



*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

**St Colman's High and Sixth Form College
Ballynahinch**

May 2013

FOLLOW-UP TO THE STANDARD INSPECTION OF ST COLMAN'S HIGH AND SIXTH FORM COLLEGE, BALLYNAHINCH, CO DOWN, BT24 8XR (423-0161)

The standard inspection of St Colman's High School, Ballynahinch, in May 2011, evaluated the school's provision as satisfactory and highlighted strengths that included pastoral care, teaching the provision for pupils with special educational needs and, the promotion of the school in the community.

The inspection identified the need for improvement in leadership for school improvement and in raising the standards being achieved by pupils in examinations.

In the interval since the inspection, the school has set up a quality assurance team, shared, with an adjoining school, instances of good teaching practice and implemented new approaches to school improvement.

The Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) conducted a follow-up inspection on 8 May 2013.

Very good quality action plans and self-evaluative reports produced in response to the inspection findings led, with support from South-eastern Education and Library Board advisory service, to an appropriate adjustment of the school development plan which meets the statutory requirements as set out by the Department of Education.

The following are the most important improvements since the standard inspection:

- the analysis and use of a wide range of quantitative and benchmarked information to inform the teachers' planning and target-setting, with an effective focus on raising standards;
- the significant improvement in standards over the last two years, with 72% of pupils attaining at least five grades A*-C in GCSE¹ & equivalent examinations; and 45% of pupils attaining at least five grades A*-C in GCSE subjects, including English and Mathematics; these outcomes are above the average for similar non-selective schools;
- the sustained good performance at GCE A² level, with 100% of the pupils attaining at least two A levels at grades A* to E in two of the last three years; and an overall improvement in the percentage of pupils attaining three grades A* to C over the last two years;
- the majority of pupils in years 13 and 14 take applied courses and achieve well in these courses;
- the quality of the provision for home economics and music, which has improved from satisfactory at the time of the original inspection to good;
- the quality of the provision for careers education, information and guidance, which has improved from satisfactory at the time of the original inspection to very good; and

¹ General Certificate of Secondary Education

² General Certificate of Education Advanced

- the effective work of the quality assurance team in sharing across the departments a wide range of learning and teaching strategies which are engaging and motivating the pupils.

The follow-up inspection identified the need to improve further the standards attained by the pupils at grades A*-C at A level.

In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by this school is now very good. The school is meeting very effectively the educational and pastoral needs of the learners; and has demonstrated its capacity for sustained self-improvement.

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