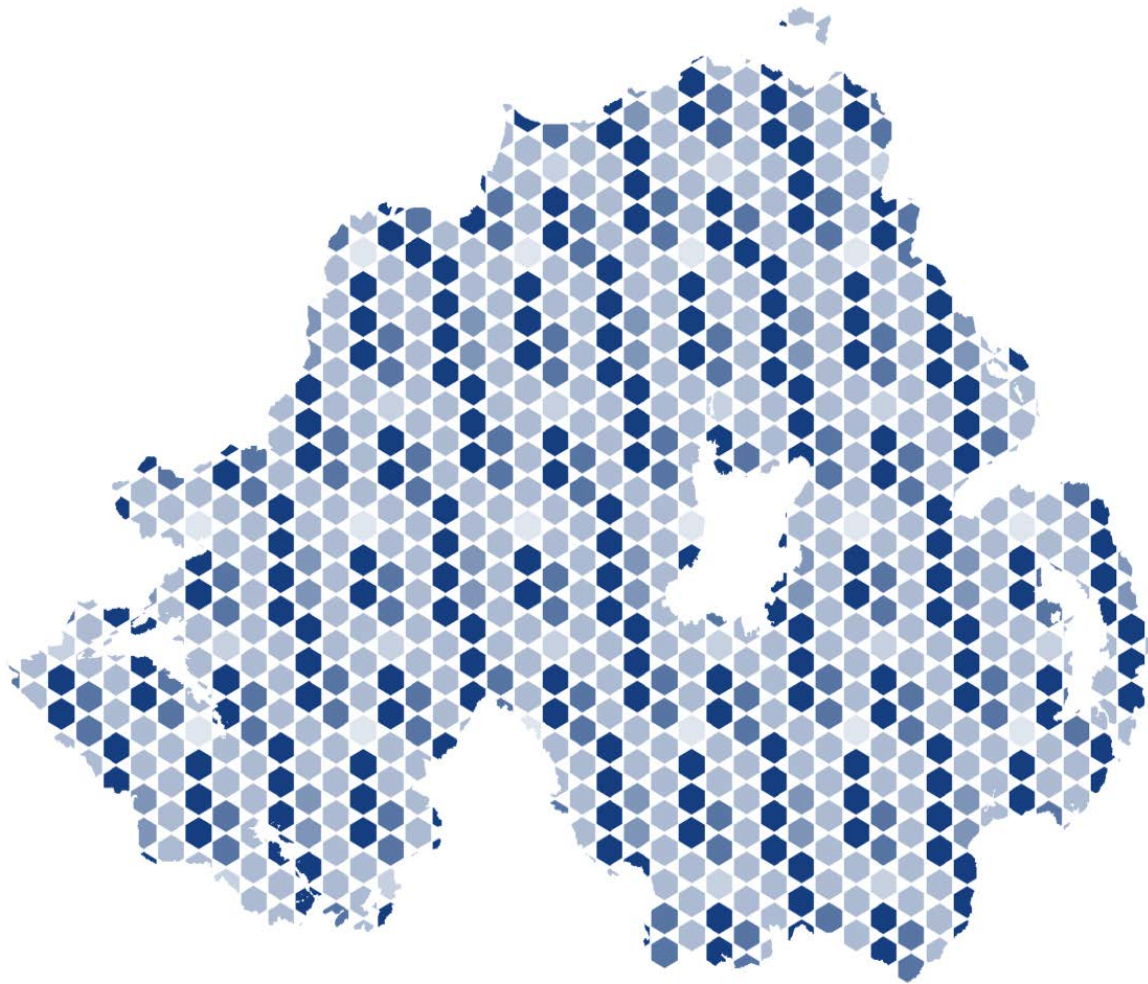


POST-PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Dunluce School, Bushmills,
County Antrim

Co-educational, 11-16 controlled, non-selective school

Report of a Follow-up Inspection
(Involving Action Short of Strike) in
March 2017



The Education and Training Inspectorate
Promoting Improvement

Providing inspection services for:

Department of Education
Department for the Economy
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A THIRD FOLLOW-UP TO THE INSPECTION OF DUNLUCE SCHOOL, BUSHMILLS, CO ANTRIM, BT57 8QQ (321-0222)

The Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) carried out a second follow-up inspection of Dunluce School in February 2015¹ which concluded that the school was satisfactory².

