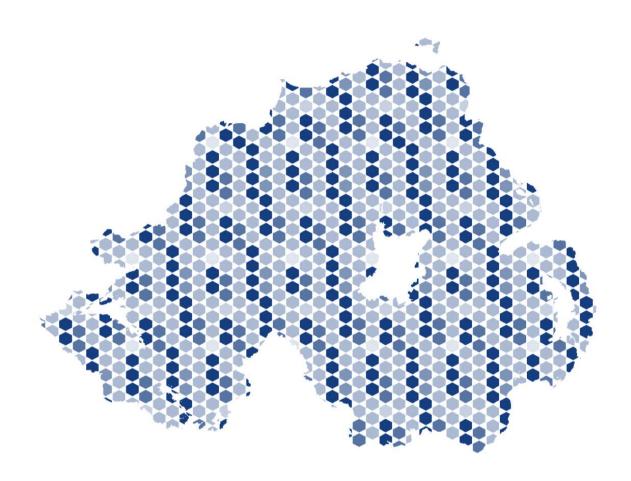# Education and Training Inspectorate
POST-PRIMARY INSPECTION

Glastry College, Ballyhalbert, County Down

Controlled, co-educational, 11-18 non-selective   DE Ref No (421-0046)

Report of an Inspection (Involving Action Short of Strike) in March 2019

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INTRODUCTION

1.   Context

Glastry College attracts its pupils from a wide area across the Ards peninsula stretching from Newtownards to Portaferry. Just over one-quarter of the pupils require additional help with aspects of their learning. The school is in a shared education partnership with two other post-primary schools in the area which it values. The school participates as a member of the North Down and Ards Area Learning Community. The geographical location of the school, and the lack of funding, provide barriers to the widening of the curriculum at post-16.

Four of the teaching unions, which make up the Northern Ireland Teachers' Council (NITC), have declared industrial action primarily in relation to a pay dispute. This includes non-co-operation with the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI). Prior to the inspection, the school informed the ETI that the principal would be co-operating with the inspection. The ETI has a statutory duty to monitor, inspect and report on the quality of education under Article 102 of the Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 1986. Therefore, the inspection proceeded and the following evaluations are based on the evidence as made available at the time of the inspection.

Glastry College	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Year 8 Intake	108	113	107	103
Enrolment	630	611	610	584
% Attendance (NI Average)	90.6 (92.0%)	91 (91.8%)	91.6 (N/A)	N/A (N/A)
FSME Percentage[1]	29.8	34.4	32.5	32.4
% and (Number) of pupils on SEN register	21.3 (134)	23.7 (145)	30.2 (184)	27.3 (143)
No. of pupils with statements of educational need in the mainstream school	15	17	16	16
No. of newcomers	*	*	*	*

Source: data as verified by the school.
N/A not available
* fewer than 5

2.   Pupils', parents' and staff questionnaire responses

Thirty-seven percent (216) of the pupils across the key stages responded to the online questionnaire. Overall, the pupils' responses were positive and they acknowledged how the school encourages online internet safety, lets them know how to improve their work and provides opportunities for participation in extra-curricular activities. One-fifth of the pupils who responded provided written comments; these highlighted the positive working relationships with staff and the pupils' appreciation of the support they receive.

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[1] The term 'FSME Percentage' refers to the percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals.

Just under seven percent of parents (34) and a significant minority of staff (21) responded to the online questionnaires. Most of the responses to the parental questionnaires were positive about the life and work of the school; highlighting, for example, their satisfaction with their children's experiences and in particular, the care and support the children receive and the high quality of the pastoral leadership. While the staff's responses were broadly positive, a small number of issues around leadership and communication were raised.

All matters raised through the questionnaires were shared with the principal and the representative of the governors.

3. Focus of the inspection

In order to promote improvement in the interests of all pupils, the purpose of a post-primary inspection is to:

- evaluate the quality of the provision and the outcomes for the pupils;

- evaluate the school's leadership and management and its capacity to effect and sustain improvement in its provision and standards; and

- inform the school's planning for improvement.

In addition to the focus on English/literacy and mathematics/numeracy, there was a supplementary subject focus on information and communication technology (ICT) in this inspection.

