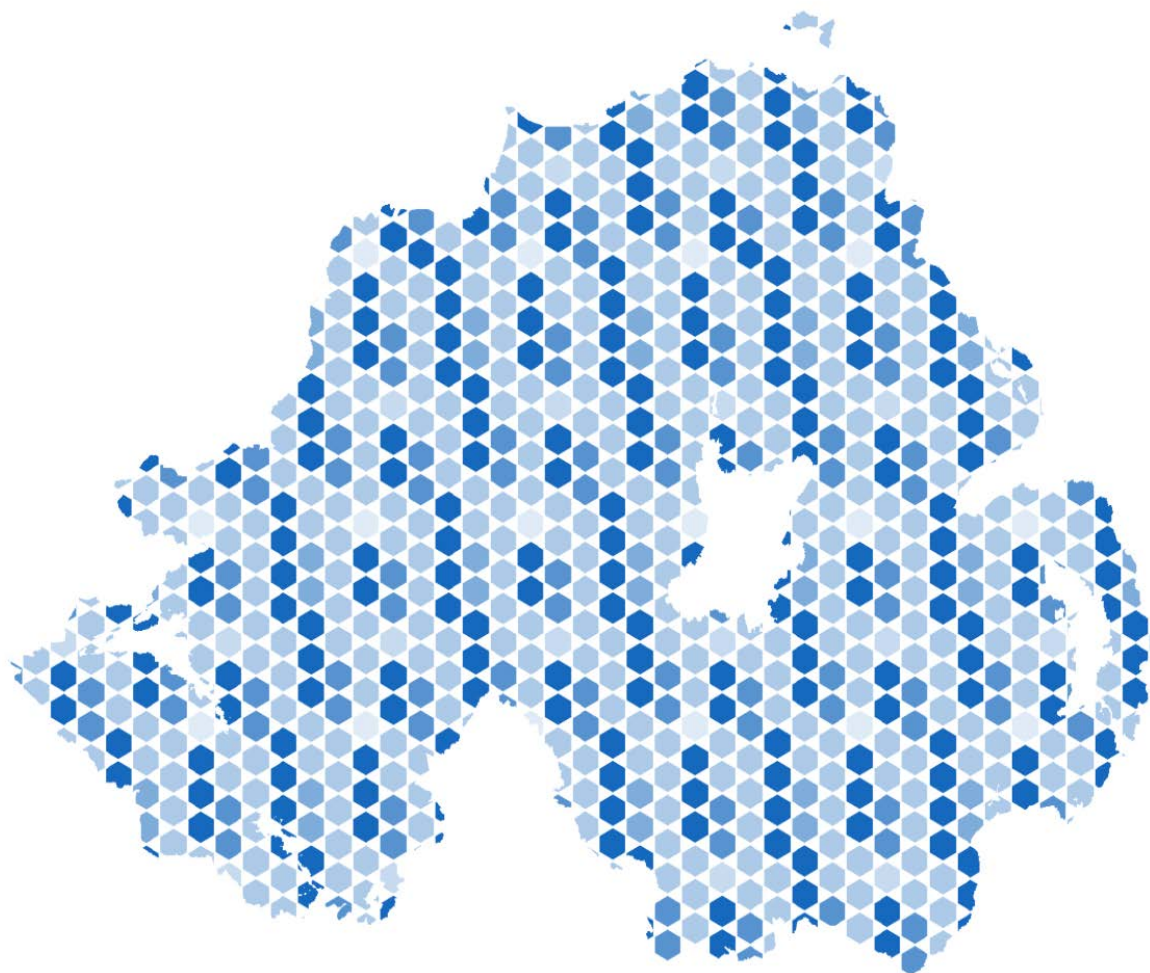


# SPECIAL SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training  
Inspectorate

Rathore School, Newry,  
County Down

Report of a Follow-up Inspection in  
October 2017



The Education and Training Inspectorate  
Promoting Improvement

Providing inspection services for:

Department of Education  
Department for the Economy  
and other commissioning Departments



## **A FOLLOW-UP TO THE INSPECTION OF RATHORE SCHOOL, NEWRY, BT35 8PJ (531-6519)**

The Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) carried out an inspection of Rathore School in November 2015<sup>1</sup>, which concluded that the school needed to address urgently the significant areas for improvement.

As a consequence, the Department of Education entered the school into the Formal Intervention Process under the Every School a Good School policy<sup>2</sup> in January 2016.

The areas for improvement included the need:

- to provide effective strategic leadership, including rigorous monitoring and evaluation of the quality of learning and teaching, to inform the school development planning process and bring about better educational outcomes;
- for all staff to discuss and agree a clear assessment system to inform planning for learning, and assess the progress and attainments of the pupils; and
- to agree and establish clear roles and responsibilities for co-ordinators and to enable them to provide effective leadership in their areas of expertise.

The school's action plans were of a very good quality.

The ETI carried out an interim follow-up visit in September 2016.

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

- a new, permanent principal was appointed in February 2016;
- a new senior leadership team with clear roles and responsibilities was appointed in June 2016;
- curriculum leaders have been appointed and have availed of extensive professional development opportunities in leading their areas of expertise;
- a school development plan has been developed from wide and appropriate consultation;
- the systems and associated documentation for assessment, planning for learning, and monitoring of pupil progression have been reviewed and revised;
- regular observations of learning and teaching throughout the school have begun; and
- all school policies are regularly reviewed, updated and agreed.

The school reports that Education Authority staff have provided advice and support which have impacted very positively on improving the work of the school.

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<sup>1</sup> [Special Inspection – Rathore Special School, Newry | Education Training Inspectorate](#)

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.deni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/de/ESAGS%20Policy%20for%20School%20Improvement%20-%20Final%20Version%2005-05-2009.pdf>

## **Key Findings**

The outcomes for learners are now good. The co-ordinator's observations of learning and teaching, and feedback at individual teacher and whole school level are impacting positively on the educational outcomes of the pupils. The pupils have high levels of engagement and enjoyment in their learning, and persevere with challenging tasks. The independence and positive behaviours of the pupils are facilitated well through thoughtful early intervention strategies. The senior pupils are confident with staff and visitors to the school, and are actively involved in planning for their futures.

The quality of provision is now very good. The consistent use of a new assessment system is informing very well planning for learning throughout the school and is being used to evidence the progression and attainment of the pupils. The individual education plans are focused on the particular needs of each child with clear and measurable targets. The more extensive use of active learning strategies and information and communication technology have enhanced significantly the learning experiences for the pupils. There is an appropriate focus on extending pupil skills into a wide range of every day contexts.

The quality and effectiveness of leadership, management and action to promote improvement is now good. The strategic leadership of the school has improved significantly, giving clear and positive direction to the school development plan, appropriately focused on the needs and interests of the pupils. The rigorous monitoring and evaluation of the quality of learning and teaching is a key focus of this work and is informing well the school leadership. The governance of the school is well informed, enabling a greater level of support and challenge to the school leadership. Clear roles and responsibilities for co-ordinators have been agreed and implemented, enabling them to provide effective leadership in their areas of expertise, and build capacity and sustainability at all levels within the school.

## **Overall Effectiveness**

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

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