The Education and Training Inspectorate - *Promoting Improvement*

Providing Inspection Services for
Department of Education
Department for Employment and Learning
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CUSTOMER SERVICE EXCELLENCE

INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Education and Training Inspectorate

Report of a Standard Inspection

Campbell College
Belfast

Inspected: April 2009

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 CONTEXT

Campbell College is a boys' voluntary grammar school located on an extensive and attractive site of approximately 100 acres just off the Belmont Road in east Belfast. From September 2009, the school will be the last remaining school in Belfast to offer boarding provision for boys. Inspectors from the Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority (RQIA), the independent health and social care regulatory body for Northern Ireland, conducted an inspection of the arrangements in the boarding department at the same time as the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) carried out the inspection of the educational provision. A summary of the RQIA findings is included in this report.

The enrolment of the school has increased over recent years and currently stands at 879; 85 of these pupils are boarders. At the time of the inspection, approximately half of the pupils in years 8-12 had obtained a grade A or B in the Transfer Test. The school has identified approximately 18% of the pupils who require additional support in their learning.

1.2 THE VIEWS OF PARENTS, TEACHERS, SUPPORT STAFF, GOVERNORS AND PUPILS

The arrangements for the inspection of the educational provision included the opportunity for the parents, teaching and support staff to complete a confidential questionnaire prior to the inspection. In addition to meetings with representatives from the Board of Governors (governors), groups of pupils from years 8, 12, and the sixth form were interviewed.

One hundred and seventy-nine questionnaires were issued to the parents, 21% were returned to the Department of Education (DE); 26 of these contained additional written comments. Most of the responses from the questionnaires, and the written comments from the parents, were highly supportive of the work of the school. In particular, the parents highlighted as strengths of the provision: the wide range of extra-curricular activities; the range of subject choices available; the supportive teachers; and the quality of the leadership provided by the Principal. A minority of parents expressed concerns about the level of challenge in aspects of teaching and homework and in the school's procedures for dealing with, and responding to, parents' concerns and complaints.

Just under one-third of the teachers and eleven support staff completed a confidential questionnaire, with ten providing additional written comments. The staff commented positively on a range of issues related to aspects of learning and teaching including: the provision for special educational needs (SEN), the quality of the relationships between staff and pupils; and the school's standing in the local community. A majority of the staff who responded expressed concerns relating to aspects of leadership and management, in particular the quality of the communication and the lack of the promotion of the welfare of staff by management.

The governors expressed their strong support for the work of the Principal and the staff, and commented positively on the many changes which have been implemented over the past three years.

Almost all of the pupils talked positively about their overall experiences in school and highlighted the very good range and quality of the sporting and other activities on offer. They feel safe and secure in school; a minority were unclear about aspects of the child protection procedures.

ETI has reported to the Principal, and to representatives of the governors, the issues emerging from the parents', teachers' and support staff questionnaires. Where appropriate, these matters are dealt with in the body of the report.

1.3 FOCUS

The inspection focused on the quality of the learning and teaching, leadership and management at all levels across the school, the provision for pupils in English, history and mathematics and the provision for pupils with special educational needs (SEN). The school's provision for pastoral care and the arrangements for child protection were also evaluated. As additional evidence for the inspection, inspectors observed classes in a range of other subjects. A summary of the main findings for the specialist subject areas under focus can be found in Appendix 1.

2. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' WORK

2.1 ACHIEVEMENT AND STANDARDS

The school has worked hard to meet the varied learning needs of the pupils. The Principal and his team of Vice-principals are aware that there is a need for improvement in the standards achieved by the pupils in external examinations and appropriate strategies for improvement have been identified and are being implemented. There is clear evidence to suggest that, in the main, pupils are benefiting from these strategies. There is a need for a common understanding among the teachers of both the standard of work that it is reasonable to expect from the pupils and how this work should be marked to encourage learning and provide the pupils with appropriate areas for improvement. In too many instances, the teachers accept poorly presented work from the pupils.

The percentage of pupils achieving seven or more General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) grades at A*-C, including English and mathematics, has improved steadily over the past three years; however, it remains below the average for Northern Ireland (NI) selective schools. At GCSE grades A*-B, most subjects are more than ten percentage points below the NI average.

Similarly, over the past three years, there has been steady improvement in the pupils' achievement in General Certificate of Education (GCE) Advanced (A) level at grades A-C in at least three subjects. This performance, however, also remains below the average for Northern Ireland (NI) selective schools.

More information about the results achieved in public examinations is given in Appendices 3 and 4.

