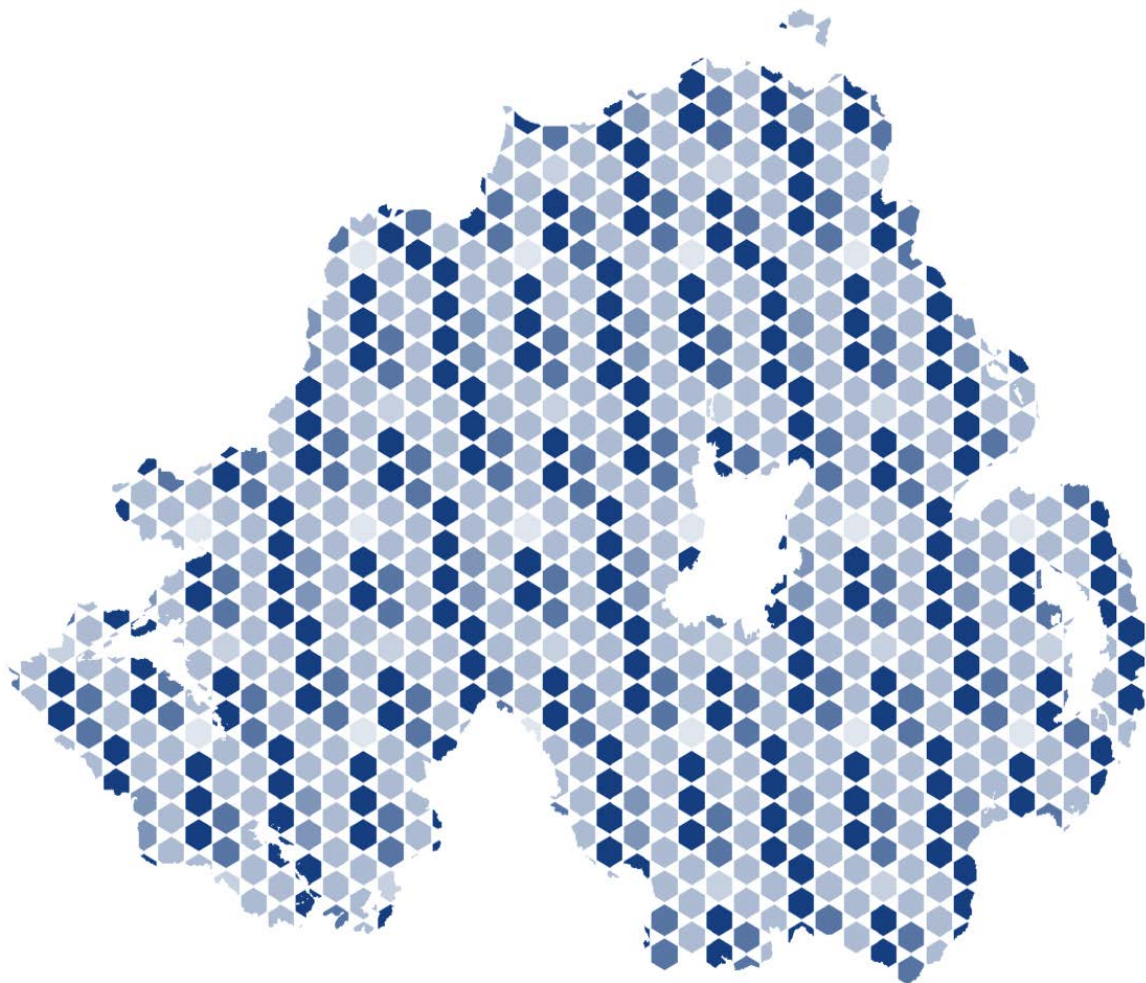


Education and Training Inspectorate

POST-PRIMARY INSPECTION



Omagh Academy, Omagh, County Tyrone

Controlled, co-educational, grammar, 11-18 DE Ref No (241-0066)

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



The Education and Training Inspectorate
Promoting Improvement

Providing inspection services for:

Department of Education
Department for the Economy
and other commissioning Departments



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INTRODUCTION

1. Context

Omagh Academy is a controlled, co-educational grammar school. The majority of the pupils who attend the school come from the Omagh area and other parts of County Tyrone, as well as from County Fermanagh. A new principal took up post in September 2018 and there is currently a vice-principal-elect. The school participates in the Omagh Learning Community and is preparing for its move to the Strule Shared Education Campus which is due to open in 2023.

