



*The Education and Training Inspectorate -  
Promoting Improvement*



*Providing Inspection Services for*  
**Department of Education  
Department for Employment and Learning  
Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure**



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

## **Education and Training Inspectorate**

### **Report of a Standard Inspection**

**St Patrick's College  
Dungiven**

**Inspected: April 2008**

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 CONTEXT**

St Patrick's College is situated in Dungiven in County Londonderry. It is a co-educational school catering for pupils aged eleven to 18. Most of the pupils are drawn from the town and its immediate hinterland. The enrolment has declined steadily over the past five years to its present figure of 328. Approximately 27% of the pupils are entitled to free school meals and 20% of the year 8 to year 12 enrolment have been identified by the school as requiring additional support with aspects of their learning. Over the past three years 13% of the intake obtained grades A to C in the Transfer Procedure, while around two-thirds elected not to take the tests. In 2007, almost 80% of the pupils in year 12 who obtained grade C or above in at least five subjects at General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) level have returned to the school to undertake post-16 education.

### **1.2 FOCUS**

The inspection focused on leadership and management at all levels across the school and, in addition, on the provision for English, history and mathematics. The provision for pastoral care and the arrangements for child protection were also evaluated. As an additional evidence base for the inspection, lessons were observed in a range of other subjects and inspectors met with subject leaders and co-ordinators from a range of other aspects of the school's provision.

### **1.3 THE VIEWS OF PARENTS, TEACHERS, GOVERNORS AND PUPILS**

The arrangements for the inspection of pastoral care and child protection included the opportunity for the parents and the teaching staff to complete a confidential questionnaire prior to the inspection, as well as meetings with representatives from the Board of Governors (governors) and groups of the pupils from years 8, 10, 12 and post-16.

One hundred and eleven questionnaires were issued to the parents; 27% were returned to the Department of Education (DE) and five contained additional written comments. The responses from the questionnaires indicated high levels of satisfaction with most aspects of the life and work of the school. In their written comments, the parents commented on how happy and content their children were at school and praised the teaching, citing a few subjects in particular. A small number raised a concern regarding the quality of learning and teaching in mathematics. The Education and Training Inspectorate has reported to the Principal, and representatives of the governors, the views of the parents. The matter of concern which was raised is addressed in Appendix 1 to the report within the mathematics section.

The governors also expressed their strong support for the work of the school. In addition to their endorsement of the positive comments expressed by the parents, they commended the collaboration arrangements with other schools and the Further Education College through the Roe Valley Learning Community initiative. In their view, the school show, which is produced every second year, helps to develop the pupils' confidence and self-esteem and promotes stronger links with the local community. They highlighted the need for stability at senior leadership level given the rapid change of principals and senior managers within recent years. They also expressed concern for aspects of the accommodation.

A majority of the teachers completed a confidential questionnaire, with 12 providing additional written comments. In their written responses, they highlighted the good quality of working relationships throughout the school, the strength of the pastoral care provision for the pupils and the commitment of the Principal to the school. They raised issues concerning the allocation and management of the school's financial budget; in particular, they consider that most subject departments are not resourced adequately for books and other learning and teaching resources. Additionally, they would value the opportunity to incorporate more aspects of information and communication technology (ICT) in their teaching and consider the school to be under-resourced in this area.

During discussions held with the pupils they reported that they felt safe and secure in the school. They indicated that they were aware of what to do if they had a concern about their safety and well-being. The majority of the pupils interviewed commented on the support they receive from the teachers and the friendly atmosphere in the school. A number of those interviewed stated that they would like to have a wider range of extra-curricular and enrichment activities available to them within the school.

#### **1.4 PASTORAL CARE AND CHILD PROTECTION**

The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care and child protection has strengths. The school has procedures in place which implement the guidance outlined in the relevant DE circulars and has identified appropriately a few areas for improvement which it is currently addressing. Among the strengths are the effective implementation of the policies for child protection by the designated teacher and consultation with the parents, staff and pupils during the development of the anti-bullying policy. The school needs to ensure that the newly appointed Vice-principal receives appropriate child protection training before taking on the responsibility of designated teacher and that all the non-teaching staff are fully aware of the school's internal procedures for dealing with child protection issues.

