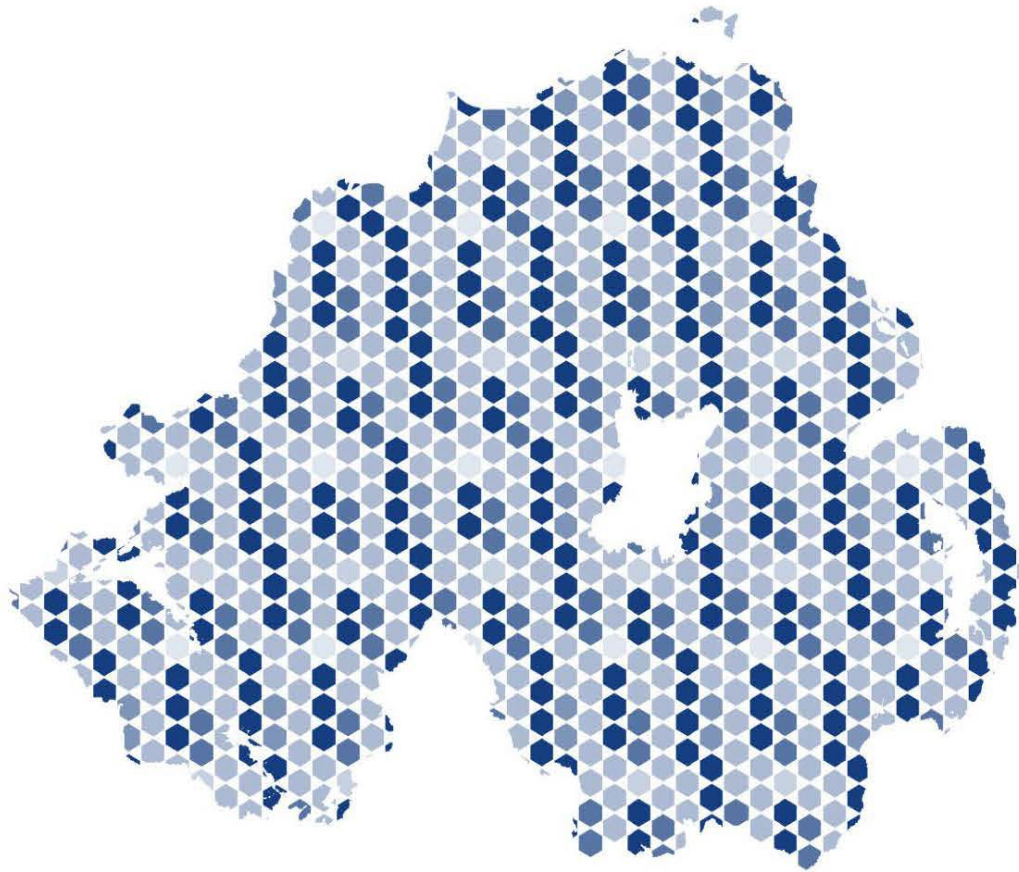


Education and Training Inspectorate POST-PRIMARY INSPECTION



The Royal Belfast Academical Institution

All-boys, 11-18, voluntary 'B' grammar school DE Ref No: 142-0027

Report of a Sustaining Improvement Inspection (Involving Action Short of Strike) in February 2020



The Education and Training Inspectorate
Promoting Improvement

Providing inspection services for:

Department of Education
Department for the Economy
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Introduction

The previous inspection in [February 2017](#) evaluated the overall effectiveness of The Royal Belfast Academical Institution as having the capacity to identify and bring about improvement. Since the last inspection, a wider range of subjects, designed to build on the pupils' interests and career aspirations and develop further their knowledge and skills, has been introduced.

A sustaining improvement inspection was conducted in February 2020.

The trade unions which make up the Northern Ireland Teachers' Council (NITC) have declared industrial action primarily in relation to a pay dispute, and also workload and other management issues. 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 would be co-operating with the inspection. The leadership co-operated with the inspection in relation to safeguarding responsibilities. 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 industrial action:

- 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
- a line of inquiry was not selected from the development plan priorities.

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

Key findings

- The inspectors met with groups of pupils who spoke with pride about the sense of community within their school. All of the groups, across the age range, commented on the careers information, advice and guidance activities they engage in, which helps them plan subject combinations for the next stage of their learning. The older pupils spoke about the benefits of a research-informed 'well-being profiler' survey. As a result, they reported that they understood the importance of leading aspects of their own learning to deepen their knowledge and understanding, balanced with maintaining a positive attitude to their personal development, learning and progress.

The ETI was unable to evaluate:

- any line of inquiry; and
- the quality of learning and teaching within the classrooms.

Safeguarding

During the inspection, the school provided evidence that the arrangements for safeguarding pupils reflect broadly the guidance from the Department of Education. 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. The pupils report that they feel safe in school and that they are aware of what to do if they have any concerns about their safety or well-being.

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. The school is a high priority for future inspection with no further notice.

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