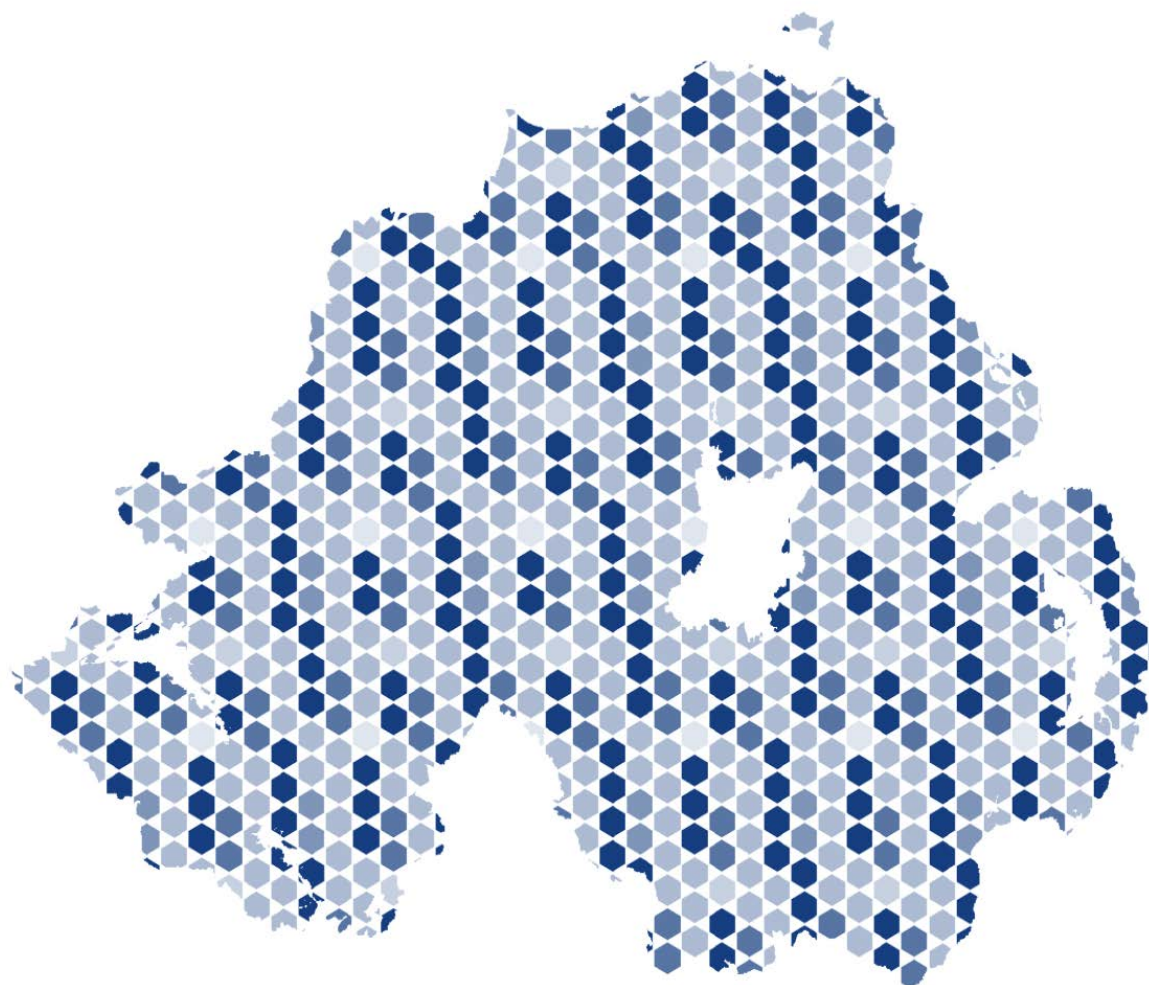


# POST-PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training  
Inspectorate

St Mary's College, Irvinestown,  
County Fermanagh

Maintained co-educational 11-16 non-selective school

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



The Education and Training Inspectorate  
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Department of Education  
Department for the Economy  
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## **Sustaining Improvement Inspection of St Mary's College, Irvinestown, County Fermanagh (223-0109)**

### **Introduction**

The previous inspection in April 2015<sup>1</sup> evaluated the overall effectiveness of St Mary's College as good<sup>2</sup>.

In the interim period, the principal returned from a temporary secondment for a period of four terms until leaving December 2017. The vice-principal has taken up leadership again. A sustaining improvement inspection (SII) was conducted in October 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, including the principal, would be co-operating with the inspectors, except in relation to safeguarding. 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**

Owing to the school's participation in action short of strike:

- the inspection was unable to focus on evaluating the extent to which the school is capable of demonstrating its capacity to effect improvement through self-evaluation and effective school development planning; and
- neither a line of inquiry nor area(s) for improvement which the school needed to address from the previous inspection were selected from the school development plan priorities.

The school provided evidence of provision for safeguarding as part of the inspection.

### **Key findings**

The ETI was unable to evaluate:

- a line of inquiry; and
- the quality of learning and teaching.

In addition, the school did not demonstrate the extent to which the areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection have been addressed; namely the need to:

- improve the standards in public examinations, particularly in GCSE mathematics;

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.etini.gov.uk/sites/etini.gov.uk/files/publications/%5Bcurrent-domain%3Amachine-name%5D/post-primary-inspection-st-marys-college-irvinestown.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> From September 2015, the overall effectiveness of a school previously evaluated as outstanding/very good or good is evaluated as having a high level of capacity for sustained improvement or capacity to identify and bring about improvement.

- develop further the consistent use of formative assessment in order to improve the planning, learning and teaching and so meet better the needs of all the pupils;
- monitor and evaluate more rigorously the quality of provision to raise further the achievements and standards; and
- broaden the curriculum choices at key stage 4 and continue to consult with the Department of Education and employing authority on the post-16 provision.

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. Since the previous inspection in April 2015, post-16 provision ceased with effect from June 2016.

### **Safeguarding**

During the inspection, the school provided evidence that the arrangements for safeguarding pupils reflect broadly the guidance from the Department of Education. The pupils reported that they feel safe in school and are aware of 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 outworking of the arrangements for safeguarding in the school.

### **Conclusion**

Owing to the impact of the action short of strike being taken by all of the teachers, the ETI is unable to assure parents/carers, the wider school community and stakeholders of the quality of education provided for the pupils. The school is a high priority for future inspection with no further notice.

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