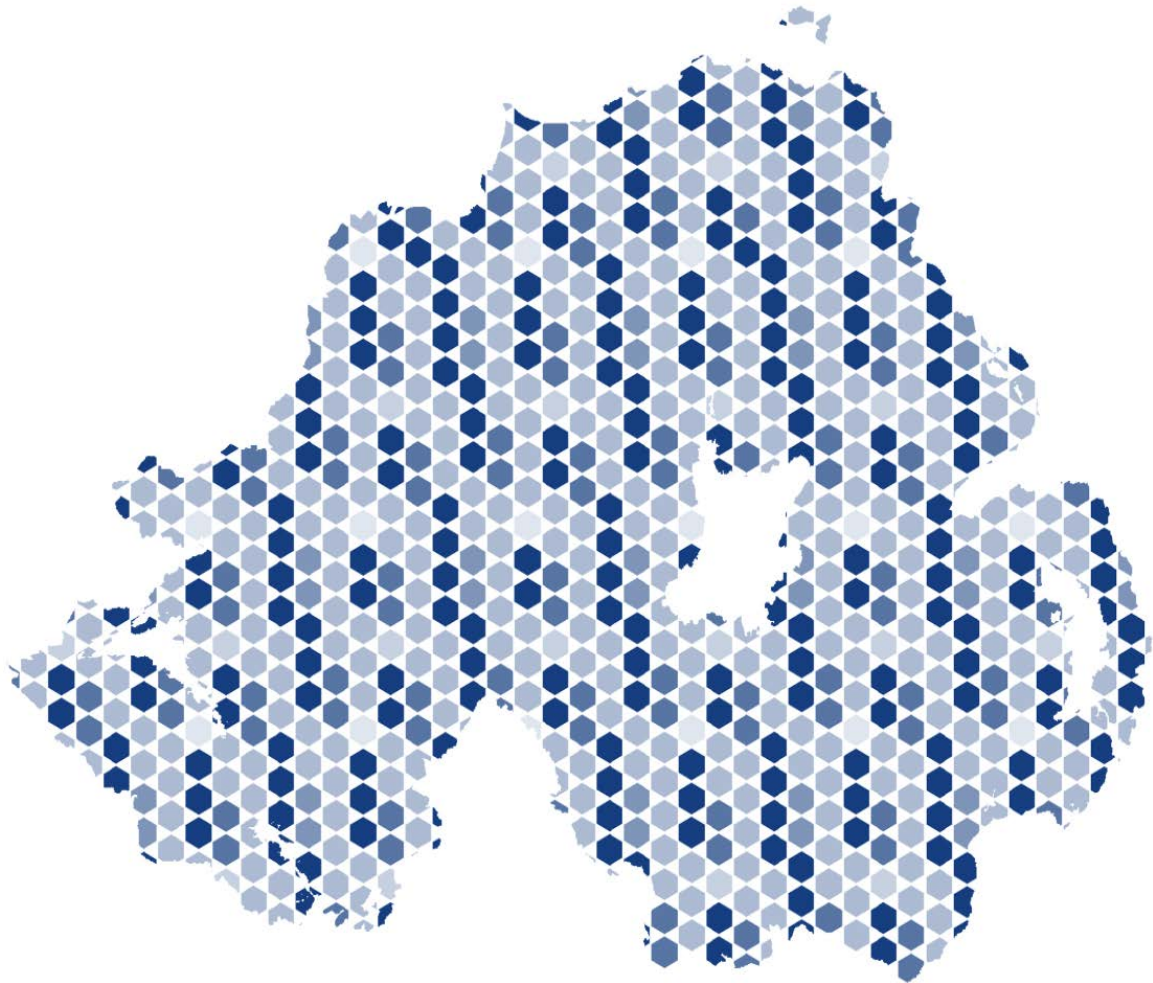


POST-PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

St Joseph's High School,
Crossmaglen, County Down

11-19 co-educational, maintained, non-selective

Report of a Sustaining Improvement
Inspection (Involving Action Short of
Strike) in October 2017



The Education and Training Inspectorate
Promoting Improvement

Providing inspection services for:

Department of Education
Department for the Economy
and other commissioning Departments



Sustaining Improvement Inspection of St Joseph's High School, Crossmaglen, County Down (523-0167)

Introduction

The previous inspection in October 2014 evaluated the overall effectiveness of St Joseph's High School as very good¹. A sustaining improvement inspection (SII) was conducted on 20 October 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 only the senior leadership team would 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.

Focus of the inspection

The inspection focused on evaluating the extent to which the school is capable of demonstrating its capacity to effect improvement through self-evaluation and effective school development planning. The school also provided evidence of provision for safeguarding as part of the inspection.

The lines of enquiry during the SII were:

- increasing the proportion of key stage (KS) 4 pupils who achieve five GCSEs or equivalents, including English and mathematics, at grades A* to C; and
- improving the use of data at KS 3 to meet more effectively the individual learning and pastoral needs of the pupils.

Key findings

- The proportion of KS 4 pupils achieving five or more GCSEs or equivalents, including English and mathematics, at grades A* to C is now above the average for similar schools. This reflects: the considerable work undertaken to improve the provision for GCSE mathematics; the close monitoring of the standards of the pupils' work; and the timely and appropriate interventions, which underpin the very effective fusion of the school's academic and pastoral work.
- The school has streamlined and developed further its systems for assessing and tracking the pupils at KS 3, including pastorally. The available documentation shows that staff have participated in training on how to plan appropriately to meet the abilities and learning needs of individual pupils.

The ETI was unable to evaluate:

- The impact of the school's improvement work on classroom practice.

¹ From September 2015, the overall effectiveness of a school evaluated previously as outstanding or very good has been reported as a school demonstrating a high level of capacity for sustained improvement.

Safeguarding

During the inspection, the school provided evidence that the arrangements for safeguarding pupils reflect broadly the guidance from the Department of Education. 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. The pupils reported that they feel safe, secure and happy in school and know what to do if they have any concerns about their well-being.

Conclusion

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 children. This will be reflected in future inspection activity.

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