

KEY MESSAGES

from the

Chief Inspector's Report 2010 - 2012



*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



Pre-school settings

Going Well

The strengths include:

- ◇ most children experience a good or better pre-school education;
- ◇ the overall effectiveness of the voluntary and private sector continues to improve;
- ◇ achievements and standards are good or better in 80% of the pre-school settings inspected;
- ◇ in the good to outstanding settings, staff communicate well with a range of other organisations to support the learning and care of the children and to disseminate better practice; and
- ◇ in the best practice, settings involve parents well in their children's learning and development.

Going Forward

There is a need to:

- ◇ further develop the continuity and progression of children's learning across all stages;
- ◇ continue to develop staff skills to provide a high quality pre-school programme; and
- ◇ improve the quality of leadership and management in 30% of the settings inspected.

Primary education

Going Well

The strengths include:

- ◇ the overall effectiveness is good or better in 78% of the primary schools evaluated;
- ◇ by the time children leave primary school, 82% have achieved the expected level in English and 83% in mathematics;
- ◇ there is an improving trend in children's thinking skills and personal capabilities;
- ◇ the quality of learning and teaching was evaluated as good or better in 82% of the lessons observed; and
- ◇ the quality of leadership and management at all levels has improved and it is now good or better in 78% of the schools inspected, compared with 68% in the last reporting period.

Going Forward

There is a need to:

- ◇ further raise standards in literacy and numeracy for almost one in five children;
- ◇ improve around 18% of learning and teaching that is satisfactory or below: key areas involve developing adequately children's reading and writing skills and their mathematical understanding; and
- ◇ increase the quality of leadership and management in 22% of the schools inspected, where there is a need for a relentless pursuit of high standards and achievements for all children through highly effective learning and teaching and high levels of teacher expectation.

Post-primary education

Going Well

The strengths include:

- ◇ the overall effectiveness in almost two out of three of the post-primary schools, which had standard inspections during the reporting period, was evaluated as good or better;
- ◇ achievements and standards were evaluated as good or better in 68% of the schools inspected;
- ◇ the achievements of school leavers gaining five GCSEs A* - C (including equivalents) has increased steadily to 73.2%, while 64.5% of pupils entered for A level (or equivalent) examinations achieved grades A* - C in three subjects;
- ◇ schools are generally effective at supporting the personal and social development of young people; pastoral care was found to be good or better in most schools; and
- ◇ CEIAG provision has improved, from a low base, to good or better in 68% of schools inspected.

Going Forward

There is a need to:

- ◇ improve outcomes for all pupils at GCSE in English and mathematics given that only 59% of school leavers attain at least five GCSEs at grades A*- C, and equivalents including English and mathematics, and particularly for those entitled to free school meals, where less than one in three reach this standard;
- ◇ ensure a greater emphasis on the effective monitoring and evaluation of the quality of provision, where actions to promote improvement were not good enough in nearly 50% of all schools inspected; and
- ◇ improve the quality of leadership and management in around 39% of schools inspected.

Special educational needs and inclusion

Going Well

The strengths include:

- ◇ achievements and standards in special schools have improved and school leavers are achieving good or better levels of accreditation;
- ◇ in the best practice teachers are using pupil learning profiles effectively to plan more individual learning approaches;
- ◇ the profile of, and the priority given to, SEN have improved in mainstream schools;
- ◇ post-primary schools are developing a greater capacity to cope with pupils who have challenging behaviours; and
- ◇ the links between AEP and mainstream schools have improved and are improving the outcomes for pupils.

Going Forward

There is a need to:

- ◇ reduce the growing pupil numbers on SEN registers and those with statements in mainstream schools;
- ◇ reduce the dependency on external support, particularly in primary schools, through improving the capacity of staff to meet the identified needs earlier and more effectively; and
- ◇ raise further the achievements and standards in EOTAS provision as well as improving the quality of accommodation, security and resources for a majority of the pupils.

