



*The Education and Training Inspectorate -
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Education and Training Inspectorate

Report of a Follow-up Inspection

**Armagh Integrated College
Armagh**

May 2008

FOLLOW-UP TO THE INSPECTION OF ARMAGH INTEGRATED COLLEGE, ARMAGH, BT60 3AS (526-0307)

The focused inspection of Armagh Integrated College in May 2007 identified strengths including:

- the motivation and engagement of pupils when the lessons were well-planned and resourced;
- the quality of provision for the pupils with special educational needs in approximately one-half of the subjects;
- the outstanding quality of teaching observed in English, art and design and history; and
- the good work of the then Acting-principal who had endeavoured to improve the pupils' learning experiences, in constrained and challenging circumstances.

However, the inspection identified major shortcomings in the school's work. The poor relationships between many of the key stakeholders in the school were having a detrimental effect on the quality of education being provided for the pupils. The inspection identified significant areas for improvement to be addressed as a matter of urgency. These were:

- the deficiencies in the arrangements for pastoral care and child protection;
- important aspects of the ethos;
- the inconsistencies in the pupils' learning experiences, along with a clear focus on improving the standards they achieve;
- the unsatisfactory provision for mathematics;
- the significant deficiencies in the school's curricular provision; and
- the lack of stability and continuity in the strategic management, leadership and staffing of the school at all levels.

In the interval since the inspection, changes that affect the work of the school have taken place including:

- the revised governance arrangements, including the appointment of a new chair of the Board of Governors (governors);
- the appointment of a new Acting-principal in November 2007;
- the creation of a leadership team, comprising the Acting-principal, learning managers for Key Stage (KS) 3 and KS 4, and special educational needs and pastoral care;

- a reduction in pupil enrolments, to 136 pupils across years 8 to 11;
- the provision of all of the year 11 General Certificate in Secondary Education (GCSE) single and double award science in the Armagh campus of the Southern Regional College (SRC);
- the provision of applied courses under the Vocational Enhancement Programme in the Armagh campus of the SRC for all year 11 pupils; and
- the decision by the governors, to transfer all its provision for year 11 pupils from September 2008 to the Integrated College Dungannon.

Since the original inspection, the Education and Training Inspectorate (Inspectorate) carried out pastoral care follow-up inspection visits in June and December 2007, and a monitoring visit in mathematics in January 2008.

As part of the arrangements for the current follow-up inspection, the Acting-principal compiled a self-evaluation report on the overall quality of provision in the school. In addition, each member of the leadership team produced self-evaluation reports for their respective areas of responsibility.

Some progress has been made in the areas for improvement identified during the original inspection. These improvements include:

- the school's pastoral care and child protection arrangements, particularly the development of a child protection policy and its effective communication to members of the school community and the commitment shown by the Acting-principal and the majority of staff in support of the pupils' welfare;
- more effective governance arrangements, where governors have taken important decisions in the best interests of the pupils;
- the leadership of the Acting-principal, who in a relatively short period of time, has worked effectively to develop communications, both in the school and with parents; and
- the more harmonious staff relationships and enhanced collegial work across most areas of the school.

Nevertheless, there are important inconsistencies in the quality and range of the pupils' learning experiences across the school. Important areas for improvement identified in the original inspection remain to be addressed urgently if the school is to meet effectively the needs of all of the pupils. These areas for improvement include the need to:

- address the poor relationships between a minority of teachers and the pupils and also among a small number of the pupils which are not characterised by the respect and dignity necessary for good behaviour and a positive ethos for learning; in addition, the limited playground space and the quality of the learning environment also have a negative impact on the morale of the staff and pupils;

- review and implement the positive behaviour and anti-bullying policies more effectively in line with the recommendations of the Department of Education Circular 2003/13 in order to address the behavioural issues and to improve the relationships;
- develop, monitor and evaluate the Personal Development programme to ensure it provides the most relevant educational experience for the pupils;
- improve the school's curricular provision to ensure that pupils have access to the broad and balanced curriculum to which they are entitled; and
- improve the quality of provision in mathematics; although some progress has been made since the original inspection, there are still important shortcomings in the quality of teaching and learning and in the standards of the pupils' work.

It will be important that the Department of Education and the governors review urgently the viability of the school in the interests of the pupils, particularly the small number of pupils who are planning to transfer to the school in year 8 in September 2008.

In the areas inspected, the school has a few strengths in its educational and pastoral provision. However, the follow-up inspection has identified important areas for improvement, which need to be addressed promptly if the school is to meet effectively the needs of all the pupils.

The Inspectorate will monitor and report on the school's progress in addressing these areas for improvement.

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