

POST-PRIMARY INSPECTION

St Michael's College, Enniskillen,
County Fermanagh

All Boys' voluntary grammar, 11-18 school, DE Ref No (242-0043)

Report of a Follow-up Inspection in April 2022



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Follow-up to the inspection of St Michael's College, Enniskillen, BT74 6DE (242-0043)

The Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) carried out a follow-up inspection of St Michael's College, Enniskillen in [May 2018](#). Owing to action short of strike by the teaching unions, the ETI was unable to evaluate fully the impact of actions taken and the extent to which the important areas for improvement had been addressed, namely to:

- improve the standards attained by the pupils at GCE A Level;
- improve the quality of the learning and teaching to meet more effectively the needs of all of the pupils, and to ensure better consistency in the quality of their learning experiences; and
- build further leadership capacity, at all levels, to monitor the quality of the learning and the standards achieved.

The school's action plans were of a good quality. The school's development plan was adjusted in light of the inspection findings.

The ETI carried out a monitoring visit in November 2021 and a second follow-up inspection in April 2022.

In the interval since the original inspection, the school received external support from the Education Authority, in relation to the areas for improvement. This included support to improve the action planning process at all levels as well as providing access to teacher professional learning opportunities and resources.

Over the same period, the key actions or changes which affect the work of the school include:

- The senior and middle leadership in the school has undergone significant restructuring and there has been a clear focus on developing the capacity of senior and middle leaders through tailored professional learning.
- Achieving consistency in the quality of teaching and learning has been prioritised across the school.
- The approach to curriculum planning has been reviewed and changes have been made to the curriculum offer for the pupils, particularly at key stage 4 and post-16.
- Academic selection as the basis for admission to the school has been suspended for the current and next school year.

As a consequence of the external support and the key changes and actions taken within the school, there have been improvements in the quality of education as reported in the key findings below.

Key findings

Eighteen percent of parents (105) responded to the online questionnaire (as part of the second follow-up inspection, there was an opportunity for parents and staff to complete a confidential questionnaire), with forty-six of them providing additional written comments. Most of the parents commented positively on the work of the school. Forty-two percent of the staff (26) responded to the questionnaire; their feedback was wholly positive and reflected their satisfaction with, and support for, the life and work of the school. Any issues raised in the questionnaire were discussed with the senior leaders and governors.

The outcomes for learners have improved and are now good.

Through the high quality of the learning and teaching the pupils develop positive attitudes to learning, work well collaboratively in pairs and small groups, and demonstrate appropriately high levels of knowledge and understanding in their learning. In the lessons observed, almost all of the pupils were motivated and curious, engaged well and demonstrated positive behaviour for learning. In discussions with inspectors and when given opportunities in the classroom, almost all of the pupils were confident and articulate and expressed their opinions maturely. The pupils are supported well to evaluate the quality of their own work, and that of their peers, and to identify strengths and areas for improvement in their learning. The pupils are prepared well for the next stage of their education, training or employment.

The quality of provision has improved and is now good.

The quality of the learning and teaching now meets well or better the needs of almost all of the pupils and there is much greater consistency in the quality of the pupils' learning experiences. Almost all of the lessons observed were effective in promoting successful learning. The notable strengths of the lessons include: a positive culture for learning underpinned by mutually respectful classroom relationships; very well-structured and well-paced lessons that allowed the pupils to make demonstrable progress in learning; and the active engagement of the pupils in their learning.

Achieving consistency in the quality of teaching and learning has been prioritised across the school and there are now more robust internal assessment processes in place to monitor and track pupils' progress in learning. Consequently, there is improved and effective use of data and other information to identify and inform the support for pupils at risk of underachieving.

The quality of the provision for English is now good. Lessons are well planned and the pupils benefit from consistently high-quality learning and teaching. The pupils' learning progresses well from the teachers' effective use of questioning and the use made of good assessment for learning practices.

The quality and effectiveness of leadership and management have improved and are now good.

The restructure of the senior leadership team has resulted in more effective communication throughout the school and a more joined-up, whole-school approach to school improvement.

The restructure at middle leadership level has led to a more consistent approach to planning, teaching and assessment for successful learning. This has included, for example, improvements in: pupil peer- and self-evaluation of learning; well-planned boy-friendly lessons to engage the pupils more; and opportunities for the pupils to respond constructively to feedback to progress their learning.

The revised assessment processes and use of data at whole-school level are being used well to: track and report on pupil progress in learning; inform pupil target-setting; and provide appropriate targeted support where required. This has resulted in better support for pupils at risk of low attainment and underachievement.

A more flexible and responsive approach to curriculum planning has resulted in access for pupils to a wider range of subjects that meets more effectively their needs, interests and abilities. This includes increased access to vocational courses at key stage 4 and post-16 level.

Overall effectiveness

St Michael's College now 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 in:

- the continued development of classroom provision to support successful learning for pupils of all abilities.

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