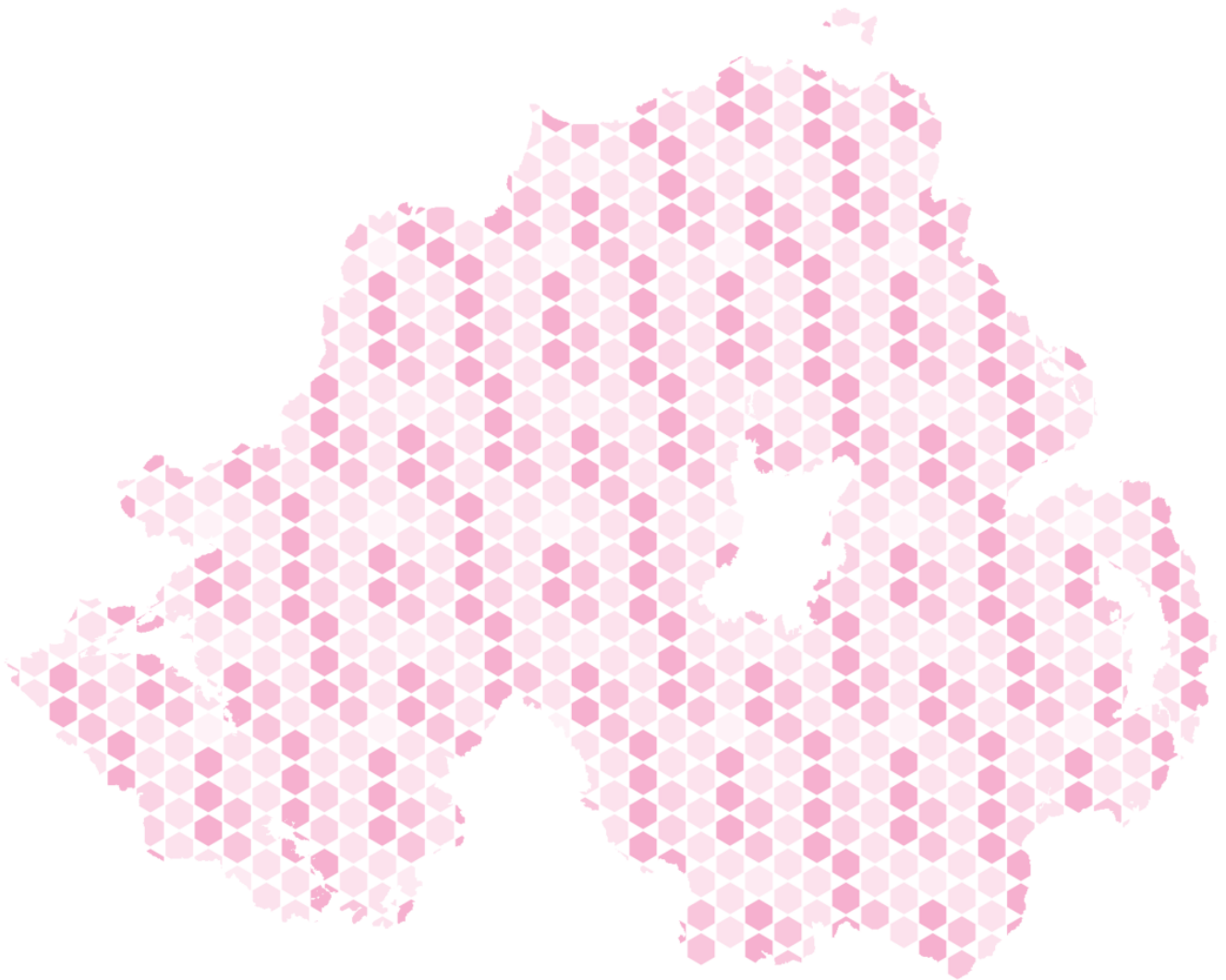


INDEPENDENT SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Mourne Independent Christian
(Co-educational) School, Kilkeel,
County Down

Report of an Inspection in
May 2018



The Education and Training Inspectorate
Promoting Improvement

Providing inspection services for:

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1. Context

Mourne Independent Christian School is in its 30th year, having been founded in 1988, and is located in suitable purpose-built accommodation, which meets health and safety standards, within the grounds of the Mourne Free Presbyterian Church in Kilkeel. The school is administered by the Mourne school board under the auspices of the Presbytery education board of the Free Presbyterian Church.

Most of the learners come from the town of Kilkeel and the surrounding area; the enrolment has declined slightly over the past four years. The learners are grouped generally into four composite classes: years one to four, years five to seven, years eight to ten and years 11 and 12. At the time of the inspection the learners in years 11 and 12 were sitting public examinations and were not present.

Focus School	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
Enrolment	37	33	33	29
% Attendance – primary age pupils	98	97	96	97
% Attendance – post- primary age pupils	92	91	92	95
Number of children on SEN register	*	*	*	*
No. of children with statements of educational needs	0	0	0	0
No. of newcomers	0	0	0	*

Source: data as held by the school.

