

EDUCATION AND TRAINING INSPECTORATE

Annual Business Report

Business Year 2020-2021



Providing Inspection services for:
Department of Education
Department for the Economy
and other commissioning Departments



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Section 1

Foreword

The Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) provides inspection services and policy advice to the Department of Education (DE) and the Department for the Economy (DfE). The ETI also undertakes inspection for the Department of Agriculture Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA), the Criminal Justice Inspection (CJI) Northern Ireland (NI) and the Home Office.

The business year 2020/21 has been an unprecedented period for education and training as Covid-19 continued to impact on everyone's lives. To support the vital efforts of schools and other education and training providers during these challenging times, all inspections were paused on 18 March 2020 until further notice. Nevertheless, ETI continues to reserve the right to conduct a formal inspection where there are serious concerns about provision, for example in relation to safeguarding arrangements in an organisation.

In the period April-November 2020, in the schools sector, the majority of ETI inspectors were redeployed to support DE's 'Continuity of Learning' Programme. Inspectors worked alongside the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools, Controlled Schools Support Council and Education Authority officers to support individual schools as designated Covid-19 link officers. They also led Expert Groups which supported the joint development of resources in particular to support remote learning across the various education sectors. In the remainder of the year inspectors transitioned back to their work as District Inspectors and conducted a range of monitoring reports at system level across all sectors. In the youth sector, evaluation work was completed for DE and The Executive Office (TEO) in addition to district work focused on identifying effective practice, the main challenges for the youth service and the impact of reduced service on young people. In addition, district inspector activity continued across further education, work-based learning and European Social Fund projects and suppliers to support them in their transition and recovery stages, with a particular focus on their quality improvement planning processes. The ETI has worked closely with commissioning departments and further education providers to support their approaches to: strategic sectoral planning in the further education sector; working collaboratively with the CJI to undertake evaluation work in the prisons; improving the implementation and delivery of remote learning; and working collaboratively with providers to identify effective practice, demonstrated through the use of case studies, in using trauma-informed and trauma-sensitive approaches to meet and promote the mental health, and emotional well-being of learners.

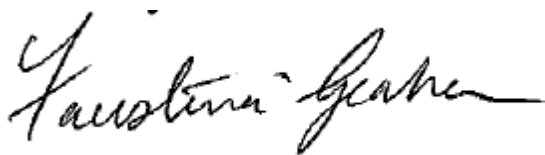
Across all aspects of its work, ETI remained flexible in responding to requests for policy advice which needed to be provided at speed as the pandemic progressed in particular in relation to issues such as qualifications, restart, remote learning, school development planning, curriculum, and assessment and reporting

The best interests of learners remains at the heart of what we do, and what we inspect and report on. Ahead of any resumption of individual institution inspection, ETI remains committed to engage with reference groups including policy makers, leaders, teachers' unions and professional associations to discuss timing and key areas of focus.

ETI's current engagement with education and training providers include a focus on:

- the effectiveness of their monitoring of the delivery and quality of remote learning;
- curriculum delivery; and
- the mental health and well-being support for learners, schools/providers, leaders and communities.

This annual business report outlines the performance against the Education and Training Inspectorate's (ETI) annual business commitments and customer service standards over the business year 2020-21. Other work undertaken by the ETI, including corporate development work, is identified within and monitored through the ETI's three-year corporate plan.



FAUSTINA GRAHAM
Chief Inspector

Section 2

What have we achieved?

2.1 Monitoring visits and inspections completed



Set out below is a breakdown of monitoring visits activity and a small number of inspection completed within the 2020-21 business year while inspection remained paused.

Achieved  Partially  Not 

Phase	Actual number of visits/inspections completed
Pre-school settings	14 monitoring visits completed.
Primary schools	4 monitoring visits completed. 1 follow-up inspection completed.
Post-primary schools	5 monitoring visits completed.
Special Schools	1 monitoring visit completed. 1 inspection completed.
Education Other Than At School (EOTAS) Organisations	3 monitoring inspections completed.
Youth organisations	4 monitoring visits completed.
Independent schools	1 inspection completed.
CJNI	1 full on-site prison inspection completed.
FE/WBL/ESF	9 ESF monitoring visits completed.


2.2 Evaluations/surveys commissioned by Departments

These evaluation activities typically include visits to multiple educational settings and result in a published report which describes the provision for learners across the system as a whole, or within a geographical area. The following evaluations were undertaken.

