Hospital. The pupils come from across the province and include primary and post-primary pupils. The school also manages the Exceptional Teaching Arrangements (ETA) service in Belfast to provide for pupils who are convalescing and cannot attend school. The ETA service also provides for pupils across Belfast who are not in school for other reasons such as anxiety, and may be referred by the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS). The staffing arrangements consist of the acting principal, 24 teachers including 16 who are part of the ETA service and six teachers who work part-time.

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 almost all of the teachers would not be co-operating with the inspectors. The designated teacher for child protection co-operated with the inspection team 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. Parent and staff questionnaire responses

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

3. Focus of the inspection

The inspection focused on:

- the outcomes for pupils; in particular, how the school is addressing individual needs;
- the quality of provision in the school and outreach; and
- the quality of leadership and management.

The ETI was unable to evaluate fully:

- the outcomes for pupils; in particular, how the school is addressing individual needs;
- the quality of provision in the school and outreach; and
- the quality of leadership and management.

Where it is 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
Outreach provision (Exceptional Teaching Arrangements)	No performance level available

KEY FINDINGS

5. Outcomes for learners

The ETI was unable to evaluate fully:

- the learning outcomes for the pupils;
- progression in the pupils' learning; and
- the pupils' wider skills and dispositions.

6. Quality of provision

The ETI was unable to evaluate:

- the quality of the curriculum;
- the effectiveness of guidance and support in bringing about high quality individual learning experiences;
- the effectiveness and impact of planning, learning, teaching and assessment in promoting successful learning;
- the quality of the outreach provision; and
- care and welfare.

7. Leadership and management

- Based on the evidence available at the time of inspection, the ETI's evaluation is that there can be limited confidence in the aspects of governance evaluated. There are aspects of governance to review, namely to:
 - address urgently the unsatisfactory safeguarding.

The ETI was unable to evaluate:

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

8. Safeguarding

- Based on the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the arrangements for safeguarding pupils are unsatisfactory¹.

The areas which must be improved urgently include:

- the completion of the relevant safeguarding training at the earliest opportunity for the chair of governors, designated governor, deputy designated teacher and new governors;
- amending and reviewing the child protection policy, notices and information to reflect the current staff safeguarding roles and responsibilities and share this information with staff and parents; and
- the leadership to establish a more rigorous schedule of policy review to reflect accurately the practice within the school and most recent guidance.

The ETI will return to the school within six working weeks to evaluate the progress in addressing the unsatisfactory arrangements for safeguarding.

9. Overall effectiveness

Owing to the impact of the action short of strike being taken by the staff, the ETI is unable to assure parents/carers, the wider school community and stakeholders of the quality of education being provided for the children

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

The ETI will return to the school within six weeks to evaluate and report on the arrangements for safeguarding.

¹ The Department of Education will seek assurance from the Education Authority that they are working with the school in relation to the inspection report.

Health and safety

1. Every room where a pupil is being taught requires a vision panel.

Statistical data

Belfast Hospital School	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Enrolment school	69	57	51	78
Enrolment outreach	21	34	39	47
% Attendance	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
% FSME ²	26	31	35	39
Newcomers	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Source: data as held by the school.

* fewer than 5

² The term 'FSME Percentage' refers to the percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals.

Inspection methodology and evidence base

The ETI's Inspection and Self-Evaluation Framework which guides inspection and self-evaluation within special schools is available on the ETI website [The Inspection and Self-Evaluation Framework \(ISEF\): Special Education | Education Training Inspectorate](#)

Inspectors scrutinised documentation and had informal discussions with a small number of pupils and the Designated Teacher for Child Protection.

The arrangements for this inspection included:

- a meeting with representatives from the governors; and
- meetings with a small number of individual pupils.

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 management³:

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.

³ And the overall provision in a 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 in 12 to 18 months.
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 in 18 to 24 months.

ADDENDUM TO THE REPORT ON THE INSPECTION OF BELFAST HOSPITAL SCHOOL IN OCTOBER 2018

SAFEGUARDING

In line with the child protection/safeguarding procedures of the Education and Training Inspectorate, the ETI returned to Belfast Hospital School on 7 December 2018 as a follow-up to the inspection which took place on the 15 October 2018; the purpose of the visit was to ensure that the safeguarding issues, evaluated as unsatisfactory in the inspection, had been addressed.

During the interim period, the school received support from the Advisory Service of the Education Authority.

On the basis of the evidence available, the revised arrangements continue to be unsatisfactory and in particular the school must address urgently:

- the completion of the relevant safeguarding training at the earliest opportunity for the chair of governors and the designated governor for child protection; and
- ensure that the recently established approach to policy review is manageable and that all safeguarding policies reflect the latest guidance.

Further action will be considered by the Department of Education.

ADDENDUM TO THE REPORT ON THE INSPECTION OF BELFAST HOSPITAL SCHOOL IN OCTOBER 2018

SAFEGUARDING

In line with the child protection/safeguarding procedures of the Education and Training Inspectorate, the ETI returned to Belfast Hospital School on 5 June 2019 as a second follow-up to the inspection which took place on the 15 October 2018; the purpose of the visit was to ensure that the safeguarding issues, evaluated as unsatisfactory in the inspection, had been addressed.

On the basis of the evidence available, the revised arrangements now reflect broadly the guidance issued by the Department of Education (DE).

During the interim period, the school received support from the Child Protection School Support Service of the Education Authority and the Advisory Service of the Education Authority.

Owing to the ongoing action short of strike, the ETI was unable to evaluate fully, the outworking of the arrangements for safeguarding in the school.

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