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 senior management team and some support staff 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.

Omagh Academy	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Year 8 Intake	95	96	95	97
Enrolment	672	671	673	655
% Attendance (NI Average)	96.6 (95.6)	96.2 (95.5)	94.5 (N/A)	N/A (N/A)
FSME Percentage ¹	14.6	14.5	14.0	13.4
% and (Number) of pupils on SEN register	7.3 (49)	8.0 (54)	7.5 (51)	8.4 (55)
No. of pupils with statements of educational need in the mainstream school	11	9	8	11

Source: data as verified by the school.

N/A not available

2. Pupils', parents' and staff questionnaire responses

Thirteen percent (87) of the pupils across the key stages completed the online questionnaire. Overall, most of the pupils' responses were positive about their experiences of the school, recognising the wide-ranging extra-curricular programme, the support and guidance they receive in relation to online safety and the progress they are making in their learning. Around thirty percent of the pupils who responded provided written comments sharing their views of school life and their learning experiences.

Five percent of parents (26) responded to the online questionnaires, with almost all indicating that they are happy with their child's experiences at the school and that their child enjoys school life. Most of the parents' written comments were positive and indicated high levels of satisfaction with the life and work of the school and, in particular, the good progress their children are making and the information they receive in relation to this.

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

Thirteen percent of staff (9) responded to the online questionnaire; there were no written comments. All of the staff's responses were wholly positive and reflected their satisfaction with the life and work of the school.

Issues raised in the questionnaires were discussed with the principal and 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 communications 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 inspectors were friendly, articulate and confident; they spoke about the benefits of their participation in a range of educational trips, team sports and other extra-curricular activities. They recognise that these opportunities support them to develop teamwork, leadership and social skills, as well as cultural understanding and appreciation of aspects of the arts. Pupils participate and achieve highly in a wide range of external events and competitions.
- The pupils' overall attainment at GCSE² is a strength of the school.
- The outcomes attained by the pupils in the last three years in almost all of the subjects at GCSE grades A* to B³ are in line with, or above, the corresponding Northern Ireland (NI) subject averages; just over two-fifths of the subjects are more than ten percentage points above these averages.
- For two out of the last three years, the percentage of pupils attaining three or more GCE A level qualifications or equivalent at grades A* to C was below the NI average for similar schools⁴. However in 2018 this proportion increased to 81.9%.
- At post-16, the outcomes attained by the pupils in almost all of the individual subjects⁵ at grades A* to C are in line with, or above, the corresponding three-year NI subject averages; over one-third of the subjects are more than ten percentage points above.
- Over the past three years, the pupils who require additional support with aspects of their learning have attained well at both GCSE and post-16.
- Over the same period, pupils from the school have been among the top candidates in NI for GCSE Spanish, mathematics and religious studies and for GCE A level French, art and design, physics, history and health and social care.
- School leavers' destinations are tracked and monitored by the school. In 2017, almost all Year 14 leavers progressed to study at further and higher education.

The ETI was unable to evaluate fully:

- the standards attained by the pupils in English and literacy; mathematics and numeracy and ICT;
- the progression in the pupils' learning; and
- the pupils' wider skills and dispositions.

² In the same free school meal (FSM) band for seven or more A* to C grades at GCSE level or equivalent and including English and mathematics; and for those with FSME attaining five or more A* to C grades at GCSE level or equivalent including English and mathematics.

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

⁴ In the same FSM band.

⁵ In those subjects for which there are corresponding NI subject averages.

