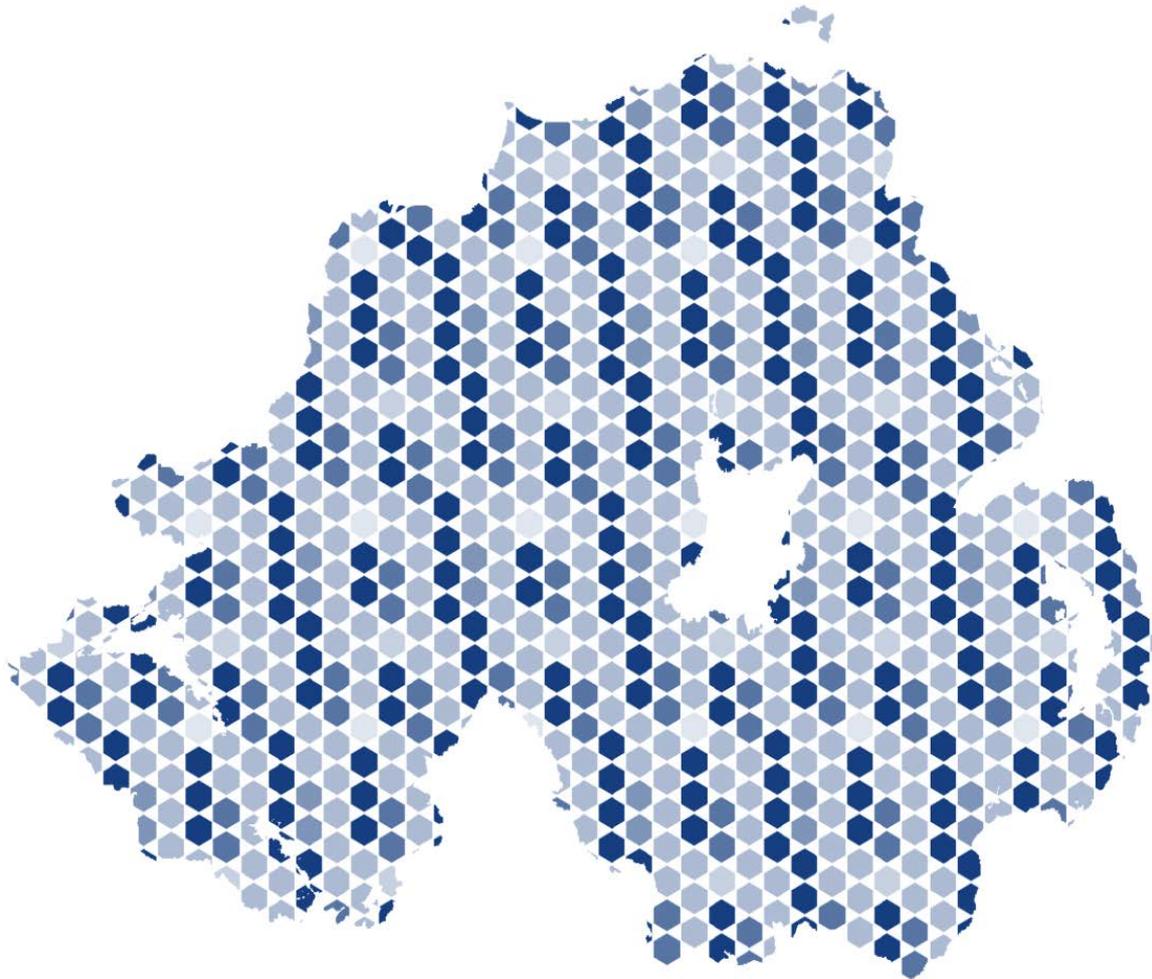


POST-PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

The Wallace High School, Lisburn,
County Antrim

Co-educational, 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

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CUSTOMER
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Sustaining Improvement Inspection of The Wallace High School, Lisburn (442-0051)

Introduction

The previous inspection in January 2015 evaluated the overall effectiveness of The Wallace High School as very good¹. In the interval since the inspection: a new senior teacher was appointed in 2016; and the school's learning environment has benefited from new accommodation for physical education, art and design, food science, and technology and design. A sustaining improvement inspection (SII) was conducted in 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 almost all of the teachers would not be co-operating with the inspection. 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 line of inquiry during the SII was to:

- evaluate how the school uses qualitative and quantitative data to meet the needs of all pupils, including those with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties; and additional learning needs.

Owing to the action short of strike, the ETI was unable to evaluate fully the outworking and impact of the identified actions associated with the line of inquiry.

Key findings

- There is clear evidence of well-planned and targeted improvement work, implemented effectively by the senior leadership team in meeting the needs of all pupils. Consequently, the pupils continue to achieve excellent outcomes in public examinations at key stage 4 and post-16.
- The well-established data team, including year heads and heads of departments, has collated and analysed to very good effect a wide range of qualitative and quantitative data including pastoral, attitudinal and diagnostic information to: set standardised grade boundaries across all departments, which broadly reflect the public examination grading system; baseline and provide meaningful feedback on the pupils' progress using a range of stanine indicators; assist pupils in making informed subject choices at the end of KS3 and KS4; and evaluate the impact of intervention strategies to meet the needs of all pupils, including those with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties, and additional learning needs.

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.'

- The vice-principals have carried out a review of the KS3 internal examinations to quality assure the range, balance and rigor of the questions used to assess the pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding.
- In discussions with the inspectors, the pupils were confident and highly motivated; they spoke very positively about their active involvement in the life and work of the school and the academic and pastoral support they receive from their teachers.

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 discussion with the inspectors, the pupils 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 outworking of the arrangements for safeguarding in the school.

Conclusion

Owing to the impact of 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 provided for the pupils. This will be reflected in future inspection activity.

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