

# Shanmullagh Education Other Than At School (EOTAS) Centre, Ballinamallard, County Fermanagh

## Report of a Follow-up Inspection in April 2023



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# Second Follow-up Inspection to Shanmullagh Education Other Than At School (EOTAS) Centre, Ballinamallard, County Fermanagh

## Introduction

The original inspection of Shanmullagh EOTAS Centre was carried out in November 2017 when the educational provision was evaluated as having important areas for improvement.

A follow-up inspection (FUI), impacted by the industrial action short of strike by teaching unions, took place in May 2019. Owing to the action short of strike, ETI was unable to evaluate the extent to which the important areas for improvement identified at the time of the original inspection had been addressed, namely to:

- review the model of provision for key stage (KS) 3 for more effective collaboration with referring schools in order to effect re-integration of pupils to their schools;
- ensure more effective engagement in vocational courses and provide the pupils with a greater range of subjects through part-time study in their mainstream schools; and
- have higher expectations for the pupils' outcomes and opportunities to study at GCSE level.

Consequently, Shanmullagh EOTAS Centre remained in the follow-up process.

A second follow-up inspection was carried out in April 2023 which was also impacted by action short of strike. Prior to the inspection, the school informed ETI that, due to industrial action short of strike by the teaching unions, the head of centre and the Education Authority's (EA) strategic lead would engage with the inspection in relation to the school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils, aspects of provision, including links between the centre and the referring schools, and aspects of leadership and management. Observations of teaching and learning by teaching staff were not permitted. ETI has a [statutory duty](#) to monitor, inspect and report on the quality of education being provided for children and young people. The follow-up inspection proceeded on a partial basis and the key findings are based on the evidence made available at the time of the inspection visit.

## Key actions and changes

In the interval since the original inspection, there have been important changes in the centre's context.

- The centre is now managed by the EA strategic lead for EOTAS and an advisor who work closely with the centre leader.

- KS 4 literacy, numeracy and ICT co-ordinators have been appointed to work with subject leads across all EOTAS provision.
- The centre now has a full complement of permanent teaching staff.
- Essential refurbishments to the building have been carried out, including the enhancement of the infrastructure for information and communication technology.
- In order to meet the needs of the pupils in local schools, the centre has reverted to its earlier model of provision for both KS 3 and KS 4 pupils.

The EA strategic lead and advisor continue to work closely with the staff in Shanmullagh EOTAS in relation to:

- streamlining the collation and analysis of academic and pastoral data to inform effectively the next stages of learning and teaching; and
- training all staff in the most effective use of these systems and of online communication tools.

## Views of pupils, parents/carers and staff

The school did not distribute questionnaires to the pupils, parents/carers and staff. Therefore, it is not possible to report on their views. ETI intends to re-issue the questionnaires at the time of the next inspection visit to complete this follow-up inspection.

## Key findings

The following findings are based on the evidence available at the time of the second FUI.

- The pupils who met with the inspectors reported that they feel safe in school and know what to do if they have any concerns about their safety or well-being. They spoke confidently and positively about their learning experiences, the skills they are developing and the progress and improvements that they are making. They expressed their appreciation of the consistent support and kindness shown by the staff.
- The staff are able to demonstrate that almost all of the pupils have improved their attendance since coming to the centre. The data provided by the centre leader and the pupils' own comments indicate that the flexible model of provision supports the pupils' wellbeing and academic progress and facilitates, for most of the pupils, their re-integration to school. Support for the pupils is further enhanced through the partnership between the EOTAS centre, the EA's behaviour support team and the referring schools.

- All of the pupils in the centre are supported well in learning how to manage their own behaviours. They develop social skills through the well-planned opportunities for working together: the pupils who met with inspectors engaged respectfully both with adult visitors and with one another. The pupils also benefit from engaging in regular physical activity, taking part in educational visits and developing their creative skills both inside and outside the classroom.
- Through part-time study at their referring schools or the local college of further education, the curriculum offer for pupils, in KS 4 in particular, is suitably broad and balanced. Pupils take a blend of general and vocational subjects, including essential skills, and have opportunities to take a range of subjects at GCSE level. Examination performance data provided by the head of centre indicates that the pupils attending the centre attain qualifications which enable them to make progress to the next stage of their education or training.

## Conclusion

Due to the action short of strike by the teaching unions, the centre was unable to provide sufficient evidence for ETI to evaluate the efficacy of the centre's arrangements for safeguarding the pupils. However, in light of the evidence provided in the course of the second FUI, the areas for improvement have been adjusted, namely to:

- keep under review the current model of provision for both KS 3 and KS 4 pupils to ensure that it supports the re-integration of the pupils into their schools;
- maintain the pupils' engagement in a wider range of vocational courses in the centre, through part-time study in their mainstream schools and in the local college of further education; and
- ensure that the pupils' opportunities to study at GCSE level are matched well to their abilities and needs.

ETI was unable to evaluate fully the centre's progress in effecting the required improvements in the quality of its provision since the original inspection in 2016. The centre's second follow-up inspection is incomplete.

The district inspector will continue to monitor the centre's progress and the follow-up inspection will be completed at the request of the centre, up to and including June 2023. Subsequently, the inspection will be completed without further notice.

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