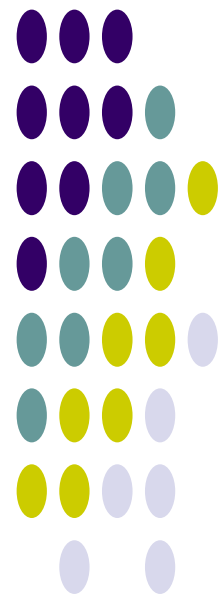


# The Education and Training Inspectorate

*Inspection Leading to Improvement:*

Business Year 2012-2013



Providing Inspection Services for  
Department of Education  
Department for Employment and Learning  
Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure

CUSTOMER  
SERVICE  
EXCELLENCE



## Foreword by the Chief Inspector

The Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) has both an improvement and accountability role. Our mission is 'promoting improvement in the interest of all learners'. The work of ETI raises expectations and leads to improvement in the quality of education by identifying practice which is good or better so that it can be shared or where it is not good enough and needs to improve. In addition we have a key role in capacity building and we do this, for example, by promoting self-evaluation and involving associate assessors in our work. We also have an accountability role in providing assurance to the Department of Education, Department for Employment and Learning and the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure about the quality of education and training and in reassuring parents and carers that their children are getting a good education.

Effective, high performing organisations display a number of key characteristics which are described in this report. There are, however, a minority of the organisations we inspect which do not demonstrate this capacity for improvement and which require more extended support. Where inspection identifies such organisations, a more rigorous follow-up inspection process is instigated whereby the organisation receives support over a period – between 12-24 months depending on the original inspection outcome – after which the ETI conducts a follow-up inspection. It is this follow-on process, and the associated interim visits conducted by ETI, which organisations tell us are so helpful to them in their improvement process.

The report which follows demonstrates clearly that a majority of organisations have been successful in making substantial improvements, leading to better outcomes for learners, as a direct result of the inspection process. I am happy to report that the positive impact of inspection which we reported over the past two years has continued this year.

Raising standards and achievements is at the heart of the current range of educational policies and the external support provided for organisations. The ETI look forward to continuing to play a pivotal role in 'raising the bar'<sup>1</sup> and 'closing the gap'<sup>2</sup>, doing so in the very best interests of children, young people and adult learners across our education, youth and training sectors.

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<sup>1</sup> Literacy and Numeracy Taskforce Report. 2008-09

<sup>2</sup> Every School a Good School. 2009

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Noelle Buick

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**Noelle Buick**  
Chief Inspector

In assessing the various features of the provision, inspectors relate their evaluations to six performance level descriptors as set out below:

Outstanding
Very good
Good
Satisfactory
Inadequate
Unsatisfactory

In this short 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%

## Introduction

Follow-up inspections are undertaken where overall provision, at the time of the original inspection, has been evaluated as satisfactory, inadequate or unsatisfactory. The follow-up inspection process focuses on the areas for improvement identified in the original inspection, which very often reflect the three key areas of leadership and management, quality of provision for learning, and achievements and standards.

In total, 72 follow-up inspections were completed between April 2012 and March 2013. The follow-up inspections **show significant improvement across a majority of the education, youth and training organisations in which a follow-up inspection was completed.** Of the 72 follow-up inspections, 15 were in early years settings<sup>3</sup>, 27 in primary schools, 20 in post-primary schools, three in special schools, one in Alternative Education Provision (AEP), three in work-based learning and three in youth.

## Summary features of improvement through inspection across all phases

The evidence from the follow-up inspections demonstrated that improvement occurs when all who are professionally involved within an organisation:

- acknowledge during and/or following inspection that improvement is needed;
- develop the quality of leadership and management at all levels;
- address inconsistencies in learning and teaching;
- share high expectations of what children, young people and adult learners can achieve and of the quality of education and training that they experience;
- commit to more effective quality assurance arrangements, including more robust use of qualitative and quantitative measures to inform both the self-evaluation and development planning processes;
- monitor learners' progress and intervene early, if necessary, to enable individuals to make good progress; and
- work well together and with others, including non-teaching staff, governors, management committees, parents and the wider community, in the very best interests of all children, pupils and adult learners.