6. Quality of Provision

- The curriculum is broad and balanced; at KS 4 and post-16, the offer meets the entitlement framework. At post-16, the subject offer is widened through collaboration with partners in the Omagh Learning Community.
- The provision for careers education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG) at KS 3 is delivered through a combination of the employability and personal development aspects of learning for life and work. There is discrete careers provision at KS 4 and post-16 which is augmented through a series of one-off events, including stakeholder and past-pupil presentations. Pupils benefit from a work experience programme at the end of year 13 with optional supplementary opportunities in year 14.
- In discussion with inspectors, pupils indicated a clear understanding of the options and the career pathways that are available to them. All of the pupils at post-16 expressed the view that the work experiences are matched well to their career aspirations; some felt that they could benefit from work experiences timed earlier.
- Almost all of the pupils who met with the inspectors expressed their appreciation of the support that they receive from many of their teachers, including the additional support provided through mentoring and after-school support sessions. Some of the pupils expressed the wish to have a stronger voice in contributing to improving aspects of their school.
- Notable features of the life and work of the school are its participation and success beyond the classroom in, for example, sport, music, drama, enterprise and debating.

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 CEIAG 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.

7. Leadership and management

- The senior management team (SMT) is supportive of one another and approaches school improvement work collegially; this work is focused sharply on the pupils' performance in public examinations and is informed by robust analysis of internal data and relevant NI benchmarks.

- The school is widening the SMT, to include the safeguarding team and the re-establishment of a curriculum team. It will be important, as part of this process, that roles and responsibilities are clear and closely aligned to the whole-school academic and pastoral priorities.
- The school development planning process is informed by consultation and self-evaluation, however the links between these evaluations and identified priorities for improvement are not always clear enough.
- In prioritising for the upcoming school development planning cycle, it will be advantageous that the pupils' views of school life are sought further and acted upon.
- The governors are committed to and have a sound understanding of the life and work of the school. They are well aware of: the pupils' outcomes in public examinations; the impact of managing staffing arrangements and transition; and the curricular provision. They support effectively the senior leaders in the continued raising of standards. Based on the evidence available at the time of inspection, the ETI's evaluation is that there can be confidence in those aspects of governance evaluated.

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 (DE). The school is reviewing currently aspects of its child protection, safeguarding and pastoral policies to reflect more fully the current DE guidance and contemporary issues which affect their pupils. 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 welfare.

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.

APPENDIX A

Health and safety/accommodation

1. The Education Authority and the school need to review the security arrangements around access to the school site and buildings.

APPENDIX B

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 SIMS⁶ and verified with the ETI, the table below compares the percentage of year 12 pupils in Omagh Academy achieving seven 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 selective schools in the same free school meals band⁷.

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

GCSE and GCSE equivalent subjects - *following permitted exclusions	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
<i>*Percentage of Year 12 taking GCSE & Equivalents in at least 7 subjects</i>	100	100	100
<i>*Percentage of Year 12 obtaining Grades C or above in at least 7 subjects</i>	95.9	98.0	94.9
<i>The NI average for similar schools in the same free school meals band⁸</i>	95.3	93.7	N/A
<i>*Percentage of Year 12 obtaining Grades C or above in at least 7 subjects including GCSE English and GCSE Mathematics</i>	95.9	98.0	93.9
<i>The NI average for similar schools in the same free school meals band</i>	93.9	93.4	N/A
<i>*Percentage of Year 12 obtaining Grades B or above in at least 7 subjects including GCSE English and GCSE Mathematics</i>	73.5	86.7	65.3
<i>*Percentage of Year 12 obtaining Grades C or above in at least 5 subjects</i>	99	98	99
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	100	90.9	94.4

⁶ SIMS: School Information Management System

⁷ See benchmarking data and guidance contained in the annual DE Circulars on: 'School Development Planning and Target-Setting'.

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.