#### **1.5 HEALTH AND WELL-BEING**

The school's programme for the promotion of health and well-being has strengths, which include the provision of a healthy drinks vending machine, a programme for health education and a developing commitment to encourage the pupils to eat healthily. In order to develop the work further, the school needs to appoint a Health Education Co-ordinator, supported by a multi-disciplinary health promoting team. This approach should provide opportunities for the whole-school community to inform and influence policy and practice with regard to healthy eating programmes, including the introduction of monitoring and evaluation processes to benchmark compliance and progress as health initiatives develop.

### **2. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' WORK**

#### **2.1 EXAMINATIONS AND STANDARDS**

Almost all the year 12 pupils are entered for at least five subjects at GCSE level. In 2007, 45% of the year 12 pupils obtained Grade C or above, and 82% obtained Grade E or above in at least five subjects at GCSE level. These results are just above the Northern Ireland average for similar schools. There is, however, undue variation in the standards achieved by the pupils across the subjects at GCSE level. The school needs to use more effectively the data obtained through analysis of pupil performance in internal and external assessments to

review learning and teaching, and to ensure that appropriate intervention strategies are implemented to raise the standards achieved by the pupils in a number of subjects and particularly in mathematics. At post-16, an appropriate range of options is made available to the pupils through the collaborative arrangements made with the other education providers in the Roe Valley Learning Community initiative. In 2007, 100% of the year 14 pupils obtained Grade E or above in three subjects at GCE A level or equivalent. More details about examination results are provided in Appendix 4.

## 2.2 QUALITY OF LEARNING AND TEACHING

The majority of the teaching observed was good or better. In the best practice seen, the teachers used a variety of teaching approaches, they provided appropriately challenging tasks for the pupils including opportunities for the pupils to learn through practical activities and the pupils were able to self-evaluate their learning and that of their peers at the conclusion of lessons. In a minority of lessons where the teaching had significant weaknesses, the expectations held for what the pupils could achieve were too low and the lessons were over-directed by the teacher giving the pupils few opportunities to be fully engaged in the learning. There is a small number of classroom assistants deployed to help individual pupils with their work and they make a valuable contribution to learning and teaching.

The school's capacity to ensure its commitment to those pupils at risk of marginalisation is good. The special educational needs (SEN) and pastoral care arrangements identify students at risk of falling behind or dropping out of school and some action to promote their inclusion is evident. The school gives attention to nurturing these pupils' emotional development, providing a basis for them to learn successfully and feel included. Levels of attendance are average.

The special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) is new to the post. During the inspection there was evidence of the pupils being provided with good levels of individual support from the teachers and the classroom assistants. There is, however, a need to review the SEN provision to ensure that the pupils who require additional learning support have effective education plans that are focused on specific, measurable targets and informed by a clear diagnosis of their learning difficulties.

## 2.3 MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

The Principal has been in post since September 2007. The Vice-principal took up post in February 2008. It would be the hope of all in the school community, as expressed to the inspection team, that there would now be a period of stability in these senior management positions. The Principal shows a high level of commitment and dedication to the school and has a good knowledge of the pupils and the staff. In addition, she knows well the strengths in the school's provision and the aspects which need improvement. The key task now for senior management is to establish processes that will ensure that developments are implemented in a systematic manner which will lead to improvements in the quality of learning and teaching. Importantly, this needs to include developing effective processes for monitoring and evaluating the quality of provision for the pupils and the standards they attain. The current school development plan (SDP) does not comply fully with the requirements of the School Development Plans Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2005. The school needs to review its present plan in light of the inspection findings and use these to inform future developments in a more strategic manner.

### **3. SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS**

#### **3.1 The strengths of the school include:**

- the friendly and co-operative pupils;
- the quality of the teaching observed which was good or better in the majority of instances;
- the commitment and dedication of the Principal and the staff to the pupils;
- the integration of the school within the local community; and
- the sound collaborative links made with other education providers to enhance the provision for the pupils.