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<sup>3</sup> Of these, 4 were nursery units within primary schools

This is not a list of necessary precursors of improvement, but these features are those that the evidence indicates are most likely to improve the educational experiences and outcomes for learners and so enable organisations to achieve an overall improvement of at least one performance level by the time of the follow-up inspection.

Ensuring that these features are in place, and that they complement each other to effect an improvement, can be challenging. The evidence indicates that in large complex organisations, where there has been long-term low achievement, improvement often takes longer.

This year, once again, the evidence demonstrates that **when leadership and management remains a substantial area for further development, sufficient improvement does not happen.**

Exemplars demonstrating how organisations improve professional practice and inspection outcomes are included in case studies in Annex 1.

The following are key statistical features of the improvements identified during the follow-up inspections:

- Improvement at the follow-up inspection during the current business year was reported in 69% of instances; most follow-up inspections reported a satisfactory or better level of performance; two organisations regressed from the time of the original inspection. The overall pattern of improvement is less favourable than that observed in the previous three years due primarily to remaining issues in some post-primary schools.
- Follow-up inspections in 29% of organisations showed improvement by two or more levels of performance on the original inspection evaluation. The proportion of organisations which had improved by one level of performance was 40% similar to the proportion in previous years.
- Of the 16 follow-up inspections where the performance was evaluated to be less than satisfactory at the original inspection, half remained less than satisfactory at the time of the follow-up inspection and half improved to a satisfactory or better level of performance.
- Of the 56 follow-up inspections where the performance was evaluated satisfactory at the original inspection, 42 improved to a good or better level of performance.

## Phase summaries

**In the Early Years sector**, the quality of the provision for the children was followed up in 11 organisations. In addition, there were follow-up inspections in four nursery units that were originally inspected as part of the inspection of a primary school. Improvement by at least one performance level was identified in 93% of these 15 centres; half of these had improved by at least two levels.

**In the Primary school sector**, there were 27 follow-up inspections, five of which were evaluated as being less than satisfactory at the time of the original inspection and were placed by the Department of Education in the Formal Intervention Process (FIP), outlined in the *Every School a Good School* policy. Of these 27 schools, 81% per cent demonstrated their capacity to improve on aspects of provision - a lower proportion than the 97% last year, primarily because there were three schools in FIP which failed to improve.

**In the Post-Primary school sector**, there were 20 follow-up inspections, eight of which were in organisations evaluated originally as having a less than satisfactory level of performance. Five of the schools in FIP failed to improve sufficiently and their quality of education remained less than satisfactory. Approximately one half of the schools that had satisfactory provision at the original inspection failed to demonstrate sufficient improvement - a proportion similar to last year. In summary, 40% of the schools improved by at least one performance level – a slightly higher proportion than the 33% last year which achieved similar improvement.

**In the Special school sector**, there was sufficient improvement in all three special schools that had a follow-up inspection this year to lead to an increase in the performance level assigned.

**In the Alternative Education Programme sector**, one follow-up inspection was undertaken and the performance level improved by one level.

**In the Youth sector**, there were three follow-up inspections. In all three providers, the improvement was not sufficient to lead to an increase in the assigned performance level.

**In the Work-Based Learning and Adult Employment sector**, three follow-up inspections were completed; in two of the organisations the levels of performance improved by at least one performance level and in the third the performance remained the same.

In addition to the three training organisations, the work-based learning provision in two specialist areas in one of the Further Education Colleges was evaluated during follow-up visits. In each of the areas, the provision improved by at least two performance levels.

**In the Further Education sector**, there were no follow-up inspections during which the overall provision was evaluated. However, there were two specialist areas in each of two colleges which were evaluated during follow-up visits. In all four areas, the provision improved by at least one performance level.

## Extent of improvement in performance levels 2012-13

	Number of follow-up inspections	Remained less than satisfactory	Regressed to less than satisfactory	No change (satisfactory)	Improved one level	Improved two levels
Early Years	15*			1	7	7**
Primary	27	3	1	1	11**	11**
Post-Primary	20	5	1	6	7***	1
Special School	3				2	1
AEP	1				1	
Youth	3			3		
Work based learning	3			1	1**	1**
Total	72	8 11.1%	2 2.8%	12 16.7%	29 40.3%	21 29.2%

\* Of which four were nursery units within primary schools

\*\* Of which one improved from a less than satisfactory performance level

\*\*\* Of which three improved from a less than satisfactory performance level

## A CASE STUDY OF IMPROVEMENT IN A PRE-SCHOOL SETTING

### **At the time of the initial inspection:**

At the time of the original inspection, a significant number of children with social and emotional development delays, or non-diagnosed special educational needs, displayed challenging behaviours which impacted negatively on the overall quality of the provision for all of the children. Too many children were not engaged in their learning as the session progressed and the staff lacked sufficient skills and confidence to manage these challenges effectively.