Youth

Going Well

The strengths include:

- ◇ the improvements in youth provision, where overall effectiveness was evaluated as good or better in almost 75% of provision during this reporting period;
- ◇ the improvement evidenced at the follow-up inspections, in which four out of six organisations inspected, improved by more than one performance level;
- ◇ the quality of the achievements and standards of the young people which were good or better in 84% of the organisations inspected;
- ◇ the development of effective participative structures for young people; and
- ◇ the significant added value to the youth sector that volunteers continue to provide.

Going Forward

There is a need to:

- ◇ to embed further the use of self-evaluation to promote improvement;
- ◇ to develop further the partnerships between the youth sector and formal education to ensure that provision is planned for, and managed, more strategically; and
- ◇ to address the shortcomings in the continuous professional development for full-time youth workers; in particular additional support is required for those at the start of their career and for those whose practice is less than good.

Further education

Going Well

The strengths include:

- ◇ the consolidation and further development of the six regional colleges, where the overall effectiveness of 80% of the provision inspected was good or better;
- ◇ overall success rates across the further education sector have increased from 61% in 2009-10 to 70% in 2010-11, while average retention rates remained steady at around 88%;
- ◇ the quality of learning and teaching in most of the lessons observed was good or better (81%), with a significant minority (44%), very good or outstanding;
- ◇ the significant investment in the further education infrastructure leaves the colleges well placed to lead on the delivery of a high quality, flexible and economically relevant curriculum; and
- ◇ through a wide range of outreach and mainstream adult provision, the colleges provide communities with good access to education and training opportunities at a range of levels.

Going Forward

There is a need to:

- ◇ increase the use of existing local labour market intelligence to expand the sometimes narrow work-based learning curriculum and, in particular, to expand the uptake and scope of the ApprenticeshipsNI provision in certain key geographical areas;
- ◇ improve the achievements and standards for a minority of the students which are not good enough; and
- ◇ improve essential skills provision, where important weaknesses were identified in the quality of the provision for essential skills in two of the colleges.

Work-based learning

Going Well

The strengths include:

- ◇ the improvements evidenced in the sector, where the overall effectiveness is now good or better in 73% of the organisations inspected;
- ◇ the ApprenticeshipsNI provision which with few exceptions was very good or better in organisations specialising in employer-led programmes such as aircraft fitting and electrical and electronic engineering;
- ◇ the good or better training, where just over three-quarters of the directed and workplace training sessions observed were evaluated as good or better;
- ◇ the significant improvement in the quality of the provision for the essential skills of literacy and numeracy; and
- ◇ the effective, innovative and outward-looking leadership that characterises the best organisations.

Going Forward

There is a need to:

- ◇ improve the quality of provision in just over one-quarter of the organisations inspected;
- ◇ improve retention rates, which although good overall are much too variable across the provision; and
- ◇ increase the use of ILT to enhance learning; it still remains under-exploited.

Adult employment programmes (Steps to Work)

Going Well

The strengths include:

- ◇ the overall effectiveness of the Steps to Work programme which is good or better in eight of the ten lead contractors, and satisfactory in the remaining two;
- ◇ based on the DEL data, approximately 60% of the lead contractors are meeting the DEL's current target for participants attaining sustained employment;
- ◇ the marked improvement in the quality of support provided by most lead contractors to enhance the work-readiness and employability skills of the participants;
- ◇ the good progress made by most of the participants in developing their motivation for work, confidence and self-esteem to enable them to improve their transferable and personal skills; and
- ◇ the innovative strategies used to improve the quantity and quality of work experience placements that are likely to lead to employment, which are most prevalent where leadership and management are very good or outstanding.

Going Forward

There is a need to:

- ◇ continue the upward trend and promote improvements in the significant minority of lead contractors that have not met the DEL's current target for the programme;
- ◇ develop the self-evaluation arrangements and quality improvement planning in a minority of the lead contractors; and
- ◇ support more lead contractors to implement innovative strategies to increase the quantity and quality of work experience placements that are likely to lead to employment.

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