2.2 QUALITY OF LEARNING AND TEACHING

A majority of the lessons observed were good or better, with a minority of the teaching being satisfactory. In the more effective practice, the lessons were well structured and the teachers deployed a variety of learning and teaching activities to maintain the pupils' interest, enjoyment and motivation. They challenged the pupils through good use of open questions and provided opportunities for the pupils to develop and extend their oral responses and thinking skills. In the less effective practice, there was over direction by the teacher and the activities provided insufficient opportunities for active participation by the pupils. In these lessons, the pace was often too slow and the lack of challenge resulted in the pupils becoming quite passive and, at times, unsettled.

There is a need to disseminate the existing good practice across the school in order to share and develop further strategies for learning and teaching that challenge and engage all of the pupils more actively in their learning and develop their independence, take greater account of the wide range of abilities and focus on the consolidation of learning.

2.3 PASTORAL CARE

The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care in the school is good. This is evidenced by the good progress made in the development of strategies to promote positive behaviour, the good conduct of most of the pupils; the good extra-curricular opportunities available for pupils, particularly the quality of the sports activities on offer, and the very good commitment of the pastoral team. Within the past year, the school has undertaken a major review of its pastoral structures, overseen effectively by the Vice-principal with responsibility for pastoral care. This work has resulted in the appointment of many staff to new, or redefined, roles and responsibilities. The new structures are appropriate and have the potential to have a positive impact on the life and work of the school. In order to develop the provision further, there is the need to ensure that the communication between pupils, staff and the senior management is more effective.

2.4 CHILD PROTECTION

The school has satisfactory arrangements in place for safeguarding children. These arrangements broadly reflect the guidance issued by DE although the school needs to ensure that all pupils are aware of child protection procedures including awareness of the designated and deputy designated teachers for child protection.

2.5 SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

The school has identified the provision of additional support for pupils who are on the special needs register as a priority for development and has allocated substantial additional resources to meeting the learning needs of these pupils. The two special educational needs co-ordinators (SENCOs) have developed a well organised and managed system for identifying and assessing the needs of pupils. They provide very good leadership and comprehensive, practical guidance on specific strategies and classroom management techniques.

It will be important to develop further the SENCO role to share this good practice across the other curricular areas and develop the awareness of all of the staff of the needs of the pupils and their skills in meeting these needs.

3. LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The Headmaster, who has been in post for just over three years, is highly committed to the school and to the process of continuous improvement. He has demonstrated strong leadership in identifying appropriate areas for development and in implementing necessary new systems and structures to take this work forward. He is ably supported by the three Vice-principals who have all also been appointed within the past three years and who share and understand his vision for the school. The senior staff have prepared a solid foundation for future developments: they have identified and prioritised key areas for improvement, including the review of the pastoral system, and the need to raise the standards achieved by the pupils in external examinations. A particular feature of this self-evaluative process is the extent to which they have made effective use of data to celebrate success and to set appropriate targets for improvement.

The structural changes have included the development of the role of middle management, in particular, the role of the heads of subject departments. Overall, the quality of middle management in the areas under focus is good. The heads of department have overseen strategic developments within their departments in a collegial manner. These key people are now taking greater responsibility for monitoring the standards within their departments and in identifying areas for improvement; a strength in this work is the extent to which they are using data to inform their judgements. Whilst much has been achieved in this area over the past academic year, there is a need to consolidate this work and develop further the communication between senior and middle management and, in particular, the heads of department, in order to develop their expertise in the process of improvement; and to ensure that they feel empowered to offer constructive criticism on whole-school issues, secure in the knowledge that their views are welcomed and respected.

There is a growing culture of reflection and self-evaluation throughout the school; this is evident in the self-evaluation reports completed prior to the inspection and in the well constructed school development plan which meets fully the requirements of the School Development Plans Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2005. The School Development Plan includes priorities which are in line with the findings of this inspection.

4. SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS

4.1 The main strengths of the school include:

- the strong leadership of the Principal in implementing new structures which have a clear focus on the improvement of the provision for the pupils;

- the developing role of the middle management in the arrangements for monitoring and evaluating the pupils' performance and in the use of data to set appropriate targets for improvement;

- the overall quality of the teaching observed, a majority of which was good or better;

- the quality of the pastoral provision;

- the hard-working and committed teachers and the diverse range of activities they provide to enhance the pupils' learning experiences beyond the classroom; and

- the excellent contribution made by the governors and support staff to the life and work of the school.

4.2 The areas for improvement include the need to:

- raise further the standards achieved by the pupils in external examinations and the overall quality of their written work;

- develop further the communication between senior and middle management and, in particular, the heads of department, in order to develop their expertise in the process of whole school improvement; and

- employ a wider range of teaching and learning strategies that engage the pupils more actively in their learning and develop their independence.

