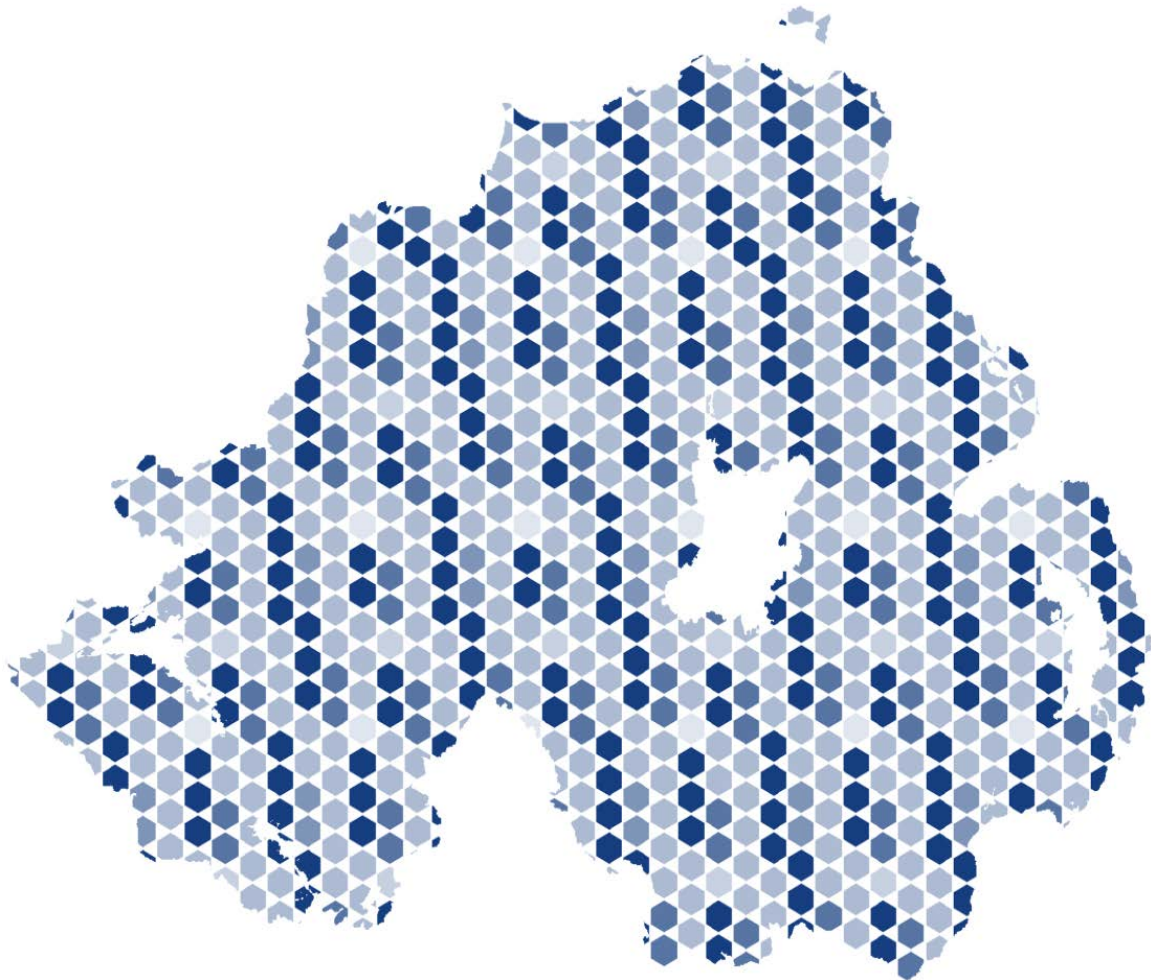


POST-PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Laurelhill Community College,
Lisburn, County Antrim

Co-educational, 11-18 controlled, non-selective school

Report of a Follow-up Inspection
in December 2017



The Education and Training Inspectorate
Promoting Improvement

Providing inspection services for:

Department of Education
Department for the Economy
and other commissioning Departments

CUSTOMER
SERVICE
EXCELLENCE



A FOLLOW-UP TO THE INSPECTION OF LAURELHILL COMMUNITY COLLEGE LISBURN, CO ANTRIM, BT28 2UH (421-0201)

The Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) carried out a follow-up inspection of Laurelhill Community College in January 2017¹ and the organisation was required to address important areas for improvement in the interest of all the learners.

