



*The Education and Training Inspectorate -
Promoting Improvement*



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



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Education and Training Inspectorate

Report of a Standard Inspection

Drumragh Integrated College Omagh

Inspected: February 2008

CONTENTS

Section	Page
1. INTRODUCTION	1
2. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' WORK	2
3. SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS	3
4. CONCLUSION	4
APPENDICES	

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 CONTEXT

Drumragh Integrated College is situated on the outskirts of the town of Omagh, County Tyrone. The majority of the pupils are drawn from the town, with others travelling from within a radius of up to 25 miles. The enrolment has increased in recent years from a minimum in 2005/06 to a current figure just over 600. Approximately 27% of the pupils are entitled to free school meals and 30% have been identified as requiring additional support with aspects of their learning. Approximately 16% of the intake obtained grades A or B in the Transfer Procedure, while around 38% opted not to take the tests.

1.2 FOCUS

The inspection focused on leadership and management at all levels across the school and, in addition, on the provision for English, mathematics and physical education. The provision for pastoral care and the arrangements for child protection were also evaluated. As an additional evidence base for the inspection, lessons were observed in a range of other subjects and inspectors met with heads of departments and co-ordinators from a range of other aspects of the school's provision. The arrangements for Alternative Educational Provision were also inspected as part of a pilot survey.

1.3 THE VIEWS OF PARENTS, TEACHERS, GOVERNORS AND PUPILS

The arrangements for the inspection of pastoral care and child protection included the opportunity for the parents and the teaching staff to complete a confidential questionnaire prior to the inspection, as well as meetings with representatives from the governors and groups of pupils from years 8, 12, 13 and 14. At the request of the Principal, the views of the non-teaching staff were also sought through an additional questionnaire.

A sample of 108 questionnaires were issued to the parents; 40% were returned to the Department of Education (DE) and 26 contained additional written comments. The responses from the questionnaires, and the comments from the parents, were overwhelmingly positive and highly affirmative of the work of the school. In particular, the parents referred to the caring ethos throughout the school, the committed and approachable teachers and the effectiveness and professionalism of the Principal. The Education and Training Inspectorate has reported to the Principal, and representatives of the governors, the very few areas of concern emerging from the parents' questionnaires.

The governors also expressed their strong support for the work of the school, particularly the commitment of the staff and Principal. The governors commented favourably on the good standards attained by the pupils and the improving reputation of the school in the community and acknowledged that these were achieved in spite of the old and inappropriate buildings.

Twenty-three of the teachers completed a confidential questionnaire, with 14 providing additional written comments. They were very positive about the working relationships within the school and appreciative of the work of the Principal. A few of the teachers raised concerns about the inconsistency in upholding the standards of the pupils' behaviour. The difficulties that arise from the nature of the current buildings were also a concern for a number of the staff.

Thirty-one members of the non-teaching staff completed a pilot questionnaire, with 12 providing additional written comments. The views expressed were very positive, including that they like working at the college and value how the achievements of the pupils were celebrated. The effective leadership of the Principal was also reported with strong support. The consistency with which the standards of the pupils' behaviour were maintained was a concern of a few of the non-teaching staff.

In their discussions, the pupils talked of the excellent relationships they enjoy with the teachers and the secure and inclusive atmosphere. They indicated that they are aware of what to do if they have any concerns about their well-being.

1.4 PASTORAL CARE AND CHILD PROTECTION

The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care and child protection has important strengths. The school has procedures in place which implement the guidance outlined in the relevant DE Circulars and has identified appropriately a few areas for improvement which it is currently implementing.

1.5 ALTERNATIVE EDUCATIONAL PROVISION (AEP)

The school's capacity to ensure its commitment to those students at risk of marginalisation is satisfactory. The special needs and pastoral care arrangements identify students at risk of falling behind or dropping out of school and some action to promote their inclusion is evident. The special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) is highly committed to the students' well-being and gives wholesome attention to nurturing these students' emotional development. Further consideration and strategic planning across special and pastoral areas may enhance this practice further.

2. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' WORK

2.1 EXAMINATIONS AND STANDARDS

The pupils show interest and are motivated to do well in their work. Most pupils in year 12 are entered for five or more subjects at General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) level. Over the last three years, an average of 60% of pupils achieved grades A* to C in five or more subjects at GCSE. This strong performance is well above the Northern Ireland (NI) average for non-selective schools.

At post-16, pupils do a range of General Certificate of Education (GCE) and Advanced Vocational Certificate of Education (AVCE) subjects, including a number of Applied GCEs. A number of pupils are also studying for a level 3 National Award in Sport. In 2007, 48% of year 14 pupils achieved the equivalent of at least three Advanced (A) levels at grade C or above, and 97% achieved the equivalent of at least two A levels at grade E or above. More information on the results achieved in public examinations is given in Appendices 3 and 4.

2.2 QUALITY OF LEARNING AND TEACHING

The quality of the teaching in the majority of lessons observed during the inspection was good or better and, on a few occasions, it was excellent. In the most effective practice, clear planning ensured that the pupils were engaged actively in their learning; learning intentions were shared with the pupils at the start of the lesson, reviewed throughout and consolidated at the end of the lesson; the teachers used effective questioning to promote the pupils' thinking; there was appropriate pace to the lesson; collaborative inter-subject projects were motivating for the pupils; and, pupils' peer and self-assessment strategies resulted in higher quality learning. In the less effective practice, the lessons were characterised by teacher-led activities which did not take account of the range of abilities within the class, by limited opportunities to develop the pupils' oral skills, and by learning intentions not being shared fully with the pupils. It is appropriate that the school has identified independent learning as an area for development. There is a need, however, for a greater consistency in the sharing and extending of teaching approaches that develop the pupils' independence.

More detailed evaluation of the subjects under focus is provided in Appendix 1.

2.3 MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

The Principal has been in post for two years. He has a clear vision for the future of the school and is committed fully to the education and well-being of the pupils. His leadership style, which involves decision-making based on effective consultation, has developed positive inclusive working relationships amongst the staff, both teaching and non-teaching; a high level of trust and openness exists between the staff and the Principal. The Principal is ably supported by the Vice-principal and members of the senior management team (SMT). There is effective communication between the SMT and the teachers with middle-management responsibilities.

There is a School Development Plan (SDP) which outlines a wide range of development areas. The SDP is the outworking of a process of reflection and evaluation, led mainly by the SMT. There is a need, however, to develop it further, in light of a systematic and, on occasions, more rigorous monitoring and evaluation, in order that the areas are prioritised, set within a realistic timeframe, measured against appropriate specific targets and focused more sharply on teaching and learning. The SDP does not comply with the requirements of the Education (School Development Plans) Regulations NI 2005.

There are aspects of good practice of self-evaluation within the work of the school. There is a need, however, to develop further the strategies through which the staff reflect on their work, using appropriate evidence, in order to review and improve the educational and pastoral provision. It is appropriate that the school has identified the need for the development of the leadership role of middle managers.

3. SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS

The strengths of the school include:

- the strong, caring and supportive ethos;
- the high standards achieved by the pupils, particularly at GCSE;

- the good quality of the majority of the teaching;
- the support of the parents and governors, and the links with other agencies in the local and wider community;
- the dedication and commitment of all the staff to the education and welfare of the pupils; and
- the quality of leadership of the Principal, and his commitment to, and vision for, the development of the school.

3.2 The area for improvement is:

- the need to develop further the monitoring and evaluation at all levels in order to increase the effectiveness of the school's improvement process.

4. **CONCLUSION**

In the areas inspected, the school has important strengths in most of its educational and pastoral provision. The inspection has identified a minor area for improvement which the school has the capacity to address.

The school's progress on the area for improvement will be followed up by monitoring visits, conducted by the District Inspector.

SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS FROM THE SUBJECTS UNDER FOCUS

Pastoral care

The strengths of the provision include:

- the opportunities provided to enrich the pupils' experiences;
- the very good behaviour, courtesy and interpersonal skills displayed by the pupils;
- the commitment of all the staff to the high quality care and welfare of the pupils; and
- the effective and committed leadership and management provided by the co-ordinator for pastoral care and other key personnel.

The areas for development include:

- the need to implement more rigorous processes to self-evaluate the quality of, and the developments in, pastoral care.

English

The strengths of the work include:

- the many good features in the teaching observed;
- the emphasis placed on developing the pupils' enjoyment of language and literature;
- the attainment of the majority of the pupils, especially in reading and writing; and
- the standards being achieved by the pupils in GCSE examinations in English subjects.

The areas for development include:

- the development of a systematic approach to self-evaluation of the active approaches being used in teaching and learning; and
- the need for greater consistency, focused through learning intentions, in the development of literacy as a central aspect of independent learning.

Mathematics

The strengths of the work include:

- the good behaviour of the pupils and positive ethos within lessons;
- the very good standards achieved by the pupils, particularly at key stage (KS) 3 and GCSE;
- the effective leadership of the head of department;
- the commitment and hard work of the teachers; and
- the good start made to the sharing of good practice within the department.

The areas for development include:

- the need to develop effective teaching and learning strategies that promote mathematical thinking and engage the pupils in active learning; and
- the need to focus development work clearly on teaching and learning through, for example, effective action planning.

Physical Education

The strengths of the work include:

- the very good working relationships between the staff and the pupils;
- the motivation of the pupils;
- the range of experiences offered to the pupils;
- the hard-working and motivated staff;
- the involvement in extra-curricular sporting activities; and
- the involvement in the top-link programme.

The areas for development include the need to continue to:

- develop teaching strategies, including more open-ended questioning, to promote independent learning, problem-solving and creativity; and
- review planning and develop the process of self-evaluation to focus more specifically on teaching and learning.

ACCOMMODATION AND HEALTH & SAFETY

- The current school buildings are unsatisfactory in terms of both accommodation and health and safety. Building work on the new school is underway, with a planned finishing date of Spring 2009.

STATISTICAL INFORMATION

- 1.1 i. School: Drumragh Integrated College v. Date of Inspection: W/C 18.02.08
 ii. School Reference Number: 226-0283 vi. Standard Inspection
 iii. Age Range: 11-16
 iv. Status: Grant Maintained Integrated

1.2 Intake/Enrolment

School Year	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08
Year 8 Intake	73	87	81	104	109
Total enrolment	544	515	492	528	607

1.3 Attendance

Year 2006/07	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	Average 2006/07	NI Average 2005/06
% Attendance	92.5	91.1	90.9	90	91.5	92.4	94.3	91	90

- 1.4 i. Total Number of Teachers:

37

- iii. Contact ratio (percentage of
-
- timetabled time in direct
-
- class contact):

0.77

- ii. PTR (Pupil/Teacher Ratio):

16.37

Year 2007/08	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	TOTAL
Enrolment: Boys	53	57	50	53	45	31	13	302
Enrolment: Girls	56	52	44	51	43	31	28	305
Enrolment: Total	109	109	94	104	88	62	41	607
PTR	18.8	18.3	16.4	17.6	14.6	13.5	13.4	

- 1.5
- Staying On Rate (2006/07)
- (Current year 13/14 as proportion of year 12 from 1/2 years previously)

Year 13	60.3	NI Av Year 13	N/A
Year 14	40.0	NI Av Year 14	N/A

1.6 Leavers Destinations

2005/06	Year 12	NI%	Year 13/14	NI%
Total Number of Leavers	43		50	
Another School	7%	8.3	6%	N/A
Employment	21%	12	4%	N/A
Full-time Further Education	63%	37.6	18%	N/A
Full-time Higher Education	N/A	N/A	64%	N/A
Full-time Training	2%	34.4	2%	N/A
Seeking Employment/Unemployed	2%	4.2	2%	N/A
Unknown/Long Term Sick/Pregnant	5%	3.5	4%	N/A