#### **3.2 The areas for improvement include:**

- the need to address the variation in the examination results across the subjects, raising the standards in a number;
- the need to review and develop the SEN provision; and
- the need to implement, monitor and evaluate strategically the planned developments to ensure they lead to improvements in learning and teaching.

### **4. CONCLUSION**

4.1 In the areas inspected, the school has strengths in many aspects of its educational and pastoral provision. The inspection has identified a few areas for improvement in important areas which need to be addressed to meet effectively the needs of all the learners.

4.2 The Education and Training Inspectorate will monitor and report on the school's progress in addressing these areas for improvement.

### **SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS FROM THE AREAS UNDER FOCUS**

#### **Pastoral care**

The strengths of the work include:

- the friendly pupils who identify strongly with the school;
- the policies and structures for child protection which are implemented effectively by the designated teacher;
- the consultation with the parents, staff and pupils to inform policy development;
- the detailed monitoring and intervention in individual pupil attendance; and
- the whole-school focus on the welfare of the pupils.

The areas for improvement include the need to:

- develop further the ways in which the pupils' views are considered with regard to pastoral matters;
- monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the pastoral care policies across the school; and
- review and update the training for staff in child protection.

#### **English**

The strengths of the work include:

- the generally good and supportive working relationships in classes and the engagement and co-operation of the pupils;
- the good standards of oral communication;
- the overall sound quality of the teaching;
- the stimulating, language rich environment of the majority of the English classrooms; and
- the good experiences, particularly in literature, for the year 8 pupils which have developed and supported their learning across the ability range and the involvement of library staff in the process.

The areas for improvement include:

- the need to review the departmental planning to ensure that the full range of the pupils' needs are being met and that appropriate progression and levels of challenge are being provided;
- the need to monitor and evaluate the support and development for the non-specialist staff; and
- the need for more rigorous monitoring and self-evaluation processes across the department.

## **History**

The strengths of the work include:

- the good working relationships between the teachers and the pupils;
- the good quality of the teaching observed;
- the use of local contexts, contemporary issues and educational visits to make history real and relevant for the pupils; and
- the high standards achieved by the pupils in GCSE examinations.

The areas for improvement include:

- the need to develop further the monitoring and evaluation of the provision in history; and
- the need to improve the quality of marking for improvement across all the year groups.

## **Mathematics**

The strengths of the work include:

- the generally good working relationships in classes and the co-operative pupils;
- the stimulating and supportive mathematical environment in the classrooms;
- the quality of teaching which was sound and, on occasions, good; and
- the good experiences developed for the year 8 pupils which have stimulated their learning across the ability range.



The areas for improvement include:

- the need to raise the standards achieved by the pupils both in their general classwork and homework and also at GCSE level;
- the need to extend the good development in year 8 to provide, consistently across the school, a more varied mathematical experience which builds on the pupils' interests and provides appropriate progression and challenge in their work; and
- the need for more rigorous monitoring and evaluation of the quality of teaching and the standards achieved by the pupils.

### **ACCOMMODATION AND RESOURCES**

- The physical education changing facilities for boys and girls are inadequate.
- The accommodation provision for the post-16 pupils is inadequate.
- The computer suite facilities for ICT are inadequate.
- The school does not have technicians to support the work in art and design and home economics.

### **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

- Metal housing for disused audio tape decks mounted on the wall at eye level in room 6 present a health and safety hazard for the pupils.

