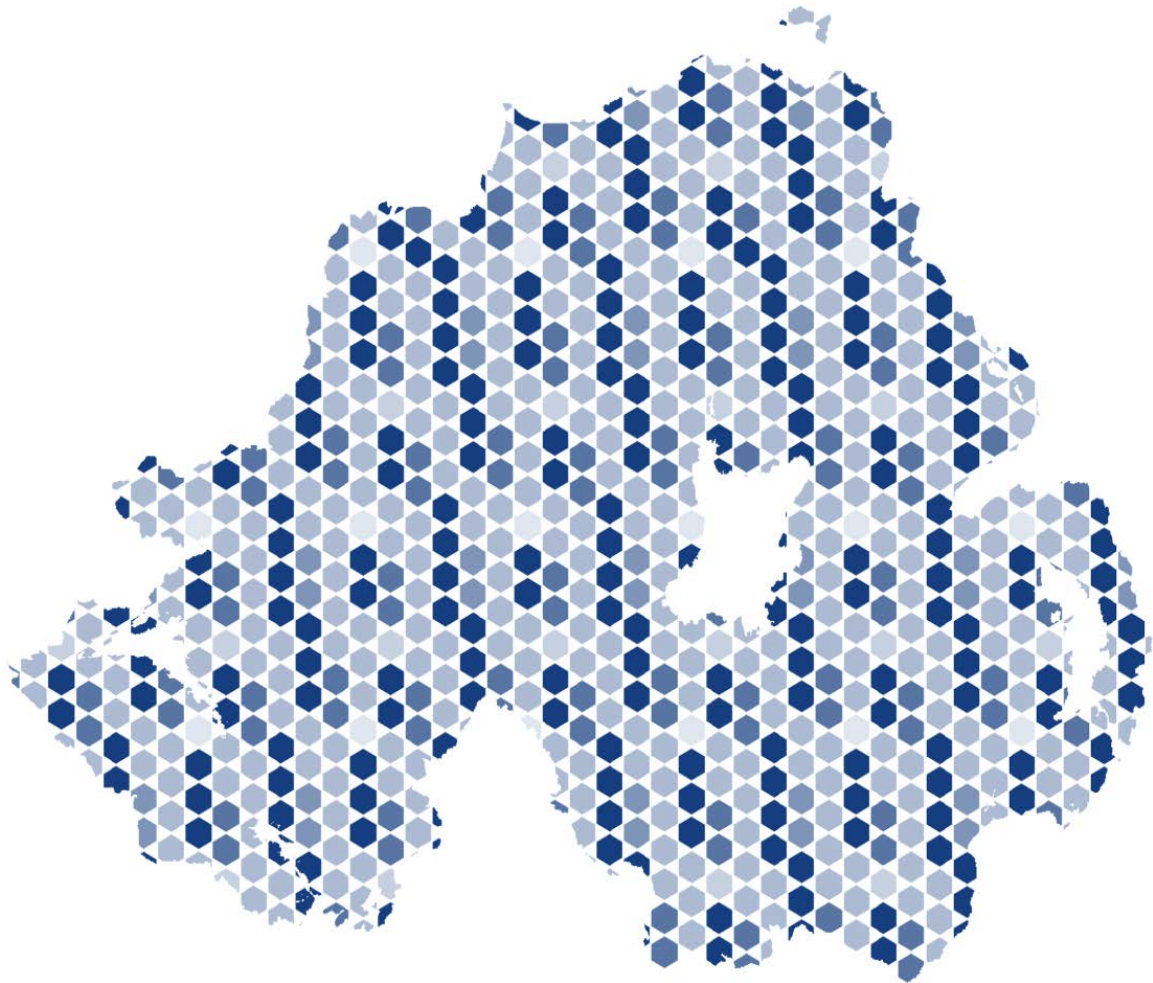


POST-PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

St Aidan's High School, Derrylin,
County Fermanagh

Maintained, 11-16, co-educational, non-selective school

Report of a Sustaining Improvement
Inspection (Involving Action Short of
Strike) in March 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 St Aidan's High School, Derrylin (223-0166)

Introduction

The previous inspection in March 2015 evaluated the overall effectiveness of St. Aidan's High School as good¹. In the intervening period, the acting senior leadership team (SLT), consisting of the principal and two senior teachers, has been made permanent. Over the same period, the school enrolment has increased by 18% to 208 pupils. A sustaining improvement inspection (SII) was conducted on 1 March 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 most 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.

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.

Two lines of inquiry were selected during the SII, namely the school's actions to:

- embed a reflective, inclusive, robust and evidenced-based process of self-evaluation, school development planning and actions to bring about improvement; and
- develop further the capacity of leaders at all levels to monitor and evaluate the impact of the school's improvement agenda on pupils' learning and on classroom practice.

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

Key findings

- The school development plan (SDP), which is currently in its first year, is underpinned by wide consultation, thorough analysis of performance data and robust self-evaluation of the provision to help identify appropriate priorities for development.
- All staff have been involved in working groups that agreed the priorities for development, leading to increased ownership and a greater commitment to the improvement agenda, as evidenced by the most recent evaluations. The performance at GCSE level of pupils entitled to free school meals decreased significantly last year and the school has identified this as a priority for improvement.

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.'

- The school leadership promotes strategies to raise standards and to improve the overall quality of the learning experiences for all of the pupils. The emerging arrangements for review and evaluation of progress need to be regular and systematic, and capture clearly the impact of the improvement work.
- Owing to action short of strike, the ETI was unable to evaluate the impact of the school's improvement work on the pupils' learning experiences. However, the pupils who met with inspectors spoke positively of their classroom and wider school experiences, and of the support and intervention strategies used by the teachers to progress their learning and improve attainment.

Safeguarding

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

Conclusion

Owing to the impact of the action short of strike being taken by most of the teachers, the ETI is unable to assure parents/carers, and the wider school community and stakeholders of the quality of education being provided for the pupils. This will be reflected in future inspection activity.

It will be important that the employing authority, school governors and the staff plan for, and manage, issues related to the sustainability of the school provision and the school budget, in order to address the current and the future needs of the pupils and the staff.

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