



*The Education and Training Inspectorate -
Promoting Improvement*



Providing Inspection Services for
**Department of Education
Department for Employment and Learning
Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure**



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Education and Training Inspectorate

Report of a Follow-up Inspection and Specialist Baseline Inspection

**Holy Trinity College
Cookstown**

April 2009

FOLLOW-UP TO THE INSPECTION OF HOLY TRINITY COLLEGE, COOKSTOWN, COUNTY ANTRIM, BT80 8QB (523-0278)

The standard inspection in October 2007 highlighted strengths including the very good behaviour and motivation of the pupils, the good quality of much of the teaching, the good provision in English and mathematics and the good leadership provided by the principal and the senior leadership team.

The inspection identified the need for improvement in the following key areas:

- to improve the overall standards at Key Stage 4, particularly in General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) science;
- to make more effective use of assessment strategies, such as homework, to support the pupils' learning; and
- to make greater use of relevant qualitative and quantitative data, at all levels, to promote improvement in the learning and teaching and the overall achievements of the pupils.

In the interval since the inspection, the following action which affects the work of the school has taken place:

- the review and reorganisation of staff roles and responsibilities;
- the appointment of new departmental leaders and teaching staff;
- the school achieved specialist schools status in sports/physical education and English in September 2008;
- the widening of the curriculum offer at KS 4 and post-16; and
- the very effective use of internal staff development and external support provided by the Curriculum and Advisory Support Service to address the identified areas for improvement.

The Education and Training Inspectorate carried out two monitoring visits and a follow-up inspection on 2 April 2009.

The action plan produced by the school in response to the inspection findings was very good.

The school's development plan has been adjusted in light of the inspection findings. The development plan meets the statutory requirements as set out by the Department of Education (DE).

Outstanding progress has been made in the areas for improvement identified during the original inspection. The following are the most important improvements since the standard inspection:

- the effective restructuring of roles and responsibilities at senior and middle management level to meet the agreed priorities for improvement;
- the significant improvement in the pupils' attainments in public examinations particularly at GCSE;
- the very effective use of qualitative and quantitative data, at all levels in the school, to promote improvement in learning and teaching;

- the very effective and systematic use of a range of assessment strategies which promote improvement and support the pupils learning; and
- the very effective leadership provided by the principal and the senior leadership team in overseeing the improvement process.

Since the inspection, the school evaluated rigorously the progress made in the areas for improvement identified in the original inspection.

In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by this school is now very good. The organisation is meeting very effectively the educational and pastoral needs of the learners and has demonstrated its capacity for sustained self-improvement.

SPECIALIST SCHOOL STATUS

The school was selected to take part in the Specialist Schools' project, beginning in September 2008.

Therefore, in addition to the follow-up inspection, the Inspectorate carried out a baseline inspection of the school's specialist status.

The school has identified appropriate and measurable targets for improvement to demonstrate:

- that sports/physical education and English are areas of clear curricular strength, with rising levels of attainment;
- how the strengths in sports/physical education and English have the potential to promote quality teaching and learning and whole school development;
- how the staff will use the specialism to develop existing links with other schools, Further Education Colleges and the wider community, including business and industry; and
- that there is viable financial planning to allocate funding in support of further improvements in the standards the pupils attain.

The Inspectorate will continue to monitor the work of the school as part of the Specialist Schools' Project.

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