* = fewer than 5

2. Focus of the inspection

The inspection focused on:

- the learners' achievements and standards in literacy and numeracy, in particular, how the school is addressing low attainment and under-achievement, where applicable;
- whether the accommodation is suitable and meets health and safety standards;
- the quality of provision in the school, with a particular focus on the implementation of the procedures for safeguarding and care and welfare; and
- the quality of leadership and management.

3. Outcomes for learners

- The school's internal performance data indicates that almost all of the learners, by the end of key stage 2, including those who require additional support in their learning, achieve high standards in literacy. The learners' extended writing is of a high quality and they write in a wide range of well-planned and engaging tasks across the curriculum. The outcomes for the learners in numeracy are good, although lower than those in literacy; the learners would benefit from more opportunities to engage in practical, problem-solving mathematical activities.
- Over the past three years, all of the learners attained five or more GCSEs or equivalent at grades A* to C. This figure is well above the Northern Ireland (NI) average for all types of school.

- Over the same period, just over 70% of the pupils attained five or more GCSEs or equivalent, including English and mathematics, which is in line with the corresponding average for all types of NI schools. The same percentage of learners attained seven or more GCSEs, including English and mathematics, which is well above the corresponding NI average for all schools.
- The school reports that most of the learners progress, for post-16 study, to other schools and to the local regional college and then to higher education.
- The learners enjoy their work in class; they are responsive, keen and positive in their approach to learning. They engage respectfully with their peers and with adults, including visitors to their classrooms, and are developing well as confident young people.

4. Quality of provision

- The planning, teaching and assessment for learning observed during the inspection was of a high standard. Almost all of the lessons observed were effective in progressing the learning. In these lessons the teachers take good account of the learners' interests, abilities and experiences.
- In the composite classes, the well-planned activities ensure that the work is appropriately adjusted to challenge the learners in terms of their ages and abilities.
- The range of subjects provided reflects the requirements of the Northern Ireland curriculum. The school provides a balanced range of choices at GCSE level which enables the learners to progress to the next stage of their education.
- The individual educational plans for the learners who require additional support with aspects of their learning have clear and relevant targets which are reviewed regularly to inform planning.
- The arrangements for the care and welfare of learners are effective. The school's behaviour policy focuses appropriately on encouraging and rewarding positive behaviour. The staff live out, and the learners benefit from, the Christian ethos and values of the school.

5. Leadership and management

- The school administrator, who chairs the Mourne school management board, maintains frequent, regular contact with the senior staff to enable the board members to oversee the smooth running of the school. The board is well informed about the standards being attained by the end of year 12.
- The school has a good range of appropriate policies in place which underpin the educational provision and are reviewed on a regular basis. It is well resourced to support learning, including a range of well-used information and communication technologies.

- The senior leaders and the administrator act as an effective link between the committed and dedicated staff, the learners' families and the school board. Many of the staff have teacher qualifications, attend relevant staff development, related in particular to public examinations, and an annual programme provided by the Presbytery Board.

6. Safeguarding

- Based on the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the arrangements for safeguarding the learners reflect broadly the guidance from the Presbytery Committee for the Protection of Children and from the Department of Education.
- The school has identified appropriately the need to review their anti-bullying policy and ensure that the required training is up to date for the designated teacher.

7. Conclusion

Mourne Independent Christian School provides efficient and suitable instruction for the learners¹. The school should continue to be registered to provide education.

¹ Education and Libraries Order (NI) 1986 Part IV 39 (1) c

Inspection guidance

The guide to the inspection of independent schools is available at:

<https://www.etini.gov.uk/publications/independent-schools-inspection-guidance>

APPENDIX B

Reporting terms used by the Education and Training Inspectorate

In this report, proportions may be described as percentages, common fractions and in more general quantitative terms. Where more general terms are used, they should be interpreted as follows:

Almost/nearly all	-	more than 90%
Most	-	75%-90%
A majority	-	50%-74%
A significant minority	-	30%-49%
A minority	-	10%-29%
Very few/a small number	-	less than 10%

SAFEGUARDING ADDENDUM MOURNE INDEPENDENT CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

The Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) returned to the school on 12 October 2018 and on 14 November 2018 to discuss an aspect of safeguarding related to the school's Parent's Agreement.

The school reported that the safeguarding recommendations made in the ETI report at the time of the original inspection in May 2018, regarding policy and training, have since been implemented.

The school maintains appropriate record-keeping and reporting for any incidents of misbehaviour and for detentions. However, the ETI advised that the Code of Discipline outlined in the Parent's Agreement was inappropriate. Importantly, the school confirmed that the sanction set out in the Code has never been invoked. Subsequently, the Code of Discipline has been revised appropriately.

The arrangements for safeguarding the learners reflect the guidance from the Department of Education.

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