



Education and Training  
Inspectorate

Newtownabbey Educational  
Guidance Centre, Newtownabbey,  
County Antrim

Report of a Follow-up Inspection  
(Involving Action Short of Strike)  
in October 2017



The Education and Training Inspectorate  
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## **FOLLOW-UP TO THE INSPECTION OF NEWTOWNABBEY EDUCATIONAL GUIDANCE CENTRE, BT37 0LX**

The Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) carried out an inspection of Newtownabbey Educational Guidance Centre in May 2016<sup>1</sup>, which concluded that the centre needed to address important areas for improvement in the interest of all the learners.

The areas for improvement included the need to:

- develop further the planning, monitoring and evaluation of the learning and teaching in the centre, outreach and tuition service;
- further develop the curriculum to include a therapeutic input and greater focus on enabling the young people to manage their behaviour, build their self-esteem and resilience to help them maintain their place in school; and
- review the safeguarding policy to ensure that procedures are clear and the code of conduct for staff includes the use of social media.

The centre's plans were revised in light of the inspection findings.

The ETI carried out an interim follow-up visit in January 2017 and a follow-up inspection in October 2017.

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 none of the teachers would be co-operating with the inspectors. The ETI have 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 made available at the time of the inspection.

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

- the deputy head retired in June 2016 and has not been replaced;
- the designated teacher resigned from that post of responsibility and has not been replaced;
- the staff have received training for the implementation of circle time with pupils and the use of social and emotional baseline assessment systems;
- the centre has started to put systems in place to develop the planning, monitoring and evaluation of the learning and teaching in the centre, outreach and tuition service;
- the model of provision has changed to include a key stage (KS) 3 shared partnership group who spend three days in the centre and two days in school;

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.etini.gov.uk/publications/newtownabbey-educational-guidance-centre>

- curriculum planning for the KS3 group is provided by the referring school; and
- the centre has been informed that the educational psychology service will begin to provide support to pupils in the centre.

### **Key findings**

- The centre has made a start in developing the curriculum to include a therapeutic input with greater focus on enabling the young people to manage their behaviour, build their self-esteem and resilience to help them maintain their place in school.
- The centre management have started to review the safeguarding policy to ensure that procedures are clear and the code of conduct for staff includes the use of social media. The Education Authority (EA) have not ratified and agreed the policies and procedures.
- The Head of Centre is the deputy designated teacher. At the time of the follow-up inspection, none of the staff had been trained in the role of the designated teacher.

Based on the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the arrangements for safeguarding pupils are unsatisfactory.

The areas which must be improved urgently include:

- the need to train a member of the teaching staff to undertake the role of designated teacher; and
- the management in the centre and the EA need to review the safeguarding policy to ensure that procedures are clear, and to ratify and agree policies and procedures.

Owing to ASoS, the centre did not provide evidence with regards the out workings and improvement in:

- the planning, monitoring and evaluation of the learning and teaching in the centre, outreach and tuition service;
- the development of the curriculum to include a therapeutic input and greater focus on enabling the young people to manage their behaviour, build their self-esteem and resilience to help them maintain their place in school;
- the review of the safeguarding policy to ensure that procedures are clear and the code of conduct for staff includes the use of social media;
- the effectiveness of the new model of provision; and
- the procedures for the tuition service tutors or the resources and Information and Communication Technology equipment allocated to them.

Consequently, there remains a need for Newtownabbey Educational Guidance Centre to address important areas for improvement.

## **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 community and stakeholders of the quality of education being provided for the pupils. The centre is a high priority for future inspection.

The ETI will return to the centre within six weeks to evaluate the progress in addressing the unsatisfactory arrangements for safeguarding<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> Further action will be considered by the Department of Education.

## **ADDENDUM TO THE REPORT ON THE FOLLOW-UP INSPECTION OF NEWTOWNABBEY EDUCATIONAL GUIDANCE CENTRE IN OCTOBER 2017**

### **SAFEGUARDING**

The ETI returned to the centre on 4 December 2017 to monitor and report on arrangements for safeguarding.

The purpose of the visit was to ensure that the safeguarding issues, evaluated as unsatisfactory during the follow-up inspection on 19 October, had been addressed.

The areas requiring urgent improvement included the need:

- to train a member of the teaching staff to undertake the role of designated teacher; and
- for the management in the centre and the EA to review the safeguarding policy to ensure that procedures are clear, and to ratify and agree policies and procedures.

During the follow-up visit, the centre provided evidence that arrangements for safeguarding reflect broadly the guidance from the Department of Education and that the areas for improvement have been addressed.

However, owing to the action short of strike, the ETI was unable to evaluate fully the outworking of the arrangements for safeguarding in the centre.

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