1.7 NAME OF SCHOOL: Drumragh Integrated College,
Omagh

SCHOOL YEAR: 2007/2008

GCSE	2005	2006	2007
Percentage of Year 12 taking GCSE in at least 5 subjects	97.33	94.52	91.56
Percentage of Year 12 obtaining Grades C or above in at least 5 subjects	55.69	61.1	63.85
Percentage of Year 12 obtaining Grades E or above in at least 5 subjects	93.67	93.05	86.74
GCE A2 Level or equivalent	2005	2006	2007
Percentage of Year 14 obtaining Grades C or above in at least 3 A2 levels	25.86	28.21	36.67
Percentage of Year 14 obtaining Grades E or above in at least 2 A2 levels	81.03	76.92	76.67

EXAMINATION RESULTS

Table showing the GCSE subject results over the previous three years ending in June 2007, in comparison with the respective Northern Ireland (NI) averages

Table 1

	More than 10 percentage points above	Between 5 and 10 percentage points above	Within 5 percentage points	Between 5 and 10 percentage points below	More than 10 percentage points below
GCSE A*-C	Drama English English Literature Geography German Home Economics Home Economics -Child Devt. Information Technology Mathematics Mathematics Additional* Religious Studies Science Double Award Science Single Award Sport/PE Studies	Business Studies	History Music*		Art & Design French Spanish Technology & Design

GCE A-C			Geography Home Economics Psychology		Art & Design^ Biology^ Business Studies^ Chemistry^ Drama^ English Literature French^ History Mathematics Music^ Physics^ Politics^ Religious Studies^ Sociology^
GCE A-E			Art & Design^ Biology^ Chemistry^ Drama^ English Literature French^ Geography History Home Economics Mathematics Music^ Psychology	Business Studies^ Politics^ Religious Studies^ Sociology^	Physics^

* Denotes subjects which had a total entry of less than 30 over the three years.

^ Denotes subjects which had a total entry of less than 20 over the three years.

NOTE:

1. Over the last three years, 76.5% of pupils taking GCSE Engineering (Vocational) achieved a grades A* to C
2. In 2007, eight pupils completed the Occupational Studies qualification; five pupils achieved Double Award Level 2, two pupils achieved Double Award Level 1 and one pupil achieved Single Award Level 1.
3. Over the last three years, 58.3% of the 12 pupils taking Fine Art achieved grades A to C
4. Over the last three years, 100% of the 12 pupils taking Fine Art achieved grades A to E

Table showing the spread of the NI subject averages which have been used in the determination of Table 1.

Table 2

	100% - 96%	95% - 86%	85% - 76%	75% - 66%	65% - 0%
GCSE A*-C			Art & Design Music	Drama English Literature German Information Technology Mathematics Additional Science Double Award	Business Studies English French Geography History Home Economics Home Economics Child Development Mathematics Religious Studies Single Award Science Spanish Sport/PE Studies Technology and Design
GCE A-C		Art & Design Business Studies Drama English Literature French Geography History Mathematics Music Politics Religious Studies Sociology Spanish	Biology Chemistry Home Economics Physics		Psychology

GCE A-E	Art & Design Biology Business Studies Chemistry Drama English Literature French Geography History Home Economics Mathematics Music Physics Politics Religious Studies Sociology Spanish	Psychology			
------------	---	------------	--	--	--

ADVANCED VOCATIONAL CERTIFICATE OF EDUCATION/APPLIED GENERAL CERTIFICATE OF EDUCATION

	2005		2006		2007		Total Entry over 3 years
	% A-C	% A-E	% A-C	% A-E	% A-C	% A-E	
Health & Social Care	50	100	60	100	100	100	12
ICT	100	100					16
ICT (Single Award)			100	100	71	100	19
ICT (Double Award)			83	100	59	100	19
Applied Business					86	100	7
Leisure & Recreation	60	80					5

© CROWN COPYRIGHT 2008

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 DE website: www.deni.gov.uk or may be obtained from the Inspection Services Branch, Department of Education, Rathgael House, 43 Balloo Road, Bangor, Co Down BT19 7PR.