The main areas for improvement were the need:

- to sustain and continue to raise standards;
- to continue to focus on raising the quality and impact of learning and teaching;
- to develop further the school's approach to the monitoring and evaluation of curriculum planning, classroom practice, assessment arrangements and careers education to ensure that the interests, aptitudes and aspirations of all of the pupils are being met.

The ETI carried out an interim follow-up visit in September 2017 and a follow-up inspection in December 2017.

The Department of Education acknowledged the positive response that the school had made, and planned to make, with support from the Education Authority (EA), regarding the areas for improvement identified in the third follow-up inspection report. The school has received well-targeted and effective support with their improvement planning from the EA.

In the interval since the third follow-up inspection, the following actions or changes which affect the work of the school have taken place:

- the principal and senior leadership team have carried out classroom observations to monitor and evaluate the quality of learning and teaching;
- a new departmental self-evaluation framework is in place to guide and support departments in the monitoring of targets and the ongoing evaluation of action plans; and
- the school's dashboard of progress measures has been extended and improved further to include baseline data and concise departmental evaluations to inform all stakeholders, including governors, about the extent of whole-school improvement.

Views of parents and staff

Four percent of parents (17) and 51 % of staff (34) responded to the re-issued online questionnaire. The majority of the parental responses expressed high levels of satisfaction with their child's experiences in school. The responses from the staff were almost wholly positive and highlighted the hard work and commitment of the staff to support the pupils in reaching their full potential. The ETI communicated to the principal and the chair of the board of governors the main findings and the individual issues arising from the questionnaires.

¹<https://www.etini.gov.uk/sites/etini.gov.uk/files/publications/follow-up-inspection-laurelhill-community-college-lisburn-county-antrim-421-0201.pdf>

Key findings

Outcomes for learners are now good. Since the last inspection, the overall outcomes attained by the pupils in public examinations at key stage (KS) 4 and post-16 have continued to improve and sustain.

The proportion of pupils attaining five or more GCSEs or equivalent at grades A* to C, including English and mathematics, has increased to 52%, which is above the Northern Ireland (NI) average for non-selective schools. The proportion of pupils attaining five or more GCSEs or equivalent at grades A* to C has increased to 78% which is also above the corresponding NI average for non-selective schools.

The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals attaining five or more GCSEs or equivalent at grades A* to C, including English and mathematics, has increased to 40% which is above the NI average.

The proportion of pupils attaining three or more GCE A levels or equivalent at grades A* to C has increased to 58% which is above the NI average for non-selective schools. In addition, it is noteworthy that most of the pupils (86%) attain two or more GCE A levels or equivalent at grades A* to C.

The quality of provision is now good. A majority of the lessons observed were good or better in promoting and progressing the pupils' learning. Importantly, the areas for improvement in classroom practice, in around one-quarter of the lessons observed have already been prioritised appropriately by the school for continued action through the dissemination of effective classroom practice.

The curriculum offer at KS 4 and post-16 is broad and balanced. It is meeting well the needs and career progression pathways of the pupils as evidenced by: the sustained high outcomes in public examinations; the staying on rate from year 13 to 14 which is more than five percentage points above the corresponding NI average; and the progression rate to further and higher education which is eight percentage points above the corresponding NI average.

The quality and effectiveness of strategic leadership, management and action to promote improvement remains good. A cohesive, well-established and effective senior leadership team with clear roles and responsibilities is leading well the improvement work. Their strategic planning, assessment of baseline data, and monitoring of the school's provision and outcomes demonstrates the capacity to sustain and bring about further improvement.

The senior leaders monitor planning, learning, teaching and assessment through lesson observations and they provide sound feedback to teachers and departments on the effectiveness of their work. The school's internal data for lesson observations matches closely that of the lessons observed by inspectors during the follow-up inspection.

The middle leaders are committed to the collegial whole-school vision for ongoing improvement and use to good effect a wide range of qualitative and quantitative data to track and monitor departmental performance, and intervene appropriately to support pupils identified at risk of under-achievement.

The governors know the school well, are actively involved in the school development planning process and effect improvement through their high levels of support for the senior leaders and their constructive challenge in target-setting to ensure the pace of progress is both well managed and sustained.

Overall Effectiveness

Laurelhill Community College demonstrates the capacity to identify and bring about improvement in the interest of all the learners.

The follow-up inspection has identified the following area for improvement:

- to continue to focus on improving the quality of learning and teaching.

The ETI will monitor how the school sustains improvement.

© CROWN COPYRIGHT 2017

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 ETI website: www.etini.gov.uk