The ETI was unable to evaluate fully:

- the quality of the provision and the overall outcomes for the pupils;

- the school's leadership and management and its capacity to effect and sustain improvement in its provision and standards;

- the quality of provision in English and literacy, mathematics and numeracy, and ICT; and

- the quality and impact of the provision for care, welfare and support of the pupils.

Where it has been possible to evaluate aspects of the foci, they have been reported in the body of the report.

4. Overall findings of the inspection

Overall Effectiveness	Unable to assure the quality of education
Outcomes for learners	No performance level available
Quality of Provision	No performance level available
Leadership and management	No performance level available

KEY FINDINGS

5.   Outcomes for learners

- The pupils who met with members of the inspection team were polite, confident and articulate; the older pupils demonstrated a high level of maturity and praised the provision of a wide range of extra-curricular and enrichment activities, which develop their personal and social skills.

- Over the past three years, the proportion of pupils attaining five or more GCSEs, or equivalent at grades A*-C, including English and mathematics, has improved significantly year-on-year, from a low base, and is now above the Northern Ireland (NI) average for similar schools. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals attaining at this level has improved significantly during this period and has been above the corresponding NI average in the last two years.

- Over the same period, the proportion of pupils attaining five or more GCSEs, or equivalent, at grades A*-C has also improved notably and is now in line with the NI average for similar schools.

- Around one-half of the individual subjects at GCSE grades A* to C[2] are performing in line with, or above the corresponding three-year averages.

- Over the past three years, the proportion of pupils attaining three or more A levels, including equivalents, has increased from 46% to 67%, which is well above the NI average for similar schools. Nearly two-thirds of the individual subjects at GCE A level grades A* to C[3] are performing in line with, or above, the corresponding averages.

- The pupils perform well across a range of vocational subjects at Key Stage (KS) 4 and post-16.

- The staying on rate from year 12 to 13 is below the corresponding NI average. In 2017, most of the leavers progressed to training, further education and higher education.

The ETI was unable to evaluate fully:

- the standards attained by the pupils in English and literacy and mathematics and numeracy, and ICT;

- the progression in the pupils' learning; and

- the pupils' wider skills and dispositions.

6.   Quality of Provision

- The curriculum at KS 3 is broad and balanced. The school tracks well the pupils' progress as they move through the school and is attentive to meeting the needs, interests and abilities of the pupils.

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[2] In those subjects for which there are corresponding NI subject averages.
[3] In those subjects for which there are corresponding NI subject averages.

- At KS4, the curriculum offer is meeting the entitlement framework and the needs of the pupils as evidenced by school's internal qualitative and quantitative data. The significant improvement in the KS4 outcomes and the consistently strong uptake of STEM[4]-related subjects with successful outcomes is indicative of the appropriateness of the curriculum offer. In addition, the ICT curriculum has been reviewed at KS 4 and post-16 and underpins the improved outcomes and progression opportunities for the pupils.

- The outcomes achieved for a minority of the pupils at KS4 indicate that the courses taken do not always match their needs and abilities. It will be important for the school to analyse further its data to ensure that the examination entry policy and curriculum options meets the needs, and enables progression for all of the pupils.

- The learning for life programme offers an appropriate blend of accredited courses; this offer is kept under review to ensure it supports viable career progression pathways and motivates the pupils to achieve and sustain high standards.

- While the outcomes at post-16 have improved steadily, the limited curriculum offer in general courses needs to be widened as the entitlement framework is not being met fully.

- The school's commitment to providing good support to its pupils was evidenced in the discussions between inspectors and pupils. The pupils spoke positively about the care and welfare provided for them in relation to their pastoral needs, the support and guidance for career planning and the benefits of their work experience.

The ETI was unable to evaluate fully:

- the impact of the curriculum;

- the effectiveness of the guidance and support in bringing about high quality individual learning experiences;

- the effectiveness and impact of planning, teaching and assessment in promoting learning;

- the quality or overall impact of the careers education, information, advice and guidance provision;

- the quality of provision in English and literacy, mathematics and numeracy, and ICT across the school; and

- the impact of care and welfare on teaching, learning and outcomes for pupils.

