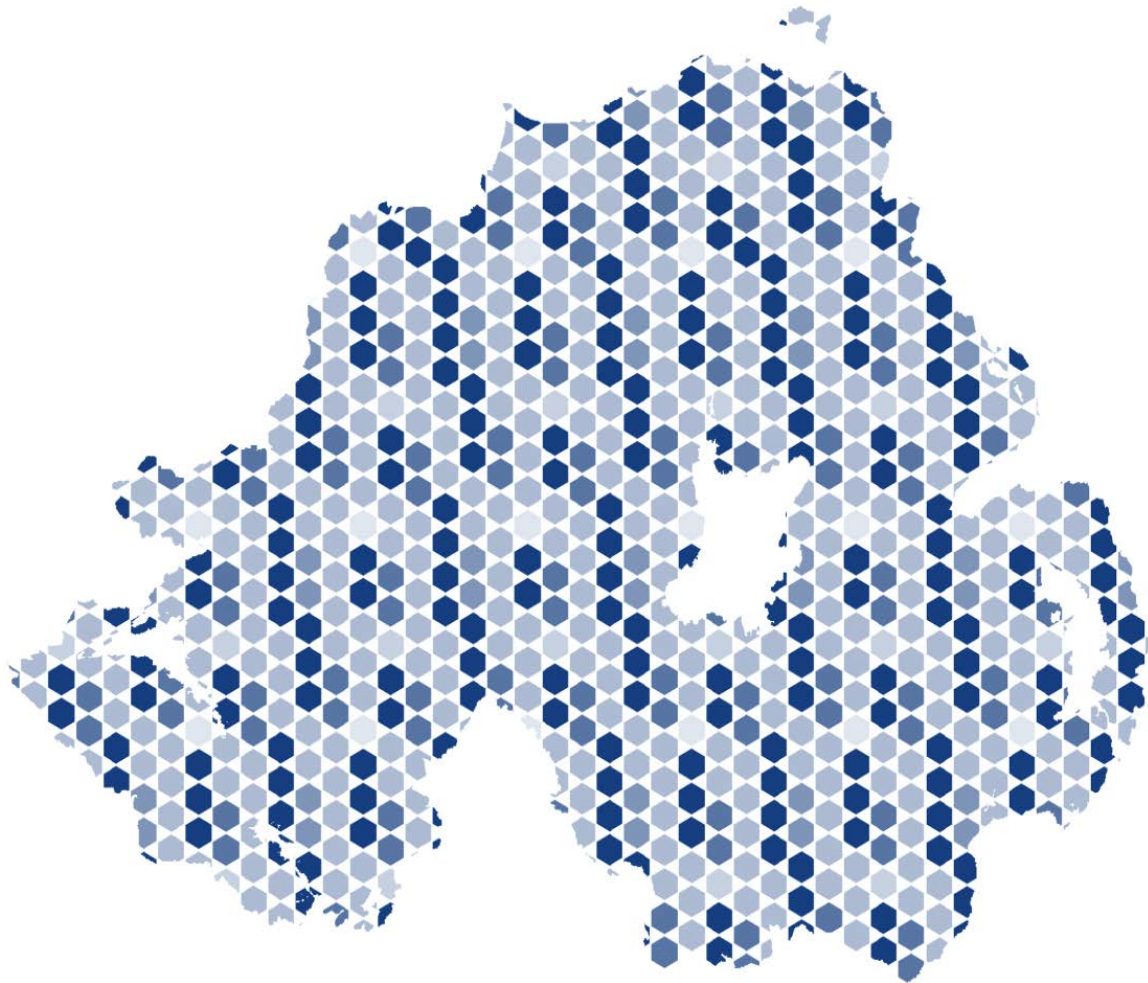


POST-PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

St Joseph's Boys' School, Derry

All boys' non-selective 11-18 School

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



The Education and Training Inspectorate
Promoting Improvement

Providing inspection services for:

Department of Education
Department for the Economy
and other commissioning Departments



Sustaining Improvement Inspection of St Joseph's Boys' School, Derry (223-0131)

Introduction

St. Joseph's Boys' School took part in the pilot of the sustaining improvement inspection (SII) in June 2015. In the interim, there have been two new appointments to the senior leadership team (SLT). A further SII was conducted on 17 May 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 the SLT would be co-operating in their capacity as senior leaders. 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:

- develop the curricular offer to meet more effectively the needs, abilities and aspirations of the pupils in order to improve outcomes at Key Stage (KS) 4; and
- enhance further the provision for literacy across the school.

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

Key findings

- The school has carried out a thorough and detailed review of the curricular offer at KS 4 to ensure that all pupils can access courses which are suited to their individual interests, abilities and career aspirations. As a result, the curriculum has been broadened at KS 4 to include a range of vocational and applied subjects, including those provided through the Foyle Learning Community. The rigorous processes of self-evaluation enables senior leaders to monitor progress of individual subjects towards the targets and the school is focused appropriately on improving the outcomes the pupils attain at GCSE. Over the past three years, the percentage of pupils attaining five or more GCSE qualifications at grades A* to C, including English and mathematics, has improved steadily and is now around the Northern Ireland (NI) average for non-selective schools in the same free school meals band.
- Literacy is afforded a high priority on the school development plan. The school completed a comprehensive literacy audit which clearly identified strengths and areas to develop. Consequently, they have focused on enhancing the literacy provision across the curriculum through: a common marking and assessment policy; the use of 'working walls' and the dissemination of effective practice. Literacy-based tasks have been successfully implemented across a number of subjects and are subject to ongoing internal quality assurance processes. A variety of literacy assessment tools have been used to track progress and identify pupils who require additional support with their learning. The school's internal data shows that almost all of the pupils who received support demonstrated improvement.

- In discussions with the inspectors, the pupils spoke positively about their experiences and engagement in literacy activities across the school and the common approach being adopted by their teachers to help them improve their work. The year 8 pupils spoke enthusiastically about their creative literacy project and the many opportunities they had to develop wider skills and dispositions. They were able to articulate fluently how literacy is a key foundation for learning in all subjects.

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 spoke positively about the caring, supportive and approachable staff and the pride they have in their school. They reported that they feel safe and are aware of what to do if they have any concerns about their safety or welfare. 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 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.

© CROWN COPYRIGHT 2018

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part, except for commercial purposes or in connection with a prospectus or advertisement, provided that the source and date thereof are stated.

Copies of this report are available on the ETI website: www.etini.gov.uk