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*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**



Education and Training Inspectorate

Report of a Follow-up Inspection

**Dundonald High School
Belfast**

October 2012

THIRD FOLLOW-UP TO THE INSPECTION OF DUNDONALD HIGH SCHOOL, BELFAST, BT16 1TH (421-0262)

In March 2007 a standard inspection of Dundonald High School identified the need for improvement in leadership and management, including school development planning, and in standards in public examinations. A follow-up inspection (FUI) in March 2009 confirmed that the areas for improvement previously identified remained valid, standards were inadequate and attendance needed to improve. The school entered the formal intervention process on 3 December 2009.

A second FUI in June 2010 noted significant improvements in examination standards and in attendance and reported that the quality of education provided was satisfactory. The areas for improvement remained the need to make better use of the analysis of quantitative data to inform classroom practice and to continue to improve standards, which remained below those in similar schools. The school exited the formal intervention process on 10 September 2010.

A third FUI took place on 24 and 25 October 2012.

The most important changes that have taken place since June 2010 include adjustments in staffing at senior level, including the retirement of the Principal and vice-principal. The Vice-principal responsible for pastoral care is acting as Principal and has been instrumental in leading a whole school evaluation of learning and teaching at Key Stage (KS) 3 with a view to improving standards.

The most important improvements since June 2010 are:

- the percentage of pupils gaining level 5 or above in KS3 mathematics has increased from 44.3% to 53.9%, which is above the NI average for similar schools;
- the percentage gaining level 5 or above in KS3 English has increased from 20.1% to 42.0%, while remaining well below the NI average for similar schools;
- the percentage obtaining grades A*-G at General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) in at least five subjects has increased from 87.8% to 95.0% which is in line with the NI average for similar schools; and
- the support provided for the pupils in the Moderate Learning Difficulties unit continues to be a strength.

At the same time, the enrolment has decreased, over the past four years, from 302 in 2009 to 264 and the overall attendance of the pupils has decreased from 88% to 85%, which is well below the NI average.

The percentage of pupils obtaining grades A*-C at GCSE in at least five subjects has fluctuated significantly from 29.27% in 2010, down to 10.64% in 2011 and back up to 20.0% in 2012, which is well below the NI average for similar schools. When English and mathematics are included, the percentage of pupils obtaining grades A*-C at GCSE has also fluctuated significantly from 14.6% in 2010, down to 2.1% in 2011 and back up to 15% in 2012, which is almost 5% below the NI average for similar schools. Almost three out of four GCSE subjects at A*-C are more than 10% below the corresponding three year average.

Overall, the quality of education provided by the school is inadequate; the significant areas for improvement outweigh the strengths in the provision.

The school is unable to demonstrate evidence of sustained improvement in the outcomes for pupils at KS4; there are significant areas for improvement in learning and teaching and in leadership and management which need to be addressed urgently if the needs of all the pupils are to be met effectively.

The areas for improvement are the need:

- to raise standards across the school, including performance in public examinations which remain well below the NI average for similar schools;
- to bring stability to the changing leadership and management arrangements; and
- to continue to make use of the quantitative data to identify underachievement and provide effective intervention.

The Education and Training Inspectorate will carry out a further follow-up inspection within 12 months and a report will be published.

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