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[4] Science, technology, engineering and mathematics

7.   Leadership and management

- The school development planning process is informed well by appropriate self-evaluation, including the analysis of tracking and examination data and information sourced from consultation with pupils, parents and staff. The associated action plans are cogent, coherent and identify clearly measurable targets, which promote well the improvement process.

- The leadership communicates a clear strategic vision for school improvement based on the needs, aspirations and interests of the pupils. Strategic decisions have resulted in improved outcomes and meaningful transitions for pupils to the next phase of their education or employment.

- Based on the evidence presented at the time of inspection, the ETI's evaluation is that there can be confidence in the aspects of governance evaluated. The board of governors has been recently re-constituted; the chair of the governors is supportive and knowledgeable about the improvements in outcomes for learners and articulates well the significant contribution the school makes to the community it serves.

The ETI was unable to evaluate fully:

- the effectiveness and impact of the senior leadership of the school;

- the effectiveness and impact of middle leadership; and

- the effectiveness of action to promote and sustain improvement.

8.   Safeguarding

During the inspection, the school provided evidence that the arrangements for safeguarding pupils reflect broadly the guidance from the Department of Education.

Owing to the action short of strike, the ETI was unable to evaluate fully the outworking of the arrangements for safeguarding in the school. In discussions with the inspectors, the pupils reported that they feel safe and are aware of what to do if they have any concerns about their safety or well-being.

CONCLUSION

9.   Overall effectiveness

Owing to the impact of the action short of strike being taken by the teachers, the ETI is unable to assure parents/carers, the wider school community and stakeholders of the quality of education being provided for the pupils. This will be reflected in future inspection activity.

Health and safety/accommodation

1. There is a need to review and update the risk reduction measures in the risk assessment documentation, while addressing:

   a. the access to the school site, the main school buildings and the mobile classrooms;

   b. the floor covering in the home economics room, which presents a slip hazard; and

   c. the water ingress through the metal window frames, which is causing a slip hazard in the corridors.

Examination performance and other statistical data

GCSE and equivalent examination results from 2015-16 to 2017-18

Based on data held by the school in SIMS[5] and verified with the ETI, the table below compares the percentage of year 12 pupils in Glastry College achieving five or more GCSE examinations and equivalent at grades A* to C and the percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals with the NI average for non-selective schools in the same free school meals band[6].

The table also includes the percentage of year 12 pupils in Glastry College achieving five or more GCSE examinations and equivalent, including English and mathematics at grades A* to E. In this instance, there is no NI average available.

GCSE and GCSE equivalent subjects - *following permitted exclusions	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
*Percentage of Year 12 taking GCSE & Equivalents in at least 5 subjects	91.59	97.8	87
*Percentage of Year 12 obtaining Grades C or above in at least 5 subjects	50.47	61.54	68
The NI average for similar schools in the same free school meals band[7]	*75.8*	*68.5*	*N/A*
*Percentage of Year 12 obtaining Grades C or above in at least 5 subjects including GCSE English and GCSE Mathematics	31.78	42.86	50
The NI average for similar schools in the same free school meals band	*46.7*	*44.3*	*N/A*
*Percentage of Year 12 obtaining Grades E or above in at least 5 subjects	*85.98*	*93.41*	92
Percentage of Year 12 entitled to free school meals achieving 5 or more GCSEs Grades A* to C or equivalent including GCSE English and GCSE Mathematics	15.15	46.43	43.75

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[5] SIMS: School Information Management System
[6] See benchmarking data and guidance contained in the annual DE Circulars on: 'School Development Planning and Target-Setting'.
[7] The benchmarking bands for 2015/16, as set in in Circular 2017/8 'School Development Planning and Target-Setting' are different to those used in preceding years; therefore, trend comparisons with previous years' benchmarking data need to be treated with caution.

GCE A level and equivalent examination results at grades A* to C from 2015-16 to 2017-18

Based on data held by the school in SIMS and verified with the ETI, the table below shows the percentage of year 14 pupils in Glastry College achieving three or more GCE A levels or equivalent at grades A* to C, compared with the NI average for non-selective schools in the same free school meals band.