5. CONCLUSION

In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by the school is good. The school has important strengths in most of its educational and pastoral provision. The inspection has identified areas for improvement which the school has demonstrated the capacity to address. The Education and Training Inspectorate will monitor the school's progress on the areas for improvement.

ANNUAL THEMATIC INSPECTION

20 APRIL 2009

CAMPBELL COLLEGE

BELMONT ROAD,
BELFAST
BT4 2ND

The Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority,
9th Floor, Riverside Tower,
Lanyon Place,
Belfast
Tel: 028 9051 7500
E: info@rqia.org.uk

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1. INTRODUCTION

2. PROGRESS WITH PREVIOUS RECOMMENDATIONS

3. CONCLUSION

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The boarding department at Campbell College is known as School House, which is located within the main School building and consists of a Middle School which houses children and young people aged from 11 to 15 years of age; and Senior School which provides accommodation and care until leaving school at 18 years of age. At the time of this inspection 84 boys were boarding at Campbell College.

1.2 This inspection was a thematic inspection, and was in keeping with the requirements of Article 176 (amended) of The Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995. Since April 2005 this legislation places a duty on the Regulation Quality and Improvement Authority (RQIA) to safeguard and promote the welfare of children who board at the School. The current programme of inspections consists of a major inspection every 3rd year and thematic inspections in the intervening two years. Campbell College last received a major inspection in 2007.

2. PROGRESS WITH PREVIOUS RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 The inspection confirmed that all of the previous recommendations had been addressed.

3. CONCLUSION

3.1 The findings of this inspection revealed that Campbell College Boarding Department has continued to develop the boarding accommodation. Overall, the boarding department in Campbell College presents as an enjoyable, stimulating and a satisfying living experience for the current boarders, in a continually improving environment. A number of strengths were identified:

- The Head of Boarding and Head of Middle School Boarding continued to present as knowledgeable and resourceful individuals who demonstrated awareness and ability to protect the boarders' welfare needs, and enable their teams to do the same.

- An incident that occurred within Campbell College prompted an appropriate revision of safeguarding procedures within the boarding department.

- The boarders who were introduced to the Inspectors were enthusiastic, confident, well spoken and polite. The young people confidently expressed many positive views about what the boarding experience had offered them.

- The out of school activities available to boarders were varied and full involvement of boarders was encouraged.

- The House Senate and food committee had been encouraged and enabled to continue making positive changes for the boarders.

- The Head of Boarding has demonstrated an effective leadership style which has led to continued positive change and has continued to have a positive impact on the boarding provision in Campbell College.

3.2 Recommendations have been made with a view to assisting the boarding department in the process of continuing to develop and improve standards.

3.3 The Inspectors appreciated the full cooperation of the Board of Governors, Headmaster, Head of Boarding, Head of Middle School Boarding, the Matron, the School Doctor, the boarding staff and the boarders during this inspection and the RQIA would like to thank them all for their contribution to this inspection.

APPENDIX 1

English

The main strengths of the English department include:

- the committed and hard working teachers;
- the good working relationships between teachers and pupils;
- the quality of leadership and collegiality in the department;
- the quality of teaching, the majority of which is good;
- the good start made to planning for the Revised Northern Ireland Curriculum; and
- the good start made to using data to inform and guide the work of the department.

The areas for improvement include the need to:

- improve the standards achieved by the pupils in external examinations, as identified by the department; and
- develop, and implement, assessment for learning strategies more consistently.

History

The main strengths of the history department include:

- the hard work, commitment and collegiality of the teachers;
- the positive working relationships between teachers and pupils;
- the innovative approaches to the teaching of history which encourage the development of thinking skills and involve the pupils more actively in their learning;
- the use of local contexts and educational visits to make history relevant to the pupils; and
- the effective leadership provided by the head of department.

The area for improvement is the need to:

- further develop the self-evaluation process in order to raise achievement at GCSE level.

Mathematics

The main strengths of the mathematics department include:

- the hard-working and committed teachers;
- the wide variety of useful support materials to guide teaching and learning at all levels;
- the good teaching in most of the lessons seen;
- the standards achieved by the pupils at GCE A Level;
- the good leadership of the department; and
- the good start made in gathering data about the pupils' performance.

The areas for improvement include the need to:

- raise the standards achieved by the pupils at GCSE level, as identified by the department; and
- provide more cohesive and effective support for all of those pupils who have difficulty with mathematics.

APPENDIX 2

ACCOMMODATION

- The school has invested significantly in developing the accommodation for learning and teaching. Many classes are taught in bright, attractive and modern accommodation. The school also has appropriate plans to address the accommodation needs for SEN. The quality of the accommodation for science is very poor. Some of the laboratories are undersized and restrict the opportunities for pupils to carry out practical activities safely. The library is in need of modernisation.