## STATISTICAL INFORMATION

- 1.1 i. School: St Patrick's College, Dungiven v. Date of Inspection: W/C 7 April 2008  
 ii. School Reference Number: 223-0144 vi. Standard Inspection  
 iii. Age Range: 11-18  
 iv. Status: Roman Catholic Maintained

1.2 Intake/Enrolment

School Year	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08
Year 8 Intake	62	59	53	57	66
Total enrolment	376	356	342	332	328

1.3 Attendance

Year 2006/07	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	Average 2006/07	NI Average 2005/06
% Attendance	94.3	92.6	93.7	89.9	91.7	85.6	91.2	92	90

- 1.4 i. Total Number of Teachers:

25.2

- iii. Contact ratio (percentage of
- 
- timetabled time in direct
- 
- class contact):

0.725

- ii. PTR (Pupil/Teacher Ratio):

13.016

Year 2007/08	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	TOTAL
Enrolment: Boys	43	30	28	37	33	7	0	178
Enrolment: Girls	23	26	26	26	26	19	4	150
Enrolment: Total	66	56	54	63	59	26	4	328
PTR	14.126	12.457	12.403	12.36	12.439	15.963	4.52	

- 1.5
- Staying On Rate (2006/07)
- (Current year 13/14 as proportion of year 12 from 1/2 years previously)

Year 13	31.7	NI Av Year 13	35.3
Year 14	9.1	NI Av Year 14	25.2

1.6 Leavers Destinations

2005/06	Year 12	NI%	Year 13/14	NI%
Total Number of Leavers	58		5	
Another School	9%	8.3	0%	1.6
Employment	3%	12	0%	18.5
Full-time Further Education	31%	37.6	0%	20.8
Full-time Higher Education	0%	N/A	100%	44.9
Full-time Training	33%	34.4	0%	6
Seeking Employment/Unemployed	24%	4.2	0%	4.8
Unknown/Long Term Sick/Pregnant	0%	3.5	0%	3.3

1.7 NAME OF SCHOOL: St Patrick's College, Dungiven SCHOOL YEAR: 2006/2007

<b>GCSE</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>
<b>Percentage of Year 12 taking GCSE in at least 5 subjects</b>	100	98	98.7
<b>Percentage of Year 12 obtaining Grades C or above in at least 5 subjects</b>	43	34	45
<b>Percentage of Year 12 obtaining Grades E or above in at least 5 subjects</b>	79	69	82
<b>GCE A Level or equivalent</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>
<b>Percentage of Year 14 obtaining Grades C or above in at least 3 A levels</b>	60	0	43
<b>Percentage of Year 14 obtaining Grades E or above in at least 3 A levels</b>	100	0	100

## EXAMINATION RESULTS

*Table showing the GCSE and General Certificate of Education (GCE) Advanced (A) level subject results over the previous three years ending in June 2007, in comparison with the respective Northern Ireland (NI) averages*

Table 1

	More than 10 percentage points above	Between 5 and 10 percentage points above	Within 5 percentage points	Between 5 and 10 percentage points below	More than 10 percentage points below
GCSE A*-E	Engineering (Double Award) Religious Studies	History Information Technology Music	Art and Design Design and Technology: Resistant Materials English Literature Home Economics Home Economics – Child Development Irish Science 1 <sup>st</sup> Subject (Double Award) Science (Single Award)	Business Studies English Learning for Life and Work Statistics	French Geography GNVQ Performing Arts Mathematics
GCE A level A-E	Applied Information & Communication Technology <sup>^</sup>		Business - (Double Award) <sup>^</sup> English Literature <sup>^</sup> Applied Health and Social Care (Double Award) <sup>^</sup> History <sup>^</sup>		

<sup>^</sup> Denotes subjects which had a total entry of less than 20 over three years.

*Table showing the spread of the NI subject averages which have been used in the determination of Table 1.*

**Table 2**

	<b>100% - 96%</b>	<b>95% - 86%</b>	<b>85% - 76%</b>	<b>75% - 66%</b>	<b>65% - 0%</b>
GCSE A*-E	English Literature Science 1 <sup>st</sup> Subject (Double Award )	Art and Design English History Home Economics Home Economics - Child Development Information Technology Irish Music Statistics	Business Studies Engineering (Double Award) French Geography GNVQ Performing Arts Learning for Life and Work Mathematics Religious Studies Science (Single Award )	Design and Technology: Resistant Materials	
GCE A level A-E	Applied Health and Social Care (Double Award) Business - (Double Award) English Literature History				Applied Information & Communication Technology

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