GCE A Level or equivalent	*2015-16*	*2016-17*	*2017-18*
Percentage of Year 14 taking A2 levels & Equivalents in at least 3 subjects	85.71	90.32	95.06
Percentage of Year 14 obtaining Grades C or above in at least 3 A2 levels	46.94	51.61	67.65
The NI average for similar schools in the same free school meals band[8]	*56.1*	*51.6*	*N/A*

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[8] The benchmarking bands for 2015/16, as set in in Circular 2017/8 'School Development Planning and Target-Setting' are different to those used in preceding years; therefore, trend comparisons with previous years' benchmarking data need to be treated with caution.

Attainment of pupils in individual subjects at GCSE level or equivalent

(The three year average is expressed as a percentage of the pupils entered)

Grades A* - C

	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
Number of pupils in Year 12 cohort	107	91	100

GCSE Subject or equivalent	Number of Entries	School A* - C	Northern Ireland A* - C
Art and Design	86	87.2	75.8
Biology	*	0	68.0
BTEC ICT	77	75.3	N/A
BTEC Sport Studies	64	93.8	N/A
Business Communication Systems	35	52.5	N/A
Business and ICT	17	35.3	N/A
Business Studies	92	47.8	60.7
Certificate of Personal Effectiveness (NQF)	*	100	N/A
Design & Technology	167	64.7	70.5
Drama	43	95.3	78.1
English	297	58.9	67.5
English Literature	17	70.6	84.5
French	28	42.9	74.9
Geography	151	64.9	64.8
German	*	100	64.9
History	100	75.0	65.0
Home Economics	67	64.2	67.7
Home Economics: Child Development	72	59.7	70.0
ICT	39	51.3	71.5
IT/Business Studies	21	61.9	N/A
Mathematics	295	49.2	52.7
Music	*	66.7	81.3
Motor Vehicle Studies	39	51.3	52.3
Occupational Studies: Business Services	16	100	N/A
Occupational Studies: Construction Studies	*	0	N/A
Occupational Studies: Design and Creativity	13	76.4	N/A
Occupational Studies: Engineering Services	15	60.0	N/A
Occupational Studies: Environment and Society	*	33.3	N/A
Occupational Studies: Technology and Innovation	11	27.3	N/A
Preparation for Adult Life	138	100	N/A
Princes Trust (NQF)	*	100	N/A
Religious Studies	11	72.7	65.1
Science: Single Award	217	63.6	70.0
Science: Double Award	76	77.0	83.4

*indicates fewer than 10 entries over 3 years

Attainment of pupils in individual subjects at GCE A level or equivalent

(The three year average is expressed as a percentage of the pupils entered)

Grades A* - C

	2015 -16	2016-17	2017-18
Number of pupils in Year 14 cohort	49	31	34

Subject	Number of Entries	School A* to C	Northern Ireland A* to C
Art & Design**	14	85.7	82.0
BTEC Childcare, Learning & Development	10	80.0	N/A
BTEC Engineering	11	80	N/A
BTEC Sports Studies	13	91.6	N/A
Business Studies Vocational	31	87.1	86.9
Certificate of Personal Effectiveness	50	N/A	N/A
Design & Technology	33	78.8	67.8
English*** Language & Literature	*	100.0	N/A
Geography	33	78.8	87.4
Health & Social Care	39	51.3	86.8
History**	16	56.3	84.4
IT Vocational	37	73.0	86.5
IT	*	100.0	77.1
Performing** Arts	2	100.0	N/A
Performing Arts (Vocational)	10	70.0	86.1
Moving Image Arts***	*	33.3	N/A
Psychology***	*	100	70
Science Vocational	22	86.4	68.9
Sociology***	*	100.0	75.9
Travel & Tourism	38	89.5	78.9

* indicates fewer than 10 entries over 3 years
**Delivered at Glastry College in last two academic years, previously in another centre
***Delivered by another centre

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STAYING ON RATE[9] 2017/18

Based on data held by the school and verified with the ETI, the table below shows the percentage of the pupils who stay on at school compared with the NI average for all schools and for the most recent year for which data is available.

