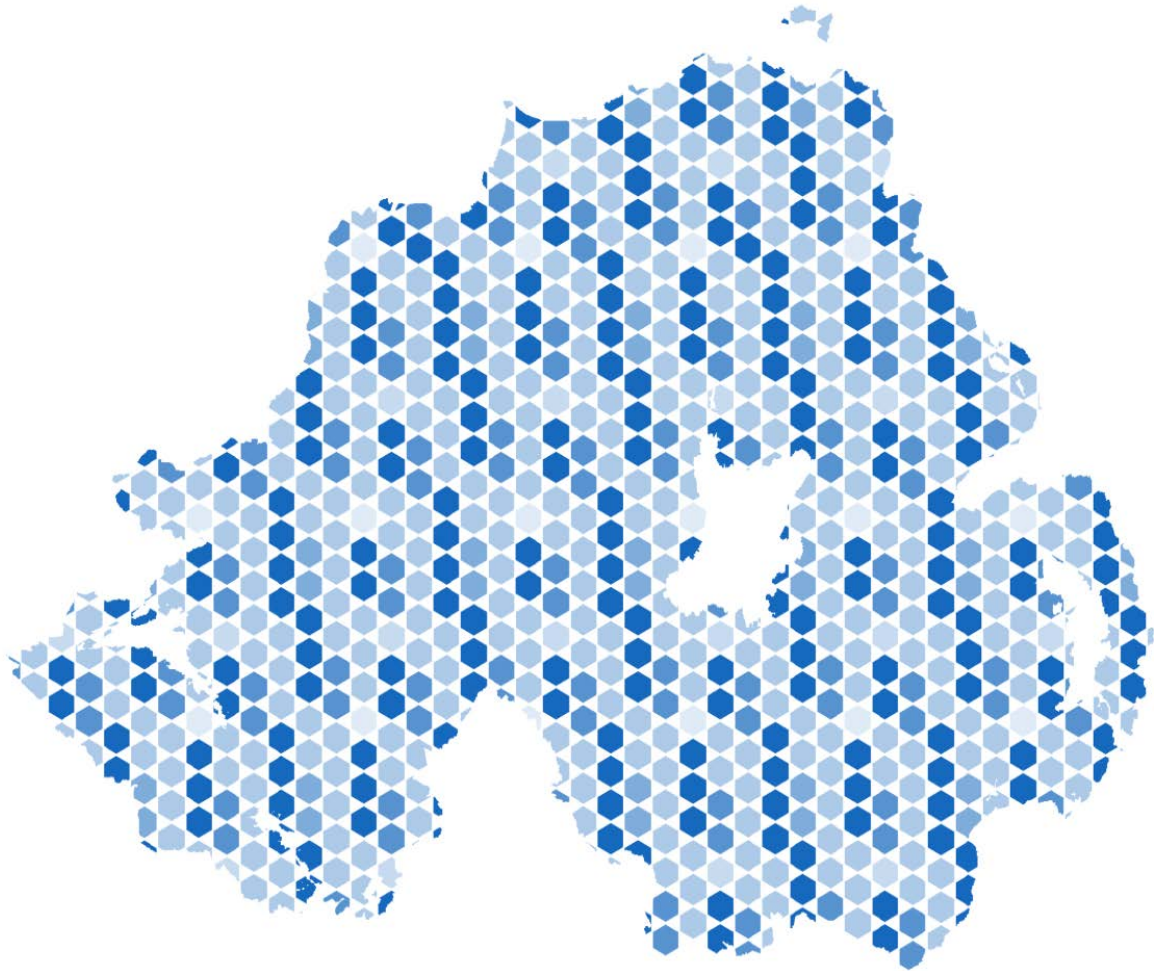


SPECIAL INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Jordanstown School,
Newtownabbey, County Antrim

Report of an Inspection (Involving
Action Short of Strike) in
January 2018



The Education and Training Inspectorate
Promoting Improvement

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1. Context

Jordanstown School is located in Jordanstown, County Antrim and provides education for pupils aged 4 to 19 years, who are deaf and or visually impaired and who come from Belfast and the surrounding areas. In addition the school provides outreach support to pupils with visual impairments in schools in the north eastern area. In the past five years there has been a consistent upward trend in pupil enrolment and at the time of inspection there were 79 pupils attending the school; the Principal has been 18 months in post. Since the last inspection the school has relocated to a new school complex with extensive modern facilities. The school has a board of governors and a board of trustees who provide additional funding to support the work of the school.

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 the majority of the teachers would not be co-operating with the inspectors. The ETI has 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.

2. Views of parents and staff

There were a small number of responses from staff and parents to the confidential questionnaires. Almost all of the responses to the questionnaires indicated good levels of satisfaction with the life and work of the school and stated that their children were happy in the school. There were additional comments from parents in relation to teaching, assessment and the school facilities. The ETI has reported to the Principal and representatives of the board of governors, the main findings emerging from the questionnaires.

3. Focus of the inspection

The inspection focused on:

- the outcomes for pupils; in particular, how the school is addressing individual needs;
- the quality of provision in the school; and
- the quality of leadership and management.

4. Overall findings of the inspection

Overall effectiveness	Unable to assure the quality of education
Outcomes for learners	No performance level available
Quality of provision	No performance level available
Leadership and management	No performance level available

5. Outcomes for learners

- The pupils can communicate their views well; they discussed their enjoyment of school and the opportunities provided for them to participate in activities and clubs such as art therapy, film and study clubs.
- The school monitor appropriately the destinations of pupils when they leave the school and transition to further education or employment.
- During a meeting with inspectors, the pupils communicated with confidence how they enjoy the subjects they study in school and were enthusiastic about the further education and career options they are working towards. They are mature and very courteous in their engagement with peers, staff and visitors to the school. The pupils enjoy the opportunities to undertake roles and responsibilities for example, as members of the student council.

