

eti

*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

**Dunmurry High School
Belfast**

January/February 2011

FOLLOW-UP TO THE STANDARD INSPECTION OF DUNMURRY HIGH SCHOOL, BELFAST, BT17 9DS (421-0194)

The standard inspection of Dunmurry High School in February 2009 highlighted the following strengths: the caring and supportive ethos; the hard-working and committed teachers, well supported by classroom assistants; the quality of the teaching in the majority of the lessons observed; the provision of nurture classes to support pupils; the commitment and leadership of the Principal to promote improvement; and the Extended Schools Programme and links with external agencies.

The inspection identified the need for improvement in the following key areas:

- the need to improve standards in public examinations;
- the need for management at all levels to use more effectively the analysis of pupil performance data to review learning and teaching, and to identify and implement appropriate intervention strategies and individual education plans (IEP) to raise the standards achieved by the pupils across the curriculum; and
- the wider dissemination of effective learning and teaching strategies, including the use of information and communication technology resources, to engage actively, motivate and challenge the pupils.

The Education and Training Inspectorate (Inspectorate) carried out two monitoring visits; and a follow-up inspection, which took place over two days the 31 January and 8 February 2011, respectively.

The action plan produced by the school in response to the inspection findings of February 2009 was of a satisfactory quality and the school's development plan meets the requirements of the School Development Plans Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2005.

In the interval since the inspection, the following are the most important changes which have affected the work of the school:

- the external appointment of a new Principal in September 2009;
- reductions in staffing and the internal promotion of three new heads of department;
- the use of data by the Principal and senior leadership team (SLT) to identify the areas of underachievement and the work of the Vice-principal to develop a culture of self-evaluation throughout the school;
- the establishment of eight working groups to take responsibility for aspects of improvement, including the dissemination of good practice across the school;
- the introduction of mentoring for year 12 pupils and the Prince's Trust xl Club for pupils in the nurture group;
- the introduction of new skills' courses and additional curriculum options at key stage (KS) 4;
- the revision of IEPs monitored by the special educational needs co-ordinator;
- the implementation of additional measures to address the poor attendance; and
- the support provided by the curriculum advisory and support services of the South-Eastern Education and Library Board.

However, the school is unable to demonstrate evidence of sustained improvement; the outcomes for pupils at KS4 are unsatisfactory and 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 improve the pupils' attendance, which decreased from 84% to 82 % in the interval since the inspection and is nine percentage points below the NI average;
- to ensure the consistent implementation of agreed policies, procedures and practice to promote positive behaviour from the pupils, and enable effective learning and teaching and assessment to take place;
- to raise the standards achieved in public examinations which have decreased:
 - from 76% to 56% of the pupils in year 12 entered for five or more subjects at General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) level;
 - from 27% to 13% of the pupils obtaining grades A* to C in five or more subjects at GCSE level, which is more than 40 percentage points below the NI average; and
 - from 17% to 4% of the pupils obtaining grades A* to C in five or more subjects including English and mathematics, which is almost 30 percentage points below the Northern Ireland average;
- to improve the quality of leadership throughout the school, and to review and re-define the roles and leadership responsibilities of all members of the SLT in light of the current needs of the school; and
- for the SLT and all teachers to ensure that the outcomes from whole school monitoring, action planning and target-setting, improve classroom practice and lead to significant and sustained improvement in the quality of the pupils' work across the whole range of abilities.

In most of the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by this school is inadequate; the areas for improvement significantly outweigh the strengths in the provision. The follow-up inspection has confirmed the major areas for improvement in standards, learning and teaching, leadership and management, which need to be addressed urgently if the school is to meet effectively the needs of all of the pupils.

Furthermore, in light of the decrease in enrolment from 317 to 265 pupils it will be important that the employing authority, governors and the staff plan for, and manage, issues related to the sustainability of the school provision and school budget, in order to address the current and future needs of the pupils and the staff.

The Inspectorate will monitor and report on the school's progress in addressing the areas for improvement, over a 12-18 month period.

© CROWN COPYRIGHT 2011

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part, except for commercial purposes or in connection with a prospectus or advertisement, provided that the source and date thereof are stated.

Copies of this report are available on the ETI website:
www.etini.gov.uk