Achieved Fully  Partially  Not 

Commissioning Department	Description	Outcome/Comment
DE	Engage	Continuation to 2021-22.
DE	SEN Resource File	Continuation to 2021-22.
DE	Curriculum Delivery and Qualifications	Convert to position paper.
DE	Effectiveness of EOTAS Provision	Complete.
DE	Priorities for Youth Implementation	Complete.
DE	Together Building United Communities Camps	Complete.
DE	Evaluation of online learning With DES e-Hub	Complete.
DfE	An Evaluation of Curriculum Planning of the Level 3 Further Education Provision	Complete.
DAERA	Blended learning evaluation	Complete.
CJNI	Evaluation of Care and Support Units across NI prisons	Complete.

2.3 Particular assignments commissioned by Departments

Achieved Fully  Partially  Not 

Commissioning Department	Description	Outcome/Comment
DE	Designated link officer work	Complete.
DE	Alternative awarding arrangements 2021, secondment and advice to DE	Complete.
DE	14-19 Project, secondment and advice to DE	Complete.
DE	Reference Group Engagements for ETI/DE Continuity of Learning Programme	Complete.
DE	Continuity of learning – practice in primary schools	Complete.
DE	Continuity of learning – practice in pre-schools	Complete.
DE	Development of summer school plans	Complete.
DE	The special school curriculum focus on play, leisure and life skills	Complete.
DE	Blended learning in special schools	Complete.
DE	Multi-disciplinary support in special schools	Complete.

DE	Special review of SEN evaluations by outside bodies	Complete.
DE	NIAO SEN Report	Continuation to 2021-22.
DE	International Studies PISA	Complete.
DE	International Studies TIMSS	Complete.
DE	Review of School Building Handbook	Complete.
DfE	Scrutiny of the quality improvement plans of the FE colleges, WBL providers 66 ESF projects (96 in total)	Complete.
DfE	Case Studies of Good Practice around the Support for Participants' Emotional Health and Well-Being by ESF Project Promoters during the Pandemic	Continuation to 2021-22.

2.4 Other evaluations

Achieved Fully  Partially  Not 

Commissioning Body	Description	Outcome/Comment
ETI	Seven phase-specific reports (pre-school; primary; post-primary; special schools; EOTAS; youth; FE, work-based learning and ESF)	Complete.
ETI	Y7 questionnaire consultation process	Complete.

ETI	Foundation Stage Evaluation	Continuation to 2021-22.
ETI	Remote learning evaluation	Complete.
ETI	Sure Start thematic review	Complete.
ETI	Primary and post-primary pupil questionnaire on remote learning	Complete.
ETI	Primary curriculum review	Complete.
ETI	Post-primary curriculum review	Continuation to 2021-22.
ETI	Outdoor learning Environments (Pre-school and Foundation Stage)	Continuation to 2021-22.

2.5 Policy advice and support

The information below gives an indication of the wide range of advice and support for the development of policy that the ETI provided during the course of this business year.

Achieved Fully  Partially  Not 

Commissioning Body	Description	Outcome/Comment
DE	Curriculum delivery and qualifications	Complete.
DE	Re-start of pre-school provision	Complete.
DE	Safeguarding – Gillen Review, Everyone’s Invited website and Period Poverty	Complete.

DE	C2K Assessment Consultation	Ongoing – Policy Advice on request.
DE	Common Formula Funding	Ongoing – Policy Advice on request.
DE	WAU Conference and Advice to DE	Ongoing – Policy Advice on request.
DE	Learning Leaders Oversight Meeting	Ongoing – Policy Advice on request.
DE	IM Advice to DE	Ongoing – Policy Advice on request.
DE	Primary Literacy Advice to DE	Ongoing – Policy Advice on request.
DE	Primary Numeracy Advice to DE	Ongoing – Policy Advice on request.
DE	Social disadvantage	Ongoing – Policy Advice on request.
DE	Pupils' Voice - development With DES	Ongoing – Policy Advice on request.
DE	Enactment of parent and student voice in school evaluation	Ongoing – Policy Advice on request.
DE	Policy Advice Strule	Ongoing – Policy Advice on request.
DE	IM Advice to DE/CCEA	Ongoing – Policy Advice on request.

DE	C2K Assessment Consultation Primary	Ongoing – Policy Advice on request.
DE	Review of Data (A&S - PP Inspections 2019/20)	Ongoing – Policy Advice on request.
DE	Particular assignment to advise CSSC on problem solving	Ongoing – Policy Advice on request.
DE	EA TV planning, filming & editing	Ongoing – Policy Advice on request.
DE	Regional Conferences Primary Inspection Procedures Planning	Ongoing – Policy Advice on request.
DE	Pupils' Voice - development project with DES & Y7 questionnaires	Ongoing – Policy Advice on request.
DE	C2K Gatekeeper	Ongoing – Policy Advice on request.
DE	C2K Review Meeting	Ongoing – Policy Advice on request.
DE	PP Media File Review	Ongoing – Policy Advice on request.
DE	Pupil/parental engagement monitoring, evaluation & review	Ongoing – Policy Advice on request.
DE	14-19 work	Ongoing – Policy Advice on request.
DE	CW&S Update & Policy advice	Ongoing – Policy Advice on request.
DE	Webinar preparation	Ongoing – Policy Advice on request.