The inspection report identified three key areas for improvement; the need for the staff to develop effective behaviour management strategies for use with children who display challenging behaviour; the need to review the daily timetable which was too fragmented and did not support the children's needs, and the need to develop observation and assessment procedures which would better inform the planning for individual children.

The overall conclusion indicated that the quality of educational provision at the time of the inspection was satisfactory.

### **As a result of the inspection:**

The playgroup drew up appropriate action plans and these were monitored through class observation and discussions held with the staff during two interim visits carried out by the district inspector. The leader reported that the positive feedback, guidance and discussion provided by ETI during the interim visits were helpful in building her confidence and capacity to implement effective improvement.

A number of key actions were taken which contributed significantly to improvement. The staff all received excellent training to support children with special educational needs through the Special Educational Needs (SEN) in Early Years capacity building pilot, funded by the Department of Education. A specialist member of the Belfast Education and Library Board Early Years Inclusion Team (EYIT) was deployed to provide additional focused support during the session for a specific child who required one-to-one support for their own safety and that of the other children. This not only helped the child to focus on activities but also freed up the staff to meet the needs of the other children. The staff benefited hugely from observing the specialist support worker's techniques on a daily basis building their own expertise and confidence which they then used in their work with all of the children. In addition, the staff used the skills they have learned through the recent capacity building training to implement effective strategies for managing children's behaviour including smaller group sessions, visual cues, and clear, direct instructions.



The training has also guided the staff on how to track children's progress effectively and how to set suitable targets. As a result, the children's records of progress are more detailed and are being used to tailor the sessions, and adult support, more effectively to the needs of individual children. For example, the children access the outdoors, one-to-one support, smaller group activities or more challenging activities, as appropriate for their stage of development.

As a result of the actions taken, the children listen more attentively, they display very good social skills, and they are well motivated and more highly engaged in their learning. The provision for all of the six areas of the pre-school curriculum was evaluated as very good or excellent during the follow-up inspection. Children with additional needs have been identified earlier, ensuring they get the appropriate early intervention and that their parents have better information to make informed decisions about the next stage of their child's education.

The follow-up inspection evaluated the overall quality of the educational provision as very good.

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## A CASE STUDY OF IMPROVEMENT IN A PRIMARY SCHOOL

### **At the time of the initial inspection:**

A number of important areas for development were identified, including the need to improve the quality of learning and teaching in years 4 to 7, to raise the inadequate standards in literacy and numeracy attained by a significant minority of the children and for the principal to improve the inadequate curricular leadership across all areas of the curriculum.

### **Immediately after the inspection:**

The Principal and the staff approached the inspection findings positively and showed willingness and determination to seek and accept support and commit fully to the process of school improvement.

### **Within a short period:**

There was one change in the teaching staff and the Principal along with the two permanent teachers reviewed key aspects of the school's provision and put in place detailed action plans to effect improvement across all aspects of the provision.

The Principal established a collegial approach to school improvement involving the staff, governors, children and parents and set high expectations for all aspects of the school's provision. He supported the staff pastorally and professionally with an unwavering focus on improving the children's learning experiences and the standards that they attain.

The governors worked closely with the Principal and the staff and have played a significant role in bringing about improvement since the inspection. They both support and challenge the Principal and staff on key aspects of the work of the school.

The school development planning process was reviewed and is now based on a critical evaluation of key aspects of the school's provision and a robust analysis of performance data.

The co-ordinators undertook a detailed review of the planning for learning and teaching in literacy and numeracy and new frameworks for short and long term planning were carefully devised. The processes of reflection on and evaluation of learning, and sharing of good practice are now fully embedded in classroom practice.

The teachers made very effective use of assessment data to identify and provide for the children who are under achieving, and those who are achieving at a low level. Literacy and numeracy booster group sessions were introduced and the school was able to demonstrate that these are having a positive impact on the standards attained by the children.