	NI Average	School
% Yr 12 staying on to Yr 13	49.5	35.7
% Yr 13 staying on to Yr 14	74.2	83.3

Leavers' Destinations[10] 2016/17

Based on data held by the school and verified with the ETI, the table below shows the percentage of all of the pupils from this school who leave school to enter employment, further education, higher education, and training or are seeking employment compared with the average for non-grammar schools and for the most recent year for which data is available.

	NI No.(%)	School No.(%)	NI Yr12 (%)	School Yr12 (%)	NI Yr13 (%)	School Yr13 (%)	NI Yr14 (%)	School Yr14 (%)	Level 2 (No.)	Level 3 (No.)	Level 4 (No.)
Total Number of Leavers	12256	100									
Employment	1497 (12.2%)	16 (16.0%)	6.7%	8.8%	21.9%	33.3%	12.2%	38.8%			
Institute of Further Education	5512 (45.0%)	60 (60.0%)	60.9%	29.5%	49.2%	33.3%	45.0%	5.6%	*	52	#
Institute of Higher Education[11]	2652 (21.6%)	13 (13.0%)	*	0.0%	*	0.0%	21.6%	55.6%			13
Training[12]	1924 (15.7%)	#	28.0%	52.9%	17.9%	33.3%	15.7%	0.0			
Unemployment	448 (3.7%)	*	2.7%	0.0%	6.4%	0.0%	3.7%	0.0			
Others	223 (1.8%)	0 (0.0%)	#	8.8%	#	0.0%	1.8%	0.0			

Source for NI data: Destination of School Leavers by year group, 2016/17 - NON-GRAMMAR SCHOOLS[13]
- *fewer than 5 cases
- # figures suppressed

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[9] The percentage of pupils who stay on at school compared with the Northern Ireland average for all schools, this rate is calculated in terms of pupils who progress their level of study, whether at their original or a new school. Pupils that move schools between years are counted as 'staying on' at their original school as they are progressing their study within the school system.

[10] Destination is defined by Institution. Institutions may provide courses at both Further and Higher Education levels.

[11] Includes universities and teacher training colleges.

[12] Numbers entering training include those entering the Training for Success programme, operated by the Department for the Economy. Training on Training for Success is delivered by a range of training providers, including Further Education Colleges. Training for Success trainees who receive training at Further Education Colleges are recorded as being in training and not in Further Education. This convention avoids double counting of Training for Success trainees.

[13] Excludes special and independent schools.

Inspection methodology and evidence base

The ETI's Inspection and Self-Evaluation Framework publication, which is available at: http://tinyurl.com/ISEF-Post-Primary.

The arrangements for this inspection included: meeting with the principal, a meeting with a representative from the governors; formal discussions with groups of pupils across all key stages; review of documentation and data; and the opportunity for all pupils, parents, teaching and support staff to complete a confidential questionnaire.

Reporting terms used by the Education and Training Inspectorate

Quantitative terms

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%

Performance levels

The ETI use the following performance levels when reporting on outcomes for learners, quality of provision and leadership and management[14]:

Outstanding
Very good
Good
Important area(s) for improvement
Requires significant improvement
Requires urgent improvement

The ETI use the following levels when reporting on governance:

High degree of confidence
Confidence
Limited confidence

The ETI use the following levels when reporting on safeguarding:

Reflects the guidance
Reflects broadly the guidance
Unsatisfactory

The ETI use the following levels when reporting on care and welfare:

Impacts positively on learning, teaching and outcomes for learners
Does not impact positively enough on learning, teaching and outcomes for learners

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[14] And the overall provision in a subject area or unit, as applicable.

Overall effectiveness

The ETI use one of the following inspection outcomes when evaluating the overall effectiveness of the school:

The school has a high level of capacity for sustained improvement in the interest of all the learners. The ETI will monitor how the school sustains improvement.
The 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.
The school needs to address (an) important area(s) for improvement in the interest of all the learners. The ETI will monitor and report on the school's progress in addressing the area(s) for improvement. There will be a formal follow-up inspection.
The school needs to address urgently the significant areas for improvement identified in the interest of all the learners. It requires external support to do so. The ETI will monitor and report on the school's progress in addressing the areas for improvement. There will be a formal follow-up inspection.