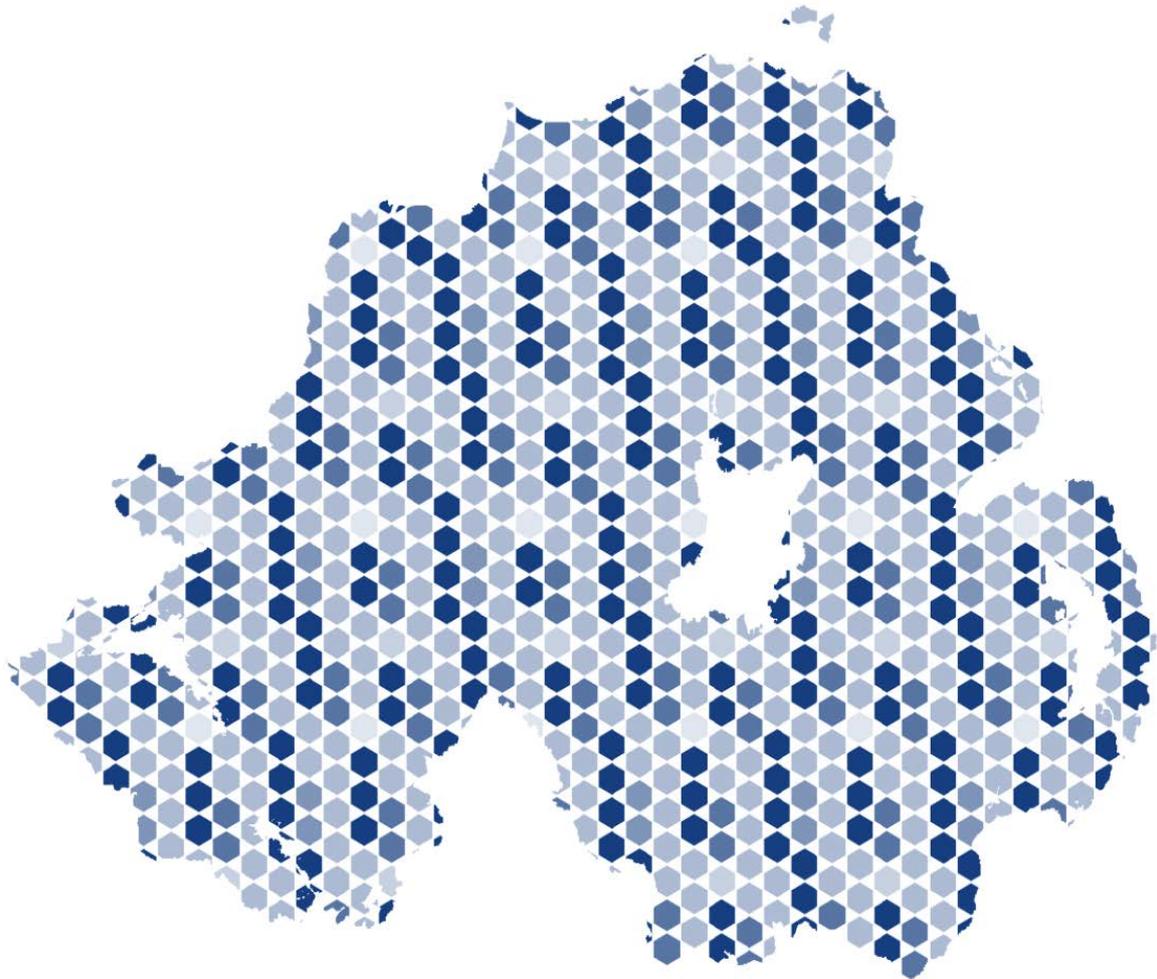


# POST-PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training  
Inspectorate

St Pius X College, Magherafelt,  
County Derry

Maintained, co-educational, non-selective school

Report of a Sustaining Improvement  
Inspection (Involving Action Short of  
Strike) in February 2017



The Education and Training Inspectorate  
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CUSTOMER  
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## **Sustaining Improvement Inspection of St Pius X College, Magherafelt (323-0168)**

### **Introduction**

The previous inspection in January 2014, evaluated the overall effectiveness of St Pius X College as very good<sup>1</sup>. A sustaining improvement inspection (SII) was conducted on 22 February 2017.

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 all of the teachers would not be co-operating with the inspectors. 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 inspection focused on evaluating 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:

- to improve the quality of the pupils' classroom experiences, in particular through a focus on the use of digital technologies, effective questioning and improved provision in literacy and numeracy; and
- to improve the school's approaches to assessment for learning, in particular through quality assurance of the internal school examinations and through more effective alignment and use of curricular and pastoral data in order to set appropriate targets for the pupils' attainment and to track their progress.

### **Key findings**

- The school development planning process is consultative and informed by the findings of the most recent inspection and by effective use of a broad range of data. The school works closely with the other post-primary schools in the Magherafelt Learning Partnership to enhance the breadth and flexibility of the curriculum at post-16 in order to provide shared education opportunities for the pupils.
- Since the last inspection the proportion of pupils at key stage 4 achieving five or more GCSE examinations at grades A\* to C, including English and mathematics, has improved significantly and is well above the corresponding Northern Ireland average for similar schools.
- In discussions with the junior and senior leadership groups, the pupils demonstrated confidence, maturity and positivity. They spoke appreciatively about the inclusive, supportive ethos of the school.

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<sup>1</sup> From September 2015, the overall effectiveness of a school previously evaluated as outstanding or very good has been reported as a school demonstrating a high level of capacity for sustained improvement.

The ETI was unable to evaluate:

- the lines of enquiry, including, through discussion, the work of the senior and middle leadership; or
- the quality of the teachers' planning for learning, the learning and teaching within the classrooms, the standard of the pupils' work or the quality of the teachers' assessment of and for learning.

### **Safeguarding**

During the inspection, the school provided evidence that satisfactory arrangements for safeguarding learners are in place which reflect broadly the guidance issued by the relevant Departments. 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 the principal and 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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