The ETI was unable to evaluate fully:

- outcomes attained by the pupils;
- progression by the pupils in learning; and
- the pupils' wider skills and dispositions.

6. Quality of provision

- The school leadership has identified appropriately the need to review the individual education plan format currently in use, to include more specific and frequent targets, with regular monitoring and evaluation.
- There is a need for subject teachers to rigorously analyse, monitor and evaluate individual pupil achievement and progress to raise further the outcomes for the pupils.
- The school has developed recently their links with the speech and language therapists and it is important that identified strategies are implemented and monitored regularly to establish their effectiveness.
- There are established links with the careers education information advice and guidance service, and pupils are well informed about career pathways and qualifications needed for courses they are interested in. The pupils do not have opportunities to participate in appropriate work experience placements at present.

The ETI was unable to evaluate fully the:

- quality of the curriculum;
- effectiveness of guidance and support in bringing about high quality individual learning experiences; and
- effectiveness and impact of planning, engagement/ teaching/training and assessment in promoting successful learning.

7. Leadership and management

- In the past two years there have been two new appointments to the senior leadership of the school. There is an appropriate emphasis on developing a culture of shared leadership and empowering all staff throughout the school. The leadership team have developed a strategic vision for the school that is suitably pupil-centred. The appointment of permanent teachers to lead the co-ordination of literacy, numeracy and information, communication technology within the school has been a key strategic decision.
- The leadership of the school has consulted appropriately with parents, staff, pupils and the board of governors to inform priorities for the school development plan. Pastoral and curricular areas for improvement have been identified and correctly prioritised for action in a timely manner, and are linked to staff development needs. The associated action plans have a consistent planning format and most have clear baseline positions and specific targets from which improvement can be measured. The assessment and self-evaluation systems are at an early stage of development; the leadership team has prioritised appropriately their further development.
- During the inspection the ETI met with representatives of the board of governors. Based on the evidence available at the time of inspection, the ETI's evaluation is that there can be limited confidence in the aspects of governance evaluated. There are aspects of governance to develop, namely to:
 - maintain a strategic overview of the progress and outcomes of all pupils; and
 - ensure a balance of appropriate support and challenge to the school's leadership.
- The school has recognised the need to develop further links with a range of external organisations, local schools, community groups and training agencies to enhance the pupils learning and educational experiences.

During the inspection, the school provided evidence that the arrangements for safeguarding pupils reflect broadly the guidance from the Department of Education (DE). In a meeting with inspectors, the pupils reported that they are happy in school and they feel safe and know what to do if they have any concerns about their safety or well-being. However, owing to the action short of strike, the ETI was unable to evaluate fully the outworking of the arrangements for safeguarding in the school. It is important that the school continues to review and update the school's safeguarding policies and that they are ratified by the governors as soon as possible.

The ETI are unable to evaluate fully the:

- effectiveness and impact of the middle leadership;
- the effectiveness of action to promote and sustain improvement; and
- the effectiveness and impact of the strategic leadership team.

8. 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 school community and stakeholders of the quality of education being provided for the pupils. This will be reflected in future inspection activity.

Statistical data

Jordanstown School	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
Enrolment school	67	73	78	79
% Attendance	93.3	92.4	91.1	90.3
% FSME ¹	50.7	49.3	51.2	50.6
Newcomers	*	*	*	*

Source: data as held by the school.

* fewer than 5

¹ The term 'FSME Percentage' refers to the percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals.

Inspection methodology and evidence base

The ETI's [Inspection and Self-Evaluation Framework](#) is available on the ETI website.

Inspectors scrutinised documentation, data and held formal discussions with pupils (in groups).

The arrangements for this inspection included:

- a meeting with representatives from the governors; and
- the opportunity for all parents, teaching and support staff to complete a confidential questionnaire.

Quantitative terms

In this report, proportions may be described as percentages, common fractions and in more general quantitative terms. Where more general terms are used, they should be interpreted as follows:

Almost/nearly all	-	more than 90%
Most	-	75%-90%
A majority	-	50%-74%
A significant minority	-	30%-49%
A minority	-	10%-29%
Very few/a small number	-	less than 10%

Performance levels

The Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) use the following performance levels when reporting on Outcomes for learners, on the Quality of provision and on Leadership and management:

Outstanding
Very Good
Good
Important area(s) for improvement
Requires significant improvement
Requires urgent improvement

Inspection Outcome

The ETI use one of the following inspection outcomes when indicating what will happen after the inspection:

The organisation has a high level of capacity for sustained improvement in the interest of all the learners. ETI will continue to monitor how the organisation sustains improvement.
The organisation demonstrates the capacity to identify and bring about improvement in the interest of all the learners. ETI will continue to monitor how the organisation sustains improvement
The organisation needs to address (an) important area(s) for improvement in the interest of all the learners. ETI will monitor and report on the organisation's progress in addressing the area(s) for improvement which include the need to... There will be a formal follow-up inspection in...
The organisation needs to address urgently the significant areas for improvement identified in the interest of all the learners. It requires external support to do so. The ETI will monitor and report on the organisation's progress in addressing the need to... There will be a formal follow-up inspection in...

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