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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**

**St Patrick's College  
Banbridge**

**March 2013**

## **FOLLOW-UP TO THE INSPECTION OF ST PATRICK'S COLLEGE, BANBRIDGE, CO DOWN, BT32 3AS (523-0076)**

The standard inspection in January 2011 highlighted strengths in the working relationships between the staff and the pupils and the quality of teaching and learning. The inspection identified the need for improvement by reversing the recent decline in the standards attained by the pupils and developing the cohesion of the senior leadership team in order to strengthen the strategic leadership and management of the school.

In the interval since the inspection, the following actions, which affect the work of the school, have taken place:

- appointing a new acting principal, a permanent vice-principal, creating a new senior leadership team and clarifying the roles and responsibilities of key staff;
- addressing the school's budget deficit, which included reducing the numbers of teachers employed in the school and ceasing post-16 provision from 2013;
- taking decisive action, through the Board of Governors, on the improvement process;
- providing extensive, well-considered and appropriately-targeted support from the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools and the Curriculum Advisory and Support Service of the Southern Education and Library Board;
- reviewing communication across the school and the quality of relationships between staff at all levels; and
- refurbishing and improving aspects of the school's estate and investing in information and communication resources and equipment.

The Education and Training Inspectorate carried out two monitoring visits in January and December 2012 and a follow up inspection on 5 and 6 March 2013.

Following a rigorous review of the original post-inspection action plan, the acting principal produced a well-balanced plan which identified appropriate actions to address the areas for improvement identified in the original inspection report.

While the attainment of the pupils is below the average for similar schools, within a short timescale and from a very low baseline, the most important improvements since the original inspection are the:

- quality of the teaching, most of which was good or better;
- significant improvement in staff morale, collegial working and effective communication across the school, in particular between the staff and the senior leadership team, between the school and the parents, and with the pupils, for example, through consultation with the pupils on aspects of the school's provision;
- establishment of a robust system of monitoring and evaluation which focuses appropriately on the quality of teaching and learning, including the effective use of data to address pupil underachievement and raise standards of attainment; and

- improved links with the local and wider community and the good start made to enhancing the reputation of the school.

## CONCLUSION

In most of the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by this school remains satisfactory; the key strengths outweigh areas for improvement in the provision.

The school has demonstrated good evidence of improvement in important aspects of leadership and management but improvements in standards, in particular, the attainments of the pupils in public examinations, remain to be addressed if the needs of all the learners are to be met effectively.

The Education and Training Inspectorate will monitor and report on the school's progress in addressing the remaining area for improvement over the next 12-18 months.

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