As a consequence, the Department of Education decided that the school should exit the Formal Intervention Process, under the Every School a Good School policy, on April 2015³.

The two areas for improvement identified during the second follow-up inspection were the need to:

- continue to develop the capacity of key post-holders and improve leadership further; and
- sustain and bring more consistency and further improvement to pupil outcomes.

The ETI carried out an interim follow-up visit in June 2016 and a follow-up inspection in March 2017.

Four of the teaching unions, which make up the Northern Ireland Teachers' Council (NITC), have declared industrial action primarily in relation to a pay dispute. This includes non-co-operation with the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI). Prior to the inspection, the school informed the ETI that none of the teachers would be co-operating with the inspectors. The ETI have a statutory duty to monitor, inspect and report on the quality of education under Article 102 of the Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 1986. Therefore, the inspection proceeded and the following evaluations are based on the evidence as made available at the time of the inspection.

In the interval since the second follow-up inspection, changes and actions which affect the work of the school include:

- the senior leadership team has been adjusted following the departure of a senior leader to another school;
- a new head of the English department has been appointed;
- the school has introduced a set of academic tests that provide a wider range of performance data on the pupils;
- along with parental consultations, the school has introduced new survey practices that provide important pastoral information on the pupils; and
- the school enrolment has declined to just over 300 pupils along with an associated and notable reduction in the number of full-time teachers, while the proportion of pupils entitled to free-school meals has doubled since 2013-14.

¹<https://www.etini.gov.uk/sites/etini.gov.uk/files/publications/%5Bcurrent-domain%3Amachine-name%5D/follow-up-inspection-dunluce-school-bushmills-4.pdf>

² From September 2015, the overall effectiveness of a school previously evaluated as satisfactory is now reported as having to address important areas for improvement in the interest of all the learners.

³ <https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/de/ESAGS%20Policy%20for%20School%20Improvement%20-%20Final%20Version%2005-05-2009.pdf>

Key Findings

The capacity of the senior leadership team continues to improve. A cohesive senior leadership team, with a shared understanding of the improvements that are required, is leading the improvement work with commitment and openness. The principal continues to move the school forward steadily and effectively.

There are improving levels of engagement between the governors and the school community to inform further their understanding of the life and work of the school.

Arrangements for enhanced accountability, building leadership capacity and quality assuring the improvement work continue to improve. Performance and pastoral data are now being used effectively to evaluate the impact of the provision for learning; the views of the pupils, parents and staff are taken on board. Quality assurance processes have been introduced to ensure there is an oversight of learning, teaching and assessment and these processes need to be developed further.

Through a range of initiatives, including the use of extended schools funding, the school has made good headway in improving significantly the pupils' attendance.

The proportion of the pupils achieving five or more GCSEs or equivalent at grades A* to C now compares favourably with similar schools. However, outcomes are below similar schools at five or more GCSEs or equivalent at grades A* to C including English and mathematics and the outcomes attained by boys are significantly lower than those of the girls.

The outcomes across individual subjects are showing improvement. At the time of the last follow-up inspection, nine subjects were in line with or above the corresponding Northern Ireland three-year subject average; this figure has now risen to 16 subjects.

The provision for English is showing improved outcomes. There is a re-focused commitment to raise standards attained by all of the pupils and the outcomes are on an upward trajectory.

Owing to action short of strike, the ETI were unable to evaluate fully the extent to which the following areas for improvement have been addressed:

- to develop the capacity of post-holders and improve the quality of leadership; and
- to sustain and bring more consistency and further improvement to pupil outcomes.

Consequently, there remains a need for Dunluce School to address the important areas for improvement in the interest of all the learners.

Overall Effectiveness

Owing to the impact of the action short of strike being taken by the teachers, the ETI is unable to assure parents/carers, the wider community and stakeholders of the quality of education being provided for the pupils. This will be reflected in future inspection activity.

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