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Education and Training Inspectorate

Report of a Follow-up Inspection

**Drumglass High School
Dungannon**

June 2016

A FOLLOW-UP TO THE STANDARD INSPECTION OF DRUMGLASS HIGH SCHOOL, DUNGANNON, CO TYRONE (521-0231)

The Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) carried out a second follow-up inspection¹ of Drumglass High School in September 2014, when the quality of education was evaluated as satisfactory².

The main areas for improvement identified during the second follow-up inspection were to:

- continue to develop the leadership and management arrangements and build capacity at all levels; and
- improve further the standards achieved by the pupils, with a particular focus on the variation in outcomes across subjects.

The school's action plans took appropriate account of the areas for improvement and were of a good quality. The school reports that it received wide-ranging, well-tailored and effective support from the Education Authority.

Prior to the follow-up inspection, 6% of the parents (15) and 60% of staff (26) responded to the online questionnaires. The responses to the parental questionnaires were, in the main, supportive of the work of the school. The parents raised a number of concerns, primarily in relation to aspects of learning and teaching and their child's progress. The staff returns were very positive; the teachers highlighted, in particular, their commitment to school improvement. The issues raised in the questionnaires were discussed with the principal and representatives from the governors.

The ETI carried out two interim follow-up visits, in May and December 2015, with a follow-up inspection in June 2016.

In the interval since the original inspection, the following actions or changes which affect the work of the school have taken place:

- the school's enrolment has decreased from 302 pupils at the time of the second follow-up inspection to 290, although the year 8 intake has now stabilised;
- the proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals has increased to just under 32%;
- the proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs has increased significantly to just under one-half of the pupils (47%);
- the school's sixth form provision has been discontinued; and
- a new senior leadership team has been established.

Key Findings

- The senior leadership team has demonstrated the capacity to bring about improvement; the team works coherently and roles and responsibilities are now clearly defined. The team provides effective support and appropriate challenge at various levels across the school and, as a result, responsibility and accountability for the necessary school improvement process is shared more widely.

¹ <http://www.eti.gov.uk/index/inspection-reports/inspection-reports-post-primary/inspection-reports-post-primary-2014/follow-up-inspection-drumglass-high-school-dungannon-2.pdf>

² From September 2015, the overall effectiveness of a school previously evaluated as satisfactory, will now be reported as having important areas for improvement.

- Over the past three years, the outcomes attained by the pupils at GCSE level or equivalent have improved. The percentage of pupils attaining GCSE or equivalent qualifications in at least five subjects has increased from 67% in 2013 to 76% in 2015. In addition, the percentage of pupils attaining GCSE or equivalent qualifications in at least five subjects, including English and mathematics, has increased from 34% in 2013 to 48% in 2015, which is now above the Northern Ireland (NI) average for similar schools. The standards attained by pupils entitled to free school meals are below the NI average.
- Over the same period, there has been a significant differential in the standards attained by boys and girls in public examinations. While this has been recognised by the school, and a range of strategies are being deployed to address the issue, the impact of these strategies needs to be carefully monitored to ensure they are successful.
- There has been sustained improvement in the standards attained by the pupils in GCSE mathematics, which remain well above the NI average for similar schools. While there is an improving trend in the standards attained by the pupils in English at GCSE level, they remain below the NI average; the performance of the boys in English requires particular attention.
- The senior leadership team is working to better effect to address the variation in the standards achieved across the subject departments; the senior leaders use a good range of data, including value added data, to identify and address low and underperformance, at all levels.
- The quality of the learning and teaching observed during the follow-up inspection process was effective (good or better) in just under two-thirds of the lessons observed, the remainder were less effective (important areas for improvement or below). The focus by the senior leaders on effective learning and teaching has been strengthened, and an important start has been made to improving the consistency of the arrangements for assessment for learning. It will be important for the school to continue to build upon this and to improve further the quality and impact of the learning, teaching and assessment to ensure that the learning needs of all of the pupils are met.
- The governors are supportive of the school and are working hard to become better informed about, and involved in, the school improvement process. It will be important for the senior leaders to work closely with the governors to ensure they are well enough informed to effectively undertake the support and challenge function.

Overall Effectiveness

The school demonstrates the capacity to identify and bring about improvement in the interest of all the learners. The ETI will continue to monitor how the school sustains improvement in:

- raising further the standards achieved by the pupils in public examinations and, in particular, to address the standards attained by boys and those pupils entitled to free school meals; and
- continuing to improve the quality of the learning and teaching.

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