



*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**

**Newtownbreda High School  
Belfast**

**September 2011**

## **FOLLOW-UP TO THE STANDARD INSPECTION OF NEWTOWNBRED A HIGH SCHOOL, BELFAST, BT8 6PY (421-0183)**

The original standard inspection of Newtownbreda High School took place in November 2006. The inspection identified the need for improvement in a number of key areas, including in the standards achieved in public examinations.

The Education and Training Inspectorate (Inspectorate) carried out a follow-up inspection (FUI) in March 2009 and noted a slight increase in the percentage of pupils gaining:

- grades A\*-C in five or more subjects at General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) (from 35% to 36%), and
- grades A\*-C in five or more subjects, including English and mathematics (from 16% to 18%).

As the standards achieved were still well below the Northern Ireland average for similar non-selective schools the need to further improve standards at key stage (KS) 4 was identified as a key area for improvement.

The Inspectorate carried out a second FUI on the 4 and 5 of November 2010. It was noted that there had been a slight increase in the number of pupils requiring additional support with their learning and also in the number with English as an additional language.

Satisfactory progress had been made in some of the areas for improvement including a further slight increase in the percentage of pupils gaining grades A\*-C in five or more subjects at GCSE including English and mathematics (from 18% to 20%).

However, the percentage of pupils gaining grades A\*-C in five or more subjects at GCSE had not improved and remained inadequate.

The second FUI reported the following areas for improvement:

- the need for improvement in the standards including, in particular, those achieved at KS4; and
- the need for management at all levels to ensure that the outcomes from the recent whole school tracking system impact effectively on classroom practice and lead to significant and sustained improvement.

A third FUI was carried out by the Inspectorate on 22-23 September 2011.

The action plan produced by the school in response to the FUI findings in November 2010 was of a satisfactory quality and the school's development plan has been adjusted in light of the earlier inspection findings. The development plan meets the statutory requirements as set out by the Department of Education.

The changes which have taken place since the previous FUI include:

- as a result of Literacy Support intervention, a decrease in the percentage of pupils on the special educational needs register;
- a continuing slight improvement in attendance;

- a comprehensive implementation by all subject departments of a more rigorous system for tracking individual pupil performance;
- the monitoring by the Principal and senior management team (SMT) of the pupil tracking system;
- the implementation of an effective mentoring system to support their study, as reported by a selection of the pupils; and
- a dissemination across the whole school of effective classroom practice in order to help improve standards.

Improvements were noted, when compared with the NI average for similar non-selective schools, in:

- the percentage of pupils gaining GCSE grades A\*-C in five or more subjects (from 36% to 42%) which is in line with the school's internal and external evaluations, but remaining well below the average;
- the percentage of pupils gaining GCSE grades A\*-C in mathematics and in English;
- the percentage gaining A\*-D in five or more subjects (from 52% to 69%); and
- the percentage gaining Level 5 or above in KS3 in both English and mathematics.

## **CONCLUSION**

Satisfactory progress has been made in the some of the areas for improvement identified during the original inspection; however significant areas for improvement in standards, in teaching and in leadership and management remain to be addressed if the needs of all the learners are to be met effectively.

These are:

- the need to further improve standards including, in particular, those achieved at KS4; and
- the need for the SMT and Heads of Department to use the results from the tracking system, the mentoring programme and the work on dissemination of good practice to provide constructive and evaluative feedback to all staff on the effectiveness of the intervention strategies in raising standards.

The Inspectorate will continue to monitor and report on the school's progress in addressing the remaining areas for improvement.

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