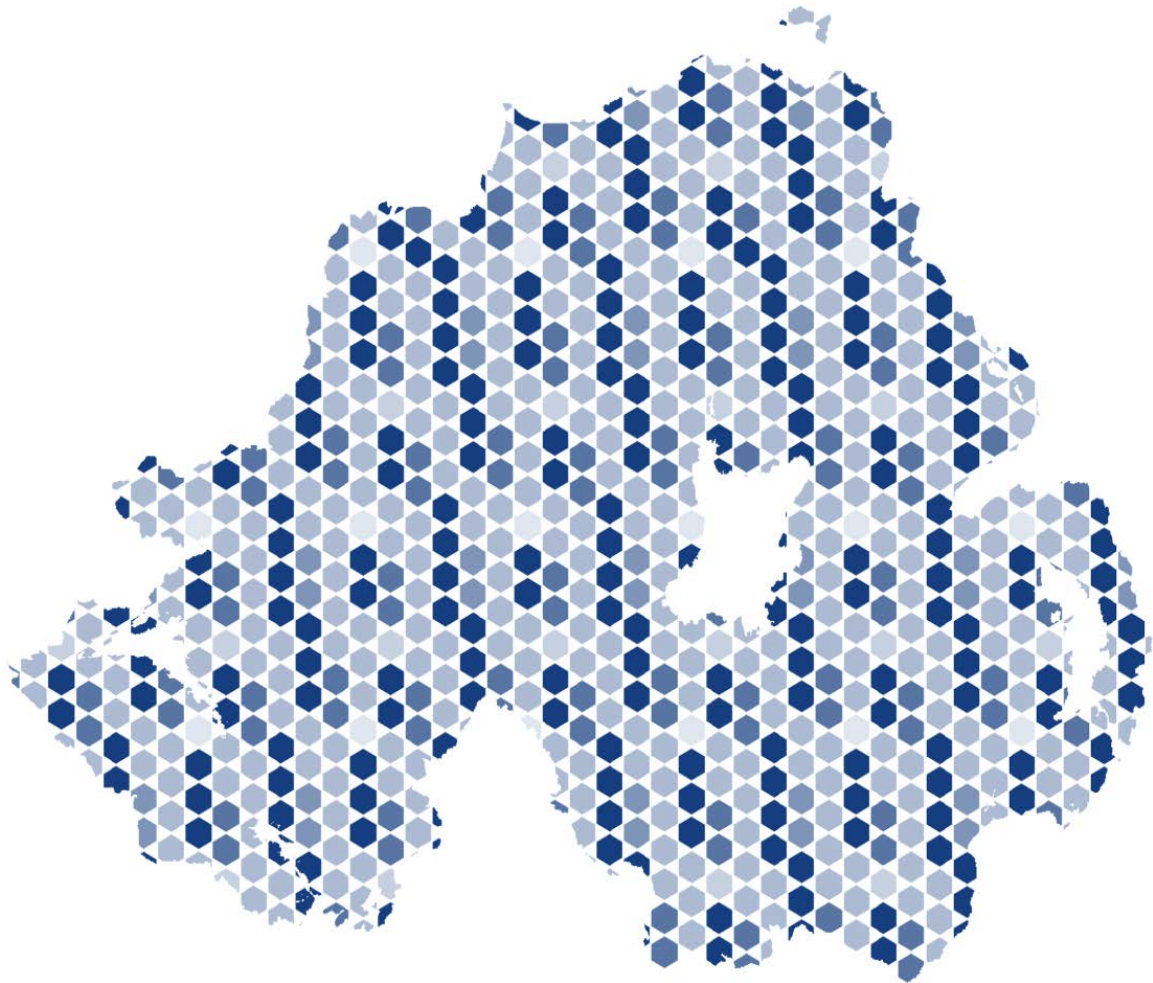


POST-PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

St Rose's Dominican College,
Belfast

Roman Catholic Maintained, all-girls', 11-19 school

Report of a Sustaining Improvement
Inspection (Involving Action Short of
Strike) in November 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 Rose's Dominican College, Belfast (123-0130)

Introduction

St Rose's Dominican College took part in the pilot of the sustaining improvement inspection (SII) in November 2014. A further SII was conducted on 27 November 2017.

In the time since the last inspection, the school's enrolment has decreased by one-quarter, from 316 to 240 pupils. In April 2017, the Department of Education (DE) approved a development proposal to discontinue provision at the school to facilitate the establishment of a new Catholic 11-19 co-educational post-primary school (being in effect an amalgamation of Christian Brothers' School, Corpus Christi College and St Rose's Dominican College) with effect from 1 September 2018, or as soon as possible thereafter.

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 almost all of the teachers would not 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.

Focus of the inspection

Owing to the school's participation in industrial action, the inspection was unable to focus 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.

One line of inquiry was selected from the school development priorities, namely to:

- develop further the school's arrangements for collaboration to facilitate a smooth transition for the pupils and staff to the new school.

The school also provided evidence of the arrangements for safeguarding as part of the inspection.

Key findings

The senior leaders, including the governors, and the staff have planned strategically and collaborated productively with staff from the other schools involved, demonstrating a strong commitment to establishing a new school which will meet the needs, abilities and aspirations of all of the pupils. This collaboration has increased the breadth and flexibility of the curriculum offer. Agreed policies are in place to facilitate the appropriate sharing and analysis of a wide range of data to inform practice, and to ensure a shared approach is adopted by staff in meeting the pastoral and academic needs of the pupils. The views of pupils and parents are sought, valued and acted upon. The governors are setting a clear strategic direction to facilitate a smooth transition and to build productively on the strengths of all three schools in the interest of all of the pupils.

Going forward, it will be important for the school to improve the outcomes for the pupils; the standards attained by the pupils in public examinations are well below the average for similar schools in the same free school meals band.

Safeguarding

During the inspection, the school provided evidence that arrangements for safeguarding pupils reflect broadly the guidance issued by DE. The school needs to review and update the policies relating to anti-bullying and relationships and sexuality education in order to reflect more fully the relevant guidance. The pupils reported that they feel safe in school and that they are aware of 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.

Conclusion

Owing to the impact of 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.

© CROWN COPYRIGHT 2018

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part, except for commercial purposes or in connection with a prospectus or advertisement, provided that the source and date thereof are stated.

Copies of this report are available on the ETI website: www.etini.gov.uk