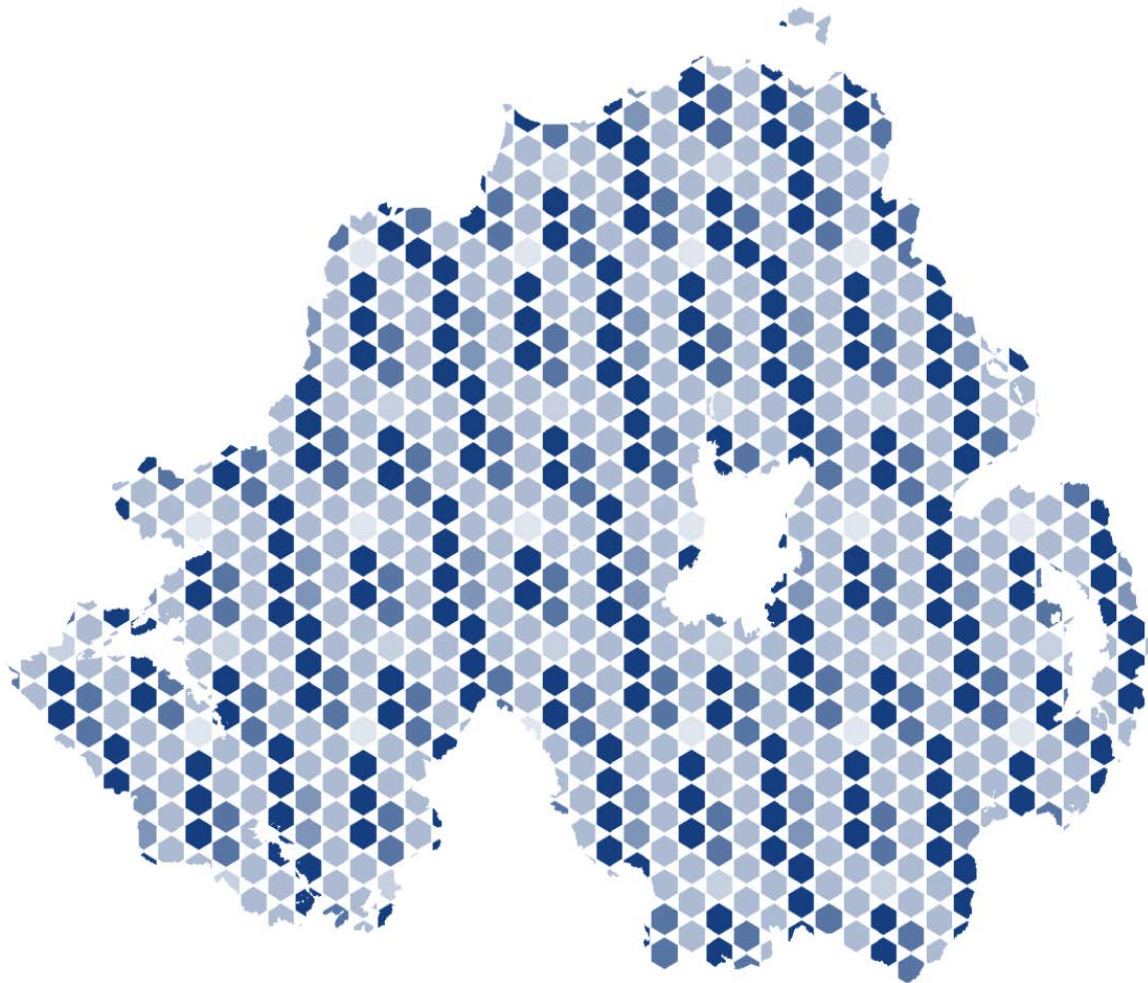


# Education and Training Inspectorate POST-PRIMARY INSPECTION



## Foyle College, Londonderry

11-18, co-educational, voluntary, selective school DE Ref No (242-0229)

Report of a Sustaining Improvement Inspection (Involving Action Short of Strike) in March 2019



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## **Sustaining Improvement Inspection of Foyle College, Londonderry (242-0229)**

### **Introduction**

The previous follow-up inspection in December 2015<sup>1</sup> evaluated the overall effectiveness of Foyle College as having the capacity to identify and bring about improvement. In the interim period the school re-located from two sites on the Cityside to a new purpose-built site on the Waterside of Londonderry in January 2018.

A sustaining improvement inspection (SII) was conducted in March 2019.

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 members of the senior leadership team (SLT) would be co-operating with the inspection. 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 purpose of the SII was to evaluate 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 inquiry during the SII were the school's actions to:

- raise further, and consistently across the subjects, the standards attained by the pupils at the end of key stage (KS) 4; and
- develop further the effective use of information and communication technology (ICT) to improve the quality of teaching and learning.

Owing to the action short of strike, the ETI was unable to evaluate fully the outworking and impact of the identified actions associated with the lines of inquiry.

### **Key findings**

- The monitoring and tracking of individual pupil progress and intervention strategies have been successful in raising outcomes in GCSE English and GCSE mathematics. The percentage of pupils attaining seven or more GCSE grades A\* to C, including English and mathematics remains well below the Northern Ireland (NI) average for similar schools. A majority of the individual subjects at GCSE level at grades A\* to B<sup>2</sup> are below the corresponding averages.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.etini.gov.uk/sites/etini.gov.uk/files/publications/follow-up-inspection-foyle-college-londonderry.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> In those subjects for which there are corresponding NI subject averages.

- The school has been monitoring more closely the appropriateness of the pupils' subject choices, with a focus on better matching the offer and number of the courses taken to the needs, abilities and aspirations of the pupils. This work needs to continue, with a necessary review of the curriculum provision to support the raising of the pupils' attainment at the end of KS 4.
- The new school campus has provided opportunities for substantial investment in a range of digital technologies and continuing professional development to enhance learning, teaching and assessing. It has also improved the communication across the school and with parents. The impact on pupils' learning experiences and outcomes of this investment and continuing professional development needs to be closely monitored and evaluated in consultation with pupils, parents and staff. The pupils reported that the use of ICT has enhanced their engagement in lessons and encouraged independence in their learning. However, owing to the action short of strike, the ETI was unable to evaluate the impact of developing the effective use of ICT to improve the quality of teaching and learning in the school.
- The pupils who met with inspectors are respectful of each other and positive about their experiences in school. In discussions, they highlighted: the excellent facilities and resources in their new school, including the availability of digital technology to support their learning; the sense of community and the very positive working relationships with staff. They were very appreciative of the support and guidance they receive through, for example, the focused KS4 peer-mentoring programme and other customised pastoral support programmes to help them reach their targets.

## **Safeguarding**

During the inspection, the school provided evidence that the arrangements for safeguarding pupils reflect broadly the guidance issued by the Department of Education. 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 the action short of strike being taken by most of 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.

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