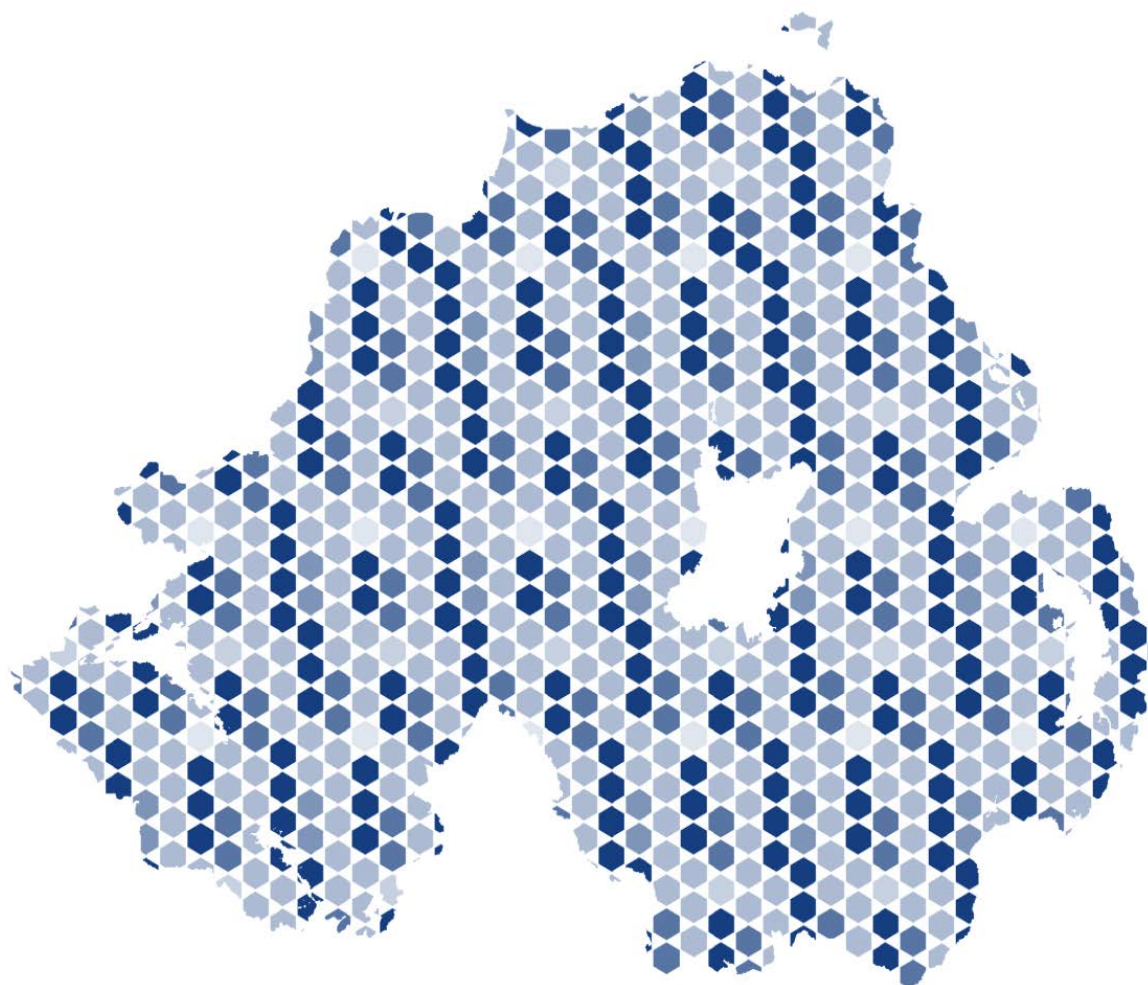


POST-PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Shimna Integrated College,
Newcastle, County Down

Integrated, co-educational, all ability 11-18 school

Report of a Sustaining Improvement
Inspection (Involving Action Short of
Strike) in February 2018



The Education and Training Inspectorate
Promoting Improvement

Providing inspection services for:

Department of Education
Department for the Economy
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Sustaining Improvement Inspection of Shimna Integrated College, Newcastle (426-0281)

Introduction

The previous inspection in October 2014 evaluated the overall effectiveness of Shimna Integrated College as good¹. In the interim, a new vice-principal was appointed in September 2016. A sustaining improvement inspection (SII) was conducted on the 26 and 27 February 2018.

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 some of the senior leadership team 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.

Focus of the inspection

The purpose of the SII was to evaluate the extent to which the school is capable of demonstrating its capacity to effect improvement through self-evaluation and effective school development planning. The school also provided evidence of provision for safeguarding as part of the inspection.

The lines of inquiry during the SII were the school's actions to:

- raise further the outcomes of the pupils at key stages four and five; and
- develop further the capacity of leaders at all levels to monitor and evaluate the impact of school improvement on classroom practice, the pupils' learning and on their achievements.

Owing to the action short of strike, the ETI was unable to evaluate fully the lines of inquiry.

Key findings

- While there is a declining trend in the number of pupils attaining five or more GCSEs or equivalent at grades A*-C when compared to the Northern Ireland (NI) average for similar schools, in two of the last three years the percentage of pupils attaining five GCSEs or equivalent at grades A*-C including English and mathematics has been above the NI average.
- In two of the last three years the percentage of pupils attaining three GCE A-levels or equivalent at grades A*-C has been below the NI average. However in 2017, the percentage of pupils attaining three GCE A-levels or equivalent at grades A*-C was slightly above the NI average. There is an improving trend in the number of pupils entitled to free school meals achieving 3 GCE A levels or equivalent at grades A*-C, and the school is appropriately focused on improving further the outcomes for pupils with this entitlement at both GCSE and this level.

¹ From September 2015, the overall effectiveness of a school previously evaluated as good is reported as 'the school is demonstrating the capacity to identify and bring about improvement.'

- Significantly, priority has been given in the last academic year to collating and analysing regularly a wide range of data to baseline and track pupil progress and to identify and monitor the impact of intervention strategies.
- Developing further the capacity of leaders at all levels to monitor and evaluate the impact of school improvement on classroom practice, the pupils' learning and on their achievements has been identified in the school development plan (SDP) for the last three years. While the inspection was unable to evaluate fully the outworking and impact of the identified actions, the school's evaluations of the current SDP have continued to identify this as an area requiring further improvement.
- Robust and consistent monitoring and evaluation by leaders at all levels is required, with a clear focus on: quality assurance of departmental target setting at Key Stage 4 and post-16; and, departmental analysis against NI benchmarks for similar schools.

Safeguarding

- During the inspection, the school provided evidence that arrangements for safeguarding pupils reflect broadly the guidance from the Department of Education. The school needs to: consider procedures, including risk assessing the open access points to the school building; and, continue its review and update of pastoral policies, (including those relating to drugs education, critical incidents and anti-bullying) in order to reflect more fully the relevant guidance. Owing to the action short of strike, the ETI was unable to evaluate fully the outworking of the arrangements for safeguarding in the school.

Conclusion

Owing to the impact of 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 education provided for the pupils. This will be reflected in future inspection activity.

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