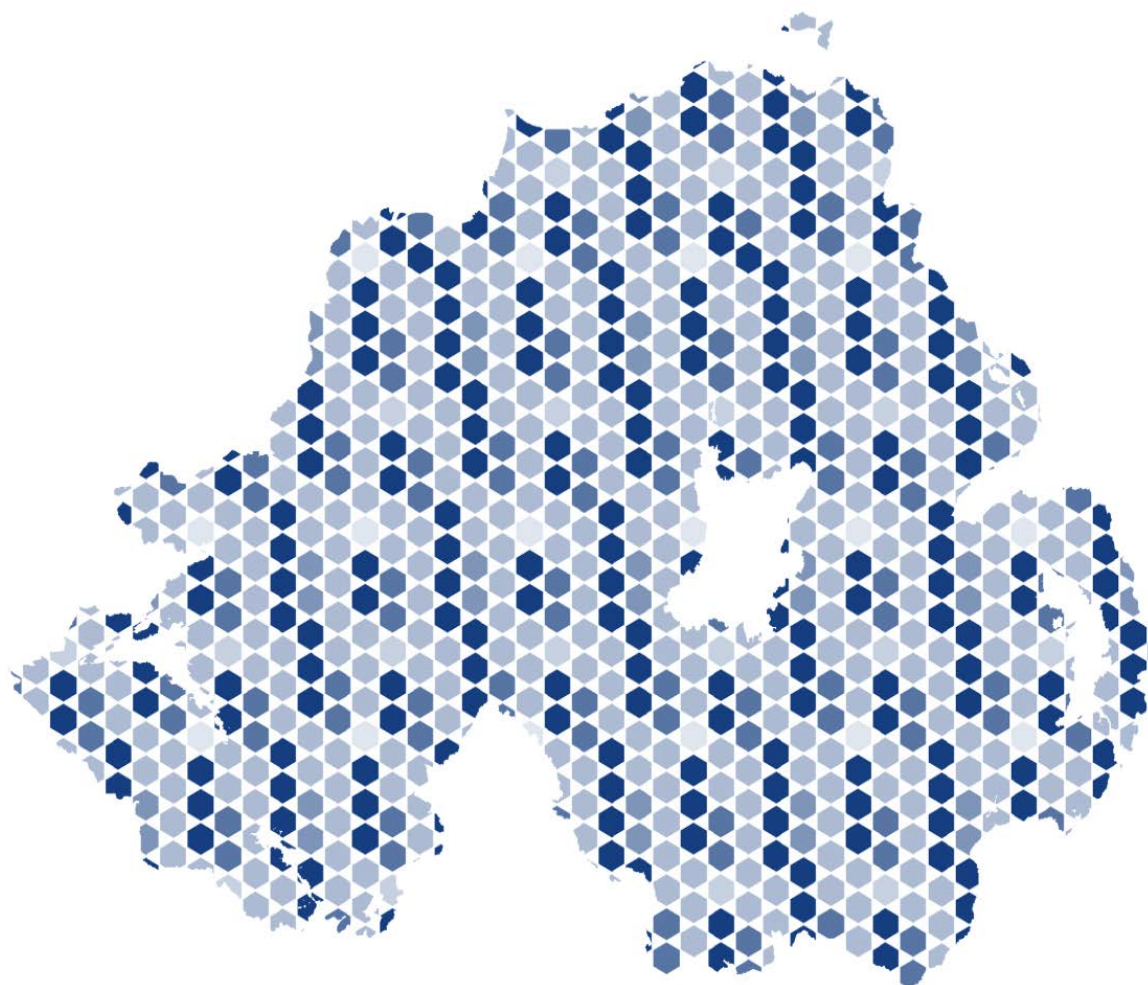


POST-PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

St Genevieve's High School,
Belfast

All girls, maintained, non-selective, 11-19 school

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



The Education and Training Inspectorate
Promoting Improvement

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Department of Education
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Sustaining Improvement Inspection of St Genevieve's High School, Belfast (123-0155)

Introduction

The previous inspection in September 2014 evaluated the overall effectiveness of St Genevieve's High School as very good¹. In the interim there has been a re-structuring of senior leadership, with the appointment of a new vice-principal and an assistant vice-principal and a subsequent re-distribution of roles and responsibilities. A sustaining improvement inspection (SII) was conducted on 7 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 none of the teachers, except those on 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 enquiry during the SII were the school's actions to:

- sustain or improve further the outcomes attained by the pupils in public examinations at key stage 4 and post-16; and
- improve further the consistency of the quality of learning and teaching.

Key findings

- Over the past three years the proportion of pupils attaining five or more GCSEs or equivalent at grades A* to C has remained at just over three quarters and is above the Northern Ireland (NI) average for similar schools in two out of the three years. Notably, over the same period, the percentage of pupils attaining 5 or more GCSEs or equivalent at grades A* to C including English and mathematics has improved significantly and is well above the NI average for similar schools in each of the three years. Since the inspection in September 2014, the proportion of pupils attaining grades A* to C at GCSE in Mathematics is increasing year on year and is above the NI average.
- The attainment at post-16 has fluctuated over the past three years. While the proportion of pupils attaining three or more GCE A levels or equivalent at grades A* to C was in line with the NI average for similar schools in 2017, the school recognises appropriately the need to ensure consistency in the outcomes at this level.

¹ From September 2015, the overall effectiveness of a school previously evaluated as outstanding or very good is reported as 'the school is demonstrating a high level of capacity for sustained improvement.'

- Learning and teaching is afforded high priority on the School Development Plan and a well-conceived programme of teacher professional learning, underpinned by first-hand evidence and robust self-evaluation, is in place to support the improvement work undertaken by the school. A shared understanding at all levels of what constitutes effective practice has been established; there has been a focus on particular aspects, namely: the structure of a lesson; successful integration of assessment for learning strategies; and, the effective management of behaviour in the classroom.

Safeguarding

During the inspection, the school provided evidence that the arrangements for safeguarding children reflect broadly the guidance from the Department of Education. In discussions with a selection of pupils from across the key stages, the pupils reported that they feel safe and secure in school and know who to talk to if they have any concerns about their welfare. They hold their teachers in high esteem and are grateful for the levels of support and care shown to them by their teachers and by their peers. 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.

Conclusion

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.

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