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In 2012, all of the year 4 and year 7 children achieved the expected levels in English and in mathematics in statutory assessment; these outcomes are well above the average for Northern Ireland (NI) and for similar schools in the same free school meals category<sup>4</sup>.

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<sup>4</sup> The key stage outcomes should be interpreted with caution for small primary schools as a large percentage change from year to year can often be attributed to a very small number of children.

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## A CASE STUDY OF IMPROVEMENT IN AN EDUCATION OTHER THAN AT SCHOOL CENTRE (EOTAS)

### **At the time of the initial inspection:**

A number of important areas for development were identified, including the need to develop planning to promote the application of the key skills of English, mathematics and information communication technology (ICT), to provide greater challenge for the young people within lessons and connect the learning in practical activities with the core curriculum, to provide opportunities for the young people to work in pairs and small groups to develop their ability to work collaboratively, to clarify the overall governance of the provision and put in place budgetary arrangements which ensure that the education co-ordinator can effectively cost the centre's development plans and resources and to ensure staff have access to continuous professional development.

### **Following the inspection:**

A mainstream post-primary school accepted the role of governance of the EOTAS centre and a new education co-ordinator was appointed. The principal of the school conducted an audit of the ICT provision and training was provided in the use of ICT, assessment for learning and in the use of thematic approaches to teaching and learning. There was a restructuring of the schemes and lesson planning with opportunities provided for the young people to work collaboratively. The school provided in-service support and ICT technical support for the centre.

As a result of the development work carried out since the original inspection, the staff report a greater engagement and attendance of the young people who are now given the opportunity to work collaboratively. There is now a consistent format for lesson planning with greater challenge within lessons and ICT is used appropriately across the core curriculum and in some practical activities. The teachers use themes based on the interests and needs of the young people as a focus that engages them well. The centre is developing the connections between the core curriculum and practical learning activities. The local mainstream post-primary school has taken on the role of governance of the centre and management is effectively supporting the new education co-ordinator in improving the provision and providing opportunities for staff to access continuing professional development. Some of the centre staff have been team teaching in the post primary school for part of the week as part of their professional development and there are effective professional relationships between the teachers in both organisations. The Education and Library Board have put in clear budgetary arrangements enabling the education co-ordinator to plan and resource the centre effectively.

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The centre is more dynamic and staff are exploring new courses and creative ways to engage the young people. The quality of the education provided by the centre is now good and there are important strengths in the provision. The governance and financial issues have been resolved and the new management team have demonstrated the capacity to continue to develop the provision.

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## **A CASE STUDY OF IMPROVEMENT IN A POST-PRIMARY SCHOOL WHICH HAD BEEN IN THE FORMAL INTERVENTION PROCESS**

The school in this case study is a non-selective 11-18 school with 900 pupils from city and rural areas. Over 95% of the pupils enrolled obtained either a Grade D or did not participate in the (then) transfer procedure. Twenty-seven percent of the pupils were entitled to free school meals and 22% required additional support with their learning.

### **At the time of the initial inspection**

In March 2010, when the initial inspection was conducted, SEN provision was evaluated as good and pastoral care and careers as satisfactory. The quality of the achievements and standards (particularly in English and science), provision for teaching and learning and the leadership at most levels, however, were evaluated as inadequate. The school was placed by the Department of Education in the formal intervention process.

### **Following the inspection**

By the time of the first follow-up inspection in September 2011, three new assistant principals (for teaching and learning, pupil support and standards and achievements) and a new head of science had been appointed. A staff development programme had been put in place and a consistent approach to managing pupil behaviour was implemented successfully. Effective use of tracking and target-setting in Year 12 to raise standards had been introduced. Standards in science rose to well above the average for similar schools and standards in English fell further to well below average. Overall, however, the provision remained inadequate.

