



The Education and Training Inspectorate  
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Department of Education

Department for the Economy

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## **Education and Training Inspectorate**

### **Report of a Follow-up Inspection**

**Strangford Integrated College  
Carrowdore**

**June 2016**

## **FOLLOW-UP TO THE POST-PRIMARY INSPECTION OF STRANGFORD INTEGRATED COLLEGE (426 0295)**

The Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) carried out an inspection<sup>1</sup> of Strangford Integrated College in April 2014, when the quality of education was evaluated as satisfactory<sup>2</sup>.

The main areas for improvement were the need to:

- continue to develop a shared responsibility and accountability for leaders and co-ordinators at all levels to improve the pupils' learning experiences;
- raise the pupils' attainment in public examinations;
- improve the quality and effectiveness of pastoral care; and
- revise the curriculum provision and the associated careers education, information, advice and guidance to improve choice and to provide more appropriate progression pathways for all of the pupils.

The school's action plans took appropriate account of the areas for improvement and were of a good quality. The school reports that it has received significant support from a range of Education Authority staff.

The ETI carried out two interim follow-up visits during the period 2014/16, 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 pupil enrolment has risen from 528 to 573;
- a development proposal to increase enrolment to 670 pupils was approved in March 2016;
- the percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals has continued to increase, rising from 19.9% to 30.3%;
- the proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs has decreased from 31% to 26%;
- a clearly defined careers team has been appointed and trained; and
- the school has recently appointed a senior leader for pupil support and development.

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<sup>1</sup> See standard inspection report at <https://www.etini.gov.uk/sites/etini.gov.uk/files/publications/%5Bcurrent-domain%3Amachine-name%5D/post-primary-inspection-strangford-college.pdf>

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

## Key Findings

- The management structure is more fit-for-purpose, senior managers share responsibilities, work well collaboratively and clearly defined leadership roles have been established. Staff, at all levels, are making more effective use of data; as a result, the target setting process is becoming more focused on both identifying the learning needs of the pupils, and taking remedial action to ensure progression in learning.
- The quality of the pupils' learning experiences remains an important area for improvement; in three-quarters of the lessons observed, there was a lack of sufficient differentiation to engage all of the pupils. Consequently, it will be important to implement more fully the teaching and learning policy and to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the literacy and numeracy sessions.
- An appropriate code of conduct has been reviewed with all staff and measures have been put in place to inform parents about the child protection and safeguarding policies. In addition, the governors are now provided with an annual report on issues relating to child protection.
- In discussions with pupils, they spoke positively about their learning experiences and the support they receive from teachers. The senior leadership team is appropriately continuing to strengthen the arrangements for the care and support of pupils, although much of the work is at an early stage. The impact of actions to improve the care and support of the pupils needs to be closely monitored.
- Since the original inspection, the standards attained by the pupils in mathematics at GCSE grades A\* to C have fluctuated; they are now just below the Northern Ireland (NI) average for similar schools and remain an important area for improvement. By contrast, over the past three years, the percentage of pupils attaining at GCSE grades A\* to C in English has increased significantly, from 46% to 75%, which is now well above the NI average.
- Over the past three years, the overall standards attained by the pupils at the end of key stage (KS) 4 have improved and are now in line with the NI average for similar schools. The percentage of the year 12 pupils attaining at GCSE grades A\* to C or equivalent in at least five subjects, including English and mathematics, has increased by almost ten percentage points to 44%. The percentage of the pupils attaining at GCSE grades A\* to C or equivalent in at least five subjects has increased by almost 20 percentage points to 69%.
- Over the same period, the percentage of year 12 pupils entitled to free school meals attaining five or more GCSEs at grades A\* to C or equivalent, including English and mathematics, has decreased by almost twelve percentage points to 33%, which is below the NI average.
- There remains too much variation in the standards attained by the pupils across the subjects; at GCSE level, approximately one-half of them are below the corresponding three-year NI averages. It is a concern that the standards in geography, history, information and communication technology and modern languages have remained below the corresponding NI average for the past three years.

- Over the past three years, there has been insufficient improvement in the percentage of pupils attaining three or more GCE A levels or equivalent at grades A\* to C.
- Some broadening of curriculum is evident with more subject choices and career progression pathways to better meet the needs and abilities of the pupils. Careers education, information, advice and guidance and the curriculum provision, however, remain important areas improvement to ensure all pupils have access to the most appropriate subjects and advice to enable them to pursue and achieve their chosen career goals.

### **Overall Effectiveness**

The school needs to address important areas for improvement in the interests of all the learners. The follow-up inspection has identified the following important areas for improvement:

- continue to improve the standards attained by the pupils in public examinations;
- to improve further the quality of planning, learning, teaching and assessment;
- to further improve the quality and effectiveness of the care and support provided to the pupils; and
- to develop further the curriculum provision to ensure pupils have access to appropriate subjects and effective careers education, information, advice and guidance to enable them to pursue their chosen careers.

The ETI will monitor and report on the school's progress in addressing the areas for improvement. The ETI will conduct a further follow-up inspection in 12-18 months.

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