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 Omagh Academy achieving three or more GCE A levels or equivalent at grades A* to C, compared with the NI average for 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	97.7	97.2	100
Percentage of Year 14 obtaining Grades C or above in at least 3 A2 levels	72.7	75.0	81.9
<i>The NI average for similar schools in the same free school meals band⁹</i>	<i>76.1</i>	<i>80.0</i>	<i>N/A</i>

Attainment of pupils in individual subjects at GCSE level or equivalent (over the past three years) at Grades A* to B

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

	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
Number of pupils in Year 12 cohort	98	98	98

GCSE Subject or Equivalent	Number of Entries	School A* to B %	NI A* to B %
Agriculture	13	76.9	N/A
Art & Design	43	93.0	78.2
Biology	40	95.0	82.2
Business Studies	60	61.7	69.2
Chemistry	40	95.0	85.3
Computer Studies	20	65.0	70.6
Design and Technology	77	84.4	74.9
English Language	294	86.1	80.3
English Literature	250	90.0	80.0
French	146	74.7	65.2
Geography	167	88.0	73.5
History	81	80.2	77.4
Home Economics	77	85.7	84.1
Information Technology	135	89.6	82.4
Mathematics	294	91.5	73.2
Mathematics Further	85	92.9	86.0
Media Studies	*	100	60.7
Music	43	83.7	88.0
Performing Arts	23	52.2	N/A
Physics	40	97.5	84.4
Religious Studies	51	100	79.2
Science Double Award	254	84.8	72.3
Spanish	177	68.4	72.7
Sport/PE Studies	44	88.6	73.9

* indicates fewer than 10 entries over 3 years

⁹ 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 GCE A level or equivalent (over the past three years) at Grades A* to C

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

	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
Number of pupils in Year 14 cohort	88	72	94

GCE Subject or Equivalent	Number of Entries	School A* to C %	NI A* to C %
Agriculture (BTEC)	*	100	N/A
Art & Design	17	100	94.7
Biology	64	85.9	82.7
Building (BTEC)	*	100	N/A
Business Studies	52	94.2	91.0
Catering Studies (BTEC)	*	100	N/A
Chemistry	36	91.7	88.5
Childcare Skills (NQF/L3_PT21)	*	100	N/A
D&T Product Design	11	45.5	N/A
Design and Technology	17	88.2	67.8
Engineering (BTEC)	18	100	N/A
English Literature	45	97.8	84.6
French	14	100	90.8
Geography	68	89.7	87.4
Health & Social Care	34	100	86.8
History	28	96.4	84.4
Home Economics	40	92.5	89.9
Information Technology	66	72.7	77.1
Mathematics	100	95.0	88.6
Mathematics Further	*	100	96.2
Multimedia (BTEC)	*	60.0	N/A
Music	*	77.8	87.7
Physics	44	88.6	81.9
Politics	*	100	88.4
Psychology	52	80.8	70.0
Religious Studies	23	100	88.8
Spanish	11	100	92.6
Sports Studies	*	100	N/A

* indicates fewer than 10 entries over 3 years

STAYING ON RATE¹⁰ 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	85.3	94.9
% Yr 13 staying on to Yr 14	88.0	92.9

Leavers' Destinations¹¹ 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 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	9727	88		5		6		77			
Employment	445 (4.6%)	5 (5.7%)	4.8%		10.7%		4.1%	5 (6.5%)			
Institute of Further Education	1967 (20.2%)	11 (12.5%)	81.5%	*	76.3%	5 (83.3%)	7.2%	*	*	7	*
Institute of Higher Education ¹²	6870 (70.6%)	67 (76.1%)	*		*		86.0%	67 (87.0%)	0	0	67
Training ¹³	237 (2.4%)	*	9.9%		5.6%		1.1%	*			
Unemployment	104 (1.1%)	0	1.2%		2.6%		1.0%				
Others	104 (1.1%)	4	#	*	#	*	0.7%	*			

Source for NI data: Destination of School Leavers by year group, 2016/17 - GRAMMAR SCHOOLS¹⁴

- *fewer than 5 cases
- # figures suppressed

¹⁰ 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.

¹¹ Destination is defined by Institution. Institutions may provide courses at both Further and Higher Education levels.

¹² Includes universities and teacher training colleges.

¹³ 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.

¹⁴ Excludes special and independent schools.

Inspection methodology and evidence base

The ETI's Inspection and Self-Evaluation Framework publication is available at: <http://tinyurl.com/lSEF-Post-Primary>.

The arrangements for this inspection included: meetings with the principal, meetings with some staff with specific responsibilities, support staff; representatives from the governors and groups of pupils; 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 (ETI)

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 management¹⁵:

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

¹⁵ 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.

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