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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 Paul's Junior High School
Lurgan**

December 2010

FOLLOW-UP TO THE STANDARD INSPECTION OF ST PAUL'S JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL, LURGAN, CO ARMAGH, BT66 6DL (523-0088)

The standard inspection in September 2008 highlighted strengths in the learning environment, the courteous pupils, the very good or better teaching in one-fifth of the lessons, the good use of information and communication technology (ICT) in the majority of lessons, the strong focus on the special educational needs (SEN) provision and the improvement brought about by the leadership of the Principal. The inspection identified the following key areas for improvement:

- to review the pastoral care provision in order to promote a more integrated and consistent approach to the pastoral and academic needs of the pupils; and
- to raise the standards achieved by the pupils through the dissemination of the good practice in the school and more rigorous monitoring and evaluation of learning and teaching.

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

- four new members of staff and two new members of the senior management team were appointed;
- the refurbishment of an ICT suite and the accommodation for the home economics suite is in operation;
- the school introduced six new qualifications (Business and Technology Education Council Level 2 double award in travel and tourism, General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) hospitality and media studies, Certificate of Personal Effectiveness, Essential Skills in communication at Level 2 for pupils at key stage (KS) 4 and Junior English Test and Senior English Test for newcomer pupils);
- the discipline and pastoral working parties were merged to form the pastoral care team;
- the increase in pupils with statements for SEN from 34 to 44;
- the establishment of a learning support team;
- all classroom assistants were trained in providing support for reading through partnerships;
- staff development took place on positive behaviour, emotional literacy, counselling and mentoring, the effective use of data and target-setting, writing across the curriculum, the use of the virtual learning environment, and the role of the middle managers in monitoring and evaluating learning and teaching;
- a mentoring programme was introduced to provide support for those pupils who are at risk of underachieving;
- the hard work and commitment of the staff focused better on embedding a culture of self-evaluation at all levels; and
- the dissemination of good practice by staff through professional sharing sessions.

The Education and Training Inspectorate (Inspectorate) carried out two monitoring visits, and a follow-up inspection in December 2010.

The Board of Governors responded positively to the original inspection report, identifying action plans to address the areas for improvement which were of a good quality.

The school's development plan has also been adjusted in light of the inspection findings. The development plan meets the statutory requirements for School Development Planning (2005) as set out by the Department of Education.

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

- the increase in the percentage of pupils achieving grades A* to C in five or more subjects at GCSE from 31.8% to 37.8%; the significant increase in the percentage of pupils gaining grades A* to E in five or more subjects at GCSE from 66.7% to 80.0%; and the increase in the percentage of pupils gaining grades A* to G in five or more subjects at GCSE from 79.1% to 93.3% which is above the Northern Ireland average for non-selective schools;
- the very good quality of the provision for mathematics;
- the quality of the teaching ranged from satisfactory to outstanding; in the majority of the lessons observed during the follow-up inspection process, it was good or better and very good or better in half of the lessons;
- the effective analysis of data to identify underachievement through baseline assessments and the setting of targets for individual pupils in order to help to raise standards in the pupils' attainment;
- the good opportunities for appropriate staff development; and
- the systematic monitoring and evaluation of learning and teaching by middle managers.

The remaining areas for improvement include:

- the need to raise urgently the inadequate standards pupils achieve in at least five subjects at grades A* to C at GCSE including English and mathematics;
- to broaden the curriculum provision at KS4 further through increased collaboration; and
- to ensure that the strategies in place for promoting positive behaviour are applied consistently at all levels.

CONCLUSION

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

The school has demonstrated evidence of improvement but significant areas for improvement in both standards and in provision at KS4 remain to be addressed, if the needs of all the learners are to be met effectively.

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

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 at KS4, in order to address the current and future needs of the pupils and the staff.

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