DE	Webinar filming	Ongoing – Policy Advice on request.
DE	Webinar preparation PP	Ongoing – Policy Advice on request.
DE	Customer Service Excellence	Ongoing – Policy Advice on request.
DE	Development of InsPIRE replacement for MARS	Ongoing – Policy Advice on request.
DE	Taxonomy development	Ongoing – Policy Advice on request.
DE	Social media	Ongoing – Policy Advice on request.
DfE	Review 'Skills for Life and Work' Strategy for entry level/level 1 design work	Ongoing – Policy Advice on request.
DfE	DfE Briefing with DI's and College Curriculum Managers	Ongoing – Policy Advice on request.
DfE	Restart planning, oversight and advisory group	Ongoing – Policy Advice on request.
DfE	FE sectoral plan development	Ongoing – Policy Advice on request.
DfE	Apprenticeships Policy Advice	Ongoing – Policy Advice on request.
DfE	Inspection evaluation planning with DfE	Ongoing – Policy Advice on request.
DfE	European Social Fund planning and co-ordination work	Ongoing – Policy Advice on request.
DfE	Schedules of Accommodation	Ongoing – Policy Advice on request.

DfE	Policy advice in relation to ongoing development of youth training (Traineeships and provision at/below level 1) and apprenticeship programmes	Ongoing – Policy Advice on request.
DfE	European Social Fund policy, liaison and support	Ongoing – Policy Advice on request.
DAERA	Policy Advice	Ongoing – Policy Advice on request.
CJNI	CJNI Work	Ongoing – Policy Advice on request.
CJNI/RQIA	Joint child protection inspection planning	Ongoing – planning for joint child protection inspection at an advanced stage with CJI and RQIA.
DfC	Sport and Physical Activity Strategy	Ongoing – Policy Advice on request.

Section 3

External evaluation of the work of ETI

3.1 Background

In order for continuous improvement and increased transparency, a post-inspection evaluation is normally conducted by the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Team (NISRA) to evaluate the performance of the ETI and Inspection Services Team (IST) during the inspection process. Due to the impact of Covid-19 and the pause of inspection, there were no questionnaires issued during this period. In addition, the annual Customer Service Excellence external evaluation of the work of ETI, due to take place in March 2020, was postponed to October 2021.

Section 4

Corporate performance

4.1 Introduction

As part of the ETI’s commitment to meeting the needs of its customers and stakeholders, regular monitoring is conducted on the extent to which its published service standards are met. These service standards are divided into the following areas: communication, consultation, complaints, and service and performance levels. The planned Customer Service Excellence accreditation did not take place in March and was postponed to October 2021.

Much of the initial contact between the ETI and its customers is made by IST. The staff members in IST deal with enquiries on behalf of the ETI and, as such, they are key, front-line staff. The extent to which published performance targets have been met is outlined below.

4.2 Performance against key targets

Achieved Fully  Partially  Not 

Target	Outcome/Comment
IST will answer all telephone calls to the branch within five rings.	Telephone answer times cannot be measured accurately during this period due to IST working remotely as a result of the Covid-19 response.
ETI/IST will acknowledge all written communication received initially by IST (by postal communication or e-mail eti@education-ni.gov.uk) within three working days.	All email communication was responded to within three working days; one letter received by post was responded to outside the three-working-day target due to remote working.
ETI/IST will provide a written reply to an enquiry/communication within 15 working days.	101 written/email enquiries during 2020/21 were responded to, 98% within 15 working days.

ETI/IST will make an initial response to a complaint within 20 working days of it being received in written form.

All postal and email communication was acknowledged within the designated time frame of 20 working days.

ETI/IST will make a substantive response to a complaint according to the timescales specified within the published Complaints Procedure.

During 2020/21, the ETI did not receive any formal complaints.

ETI/IST will make a substantive response to formal requests for information under the Freedom of Information (FoI) Act 2000 procedures within agreed timescales.

During 2020/21, 10 formal requests for information under the FoI Act 2000 procedures (including seven from DE requesting a part-input from ETI) were responded to within the required time scale.

4.3 Actions to support the environment

Most AA and ETI staff development conference evaluations are now carried out online rather than using paper surveys. All school and pre-schools receive notification of inspection by telephone call and email.

4.4 Finance

The cost of ETI was £5,613k, representing 0.23% of DE's Resource Departmental Expenditure Limits (DEL) budget.

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