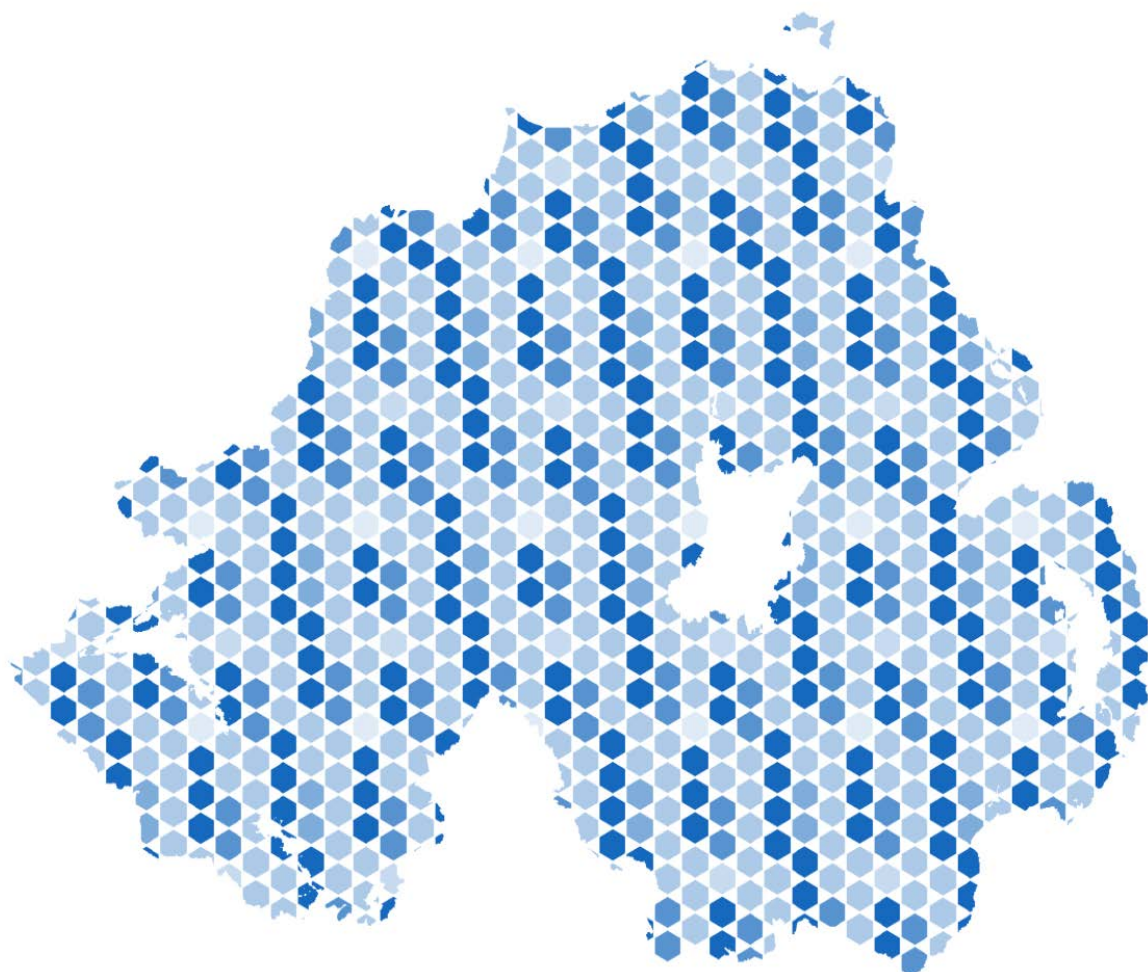


Education and Training Inspectorate

SPECIAL INSPECTION



Longstone School, Dundonald, Belfast

Special, controlled, co-educational DE Ref No (431-6273)

Report of a Sustaining Improvement Inspection 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

CUSTOMER
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EXCELLENCE



Sustaining Improvement Inspection of Longstone School, Dundonald, Belfast (431-6273)

Introduction

The previous inspection in June 2016 evaluated the overall effectiveness of Longstone School as good¹. In the interim, the leadership team has been revised to include six new co-ordinators, the pupil enrolment has increased by a third, a dual day nursery has been established and the school has achieved a silver award for developing the pupils' awareness and understanding of rights. The school participates in a shared partnership programme with a local primary and special school. A sustaining improvement inspection (SII) was conducted on the 25 and 26 March 2019.

Focus of the inspection

The inspection focused on evaluating the extent to which the school is capable of demonstrating its capacity to effect improvement through self-evaluation and effective school development planning. The school also provided evidence of provision for safeguarding as part of the inspection.

The areas of focus during the SII were to:

- develop a progressive and coherent system for planning and assessment throughout the school; and
- for the teachers to regularly evaluate learning in their classes to inform their lesson planning.

Key findings

- Co-ordinators have received training which has supported them in writing appropriate action plans and they have begun to provide progress updates to governors. While there is evidence of effective implementation of the plans across the school, the leadership has appropriately identified the need to refine the number of strategic actions. There is a developing system to monitor the quality of assessment and teacher planning, which includes the co-ordinators monitoring and reviewing the pupil progress files, individual education plans (IEPs), termly planners and providing feedback to teachers on areas for development. Their work is also reviewed by the senior leadership team to support the development of middle leaders and ensure that areas identified are addressed across the departments. Baseline assessments have been introduced to inform the progress of the pupils and the delivery of the curriculum with additional entry level qualifications in place to meet the needs of all the pupils. Record of achievement files, reading assessments and a whole school focus on numeracy are appropriately informing the planning and assessment systems. The leadership team have identified the need to integrate further thinking skills and personal capabilities, and differentiation into the planning.

¹ From September 2015, the overall effectiveness of a school previously evaluated as good has been reported as a school demonstrating capacity for sustained improvement

- The IEPs have been revised and now include the pupil's strengths and more focused pupil targets. A system for monitoring the IEPs with pupils has been established with weekly pupil review meetings to support them in evaluating their progress and inform the next stage of learning and teaching. Learning intentions and success criteria are shared with the pupils and reviewed to demonstrate understanding and learning. The planning and evaluations for the nursery and the foundation stage are informed by regular observations of the children's learning. The teachers work collaboratively and effectively to plan a seamless transition for the children from the nursery into year one. Across the school, the teachers have implemented a consistent format for behaviour plans and pupil profiles and this is used to guide their planning and teaching.

Safeguarding

During the inspection, the school provided evidence that arrangements for safeguarding continue to reflect² the guidance issued by the relevant Departments.

Conclusion

Longstone School continues to demonstrate capacity for sustained improvement in the interest of all the learners. The ETI will continue to monitor how the school sustains improvement.

² From January 2017, arrangements previously evaluated as comprehensive are reported as **reflect** the guidance.

Health and Safety

The school is making arrangements to fulfil the requirements of the Department of Education guidance circular 2007/ 22 annex A in relation to the qualifications for staff teaching Technology and Design in Northern Ireland.

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