APPENDIX 3

STATISTICAL INFORMATION

1.1 i. School: Campbell College
ii. School Reference Number: 142-0020
iii. Age Range: 11-18
iv. Status: Voluntary Grammar
v. Date of Inspection: W/C 20.04.09
vi. Area of Study: Standard Inspection

1.2 Intake/Enrolment

School Year	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09
Year 8 Intake	141	121	141	140	143
Total enrolment	870	870	890	494	879

1.3 Attendance

Year 2007/08	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	Average 2007/08	NI Average 2006/07
% Attendance	96.6	95	94.6	95.1	94.8	95.1	95.1	95	95

1.4 i. Total Number of Teachers: 71

ii. PTR (Pupil/Teacher Ratio): 12.8

iii. Contact ratio (percentage of timetabled time in direct class contact): 62.4

Number of Teachers involved in Area of Study: 23

Year 2008/09	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	TOTAL
Enrolment: Boys	143	138	136	125	142	110	85	879
Enrolment: Total	143	138	136	125	142	110	85	879
PTR	16.79	16.88	13.24	13.36	15.1	9.73	7.33	

1.5 Staying On Rate (2007/08) (Current year 13/14 as proportion of year 12 from 1/2 years previously)

Year 13	75.0	**NI Av Year 13**	91.7
Year 14	73.7	**NI Av Year 14**	83.7

1.6 Leavers Destinations

2006/07	Year 12	NI%	Year 13/14	NI%
Total Number of Leavers	45		103	
Another School	27%	22.6	7%	1.3
Employment	4%	5	6%	5.1
Full-time Further Education	42%	54.4	11%	8.4
Full-time Higher Education	N/A	N/A	68%	81.7
Full-time Training	0%	11.7	0%	1.2
Seeking Employment/Unemployed	0%	1.9	0%	0.9
Unknown/Long Term Sick/Pregnant	27%	4.5	9%	1.3

1.7 NAME OF SCHOOL: Campbell College, Belfast SCHOOL YEAR: 2008/2009

GCSE	2006	2007	2008
Percentage of Year 12 taking GCSE in at least 5 subjects	100	100	100
Percentage of Year 12 obtaining Grades C or above in at least 5 subjects	87	84	89
Percentage of Year 12 obtaining Grades C or above in at least 5 subjects including English and Mathematics	73	72	79
Percentage of Year 12 obtaining Grades C or above in at least 7 subjects	73	74	79
Percentage of Year 12 obtaining Grades C or above in at least 7 subjects including English and Mathematics	66	69	71
GCE A2 Level or equivalent	**2006**	**2007**	**2008**
Percentage of Year 14 obtaining Grades C or above in at least 3 A2 levels	49	50	52
Percentage of Year 14 obtaining Grades E or above in at least 3 A2 levels	98	98	99

APPENDIX 4

EXAMINATION RESULTS

***Table** showing the GCSE and (GCE A2^{+}) subject results over the previous three years ending in June 2005, 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*-B	Art and Design Latin	Music	German	Additional Mathematics Chinese French	Biology Business Studies Chemistry Design and Technology Double Award Science 1st Subject Drama English English Literature Geography History Information Technology Mathematics Physics Religious Studies Spanish Sport/PE Studies

GCE A Level A-C	Latin	Design and Technology: Product Design Drama Further Mathematics German	Biology Chemistry Chinese Design and Technology History Mathematics Music Physics	Art and Design Business Studies Politics Religious Studies	English Literature French Geography Information Technology Spanish Sport/PE Studies
GCE A Level A-E		Design and Technology: Product Design	Art and Design Biology Business Studies Chemistry Chinese Design and Technology Drama English Literature Further Mathematics Geography German History Information Technology Latin Mathematics Music Physics Politics Sport/PE Studies	Religious Studies Spanish	French

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*-B	Chinese	Music	Drama Information Technology Sport/PE Studies	Additional Mathematics Art and Design Biology Chemistry Design and Technology English English Literature Geography History Mathematics Physics Religious Studies	Business Studies Double Award Science 1st Subject French German Latin Spanish
GCE A Level A-C	Chinese	Art and Design Drama English Literature Further Mathematics German History Mathematics Music Politics	Biology Business Studies Chemistry Design and Technology: Product Design Economics French Geography Information Technology Latin Religious Studies Spanish	Physics Sport/PE Studies	

GCE A Level A-E	Art and Design Business Studies Chinese Design and Technology Drama Economics English Literature French Further Mathematics Geography German History Information Technology Latin Mathematics Music Politics Religious Studies Sport/PE Studies	Biology Chemistry Design and Technology: Product Design Physics Spanish			

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