### **How did the school improve to Satisfactory between March 2010 and November 2012 and exit formal intervention?**

- The governors formed a monitoring group which worked in the school, on a regular and frequent basis, interviewing, challenging and supporting teachers with leadership duties.
- Reporting to governors through subject departments reviews, was implemented, focusing on addressing underachievement.
- A new school development plan was drawn up, coordinating teams across the school.
- The senior leadership team was restructured with distributed responsibilities.
- A new vice-principal and a new head of English were appointed.
- Pastoral care provision was revised, codes of conduct for pupils and staff were introduced with a focus on consequences and rewards, in order to build an ethos of REAL (*Respect for Everyone, Achievement for Life*) which created a more explicit link between the curriculum, teaching and pastoral provision.
- A staff well-being group was introduced and monthly meetings held with support staff.
- A school council was set up for students and evening classes provided for parents.
- Based on collating and analysing detailed assessment data, the tracking of pupils' progress and intervention was developed further to address underachievement.
- Through staff development, a much sharper and more effective focus on the pupils' learning and on the pedagogy which best promotes it was shared.

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In the context of a well-coordinated and highly accountable strategic approach, the staff now accept collective responsibility for continued improvement and, through a combination of formal and informal communications, are reflecting on and sharing good teaching practices in an effective way. As a result, across 14 subjects, standards at General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) have risen significantly, including the measure of good GCSEs and, while the headline figures are just below the average for similar schools, there is sufficient evidence that the actions are impacting positively on the outcomes for pupils and the provision was evaluated as satisfactory in November 2012 and the school exited formal intervention.

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## A CASE STUDY OF IMPROVEMENT IN A WORK-BASED LEARNING ORGANISATION

### **At the time of the initial inspection:**

The overall quality of the provision was inadequate and a number of important areas for development were identified, including the unsatisfactory quality of the provision for engineering in a sub-contracting organisation; the inadequate leadership and management of the engineering provision, particularly the arrangements for the monitoring and evaluation of the sub-contracted training; the quality of the teaching, training and learning in a significant minority of the directed training sessions observed; and the modest overall retention rate across the professional and technical areas inspected.

### **Within a short period:**

The manager, board of directors and staff demonstrated a strong commitment to addressing shortfalls in the quality of the provision and an effective improvement plan was produced to promote improvement across the organisation.

### **In the interval after the inspection:**

A number of key actions which affected the work of the organisation took place.

- The board of directors became more actively involved in the quality improvement process.
- Improved internal quality assurance and management information systems were implemented.
- The curriculum offer was revised and new health and safety and sub-contracting arrangements were put in place, including enhanced arrangements to monitor and evaluate the sub-contracted provision.
- The staffing and management structures were reviewed, and a qualifications manager and some specialist tutors were recruited.
- A significant investment was made in targeted continuous professional development to further improve the quality of teaching, training and learning.
- High levels of investment were made in resources and accommodation.
- A revised retention strategy was implemented.



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**Over an 18 month period:**

Significant improvements were made in the quality of the provision, both at management level and across a number of professional and technical areas.

- Good arrangements are now in place to manage and evaluate provision which is sub-contracted.
- The provision in the professional and technical areas has improved and is now good or very good across the provision.
- The quality of teaching, training and learning is now good or better in a majority of the sessions observed.

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## **A CASE STUDY IN A SPECIAL SCHOOL: ENABLING INCLUSIVE SUPPORT TO DEVELOP**

### **At the time of the initial inspection:**

The main area for improvement related to leadership and management. The school was in the process of a new build and much work was needed to ensure that the provision would be fit for future purpose and developed within a long term strategic view of the school as a specialist provider for children with sensory impairment and an advisory and support service to the wider mainstream school system

### **Following the inspection:**

Little progress was noted by the time of the follow-up inspection in the key areas for development as the school was focused almost entirely on securing the resources and accommodation which the staff considered necessary to meet the needs of the pupils. With support from the Education and Library Board and the district inspector a new action plan and school development plan were prepared which were of good quality and used purposefully to implement important priorities such as linking the school to provision at the local further education college and initiating joint learning between the school and its neighbouring mainstream schools. This action was effective and helped the school to create an ethos as a valued resource to mainstream schools

### **The second follow up inspection:**

Found the level of provision of a good standard. Key improvements included the creation of an effective system to track pupils' progress, monitor outcomes and ensure that the pupils had the opportunity to experience learning alongside peers in mainstream schools. The outreach service is now well established and learning pathways are clear and recognised by pupils and parents alike. Creatively, the pupils have developed a training programme of signing to break barriers to communication which they teach to pupils and professionals in other schools, and settings.

As a consequence the school is in a better position to day and a confident and outgoing service of support is well underway.