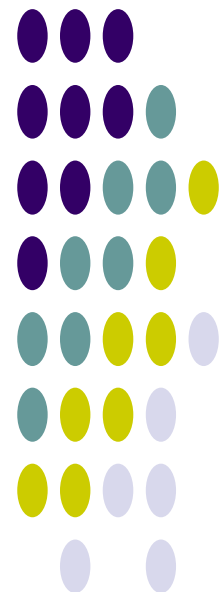


The Education and Training Inspectorate

Inspection Leading to Improvement:

Business Year 2010-2011



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



Foreword by the Chief Inspector

Inspection is a very powerful catalyst for improvement and for the fostering of a culture of self-evaluation – a culture which will support sustained self-improvement within the organisation inspected. In short, external evaluation and challenge, coupled with honest and rigorous self-evaluation, are a very effective combination in bringing about improvement.

The report which follows provides convincing evidence to support this assertion and serves to illustrate that inspection, along with a process of well-focused follow-up work, leads on most occasions to improvement and, in some cases, to very significant improvement.

As raising standards and achievements are placed at the very heart of the current range of educational policies, the Education and Training Inspectorate looks forward to continuing to play a pivotal role in 'raising the bar - and closing the achievement gap', doing so in the very best interests of children, young people and adult learners across our education, youth and training sectors.

N. Buick

Noelle Buick
Chief Inspector

The inspection process, through inspections, interim and formal follow-up procedures, including district and monitoring visits, and active engagement by the Inspectorate with providers, continues to effect significant improvement in the quality, performance and standards of provision across the education, youth and training sectors in Northern Ireland.

In assessing the various features of the provision, inspectors relate their evaluations to six performance level descriptors as set out below:

Outstanding
Very good
Good
Satisfactory
Inadequate
Unsatisfactory

In this short report, proportions may be described as percentages, common fractions and in more general quantitative terms. Where more general terms are used, they should be interpreted as follows:

almost/nearly all	more than 90%
most	75% – 90%
a majority	50% - 74%
a significant minority	30% - 49%
a minority	10% - 29%
very few/a small number	less than 10%

Introduction

Follow-up inspections are undertaken where overall provision has been evaluated as satisfactory, inadequate or unsatisfactory.

Follow-up inspections conducted in Northern Ireland in the business year April 2010 to March 2011 **show significant improvement across most of the 57 education, youth and training organisations in which a follow-up inspection was completed**¹. The 57 follow-up inspections comprised 17 in early years, 20 in primary, eleven in post-primary, one in special, four in work-based learning, two in further education and two in youth.

Summary features of improvement through inspection across all phases

The follow-up inspection process focuses on the areas for improvement identified in the original inspection, which in turn reflect strongly the three main areas of leadership and management, the quality of learning and teaching, and the outcomes for the learners.

Improvements are most often seen in the quality of leadership and management, as evidenced in more effective arrangements for quality assurance, including more robust use of qualitative and quantitative measures to inform both self-evaluation and development planning processes. Such practice impacts successfully on the quality of educational provision and leads to enhanced outcomes, standards and achievements for children, young people and adult learners. In the most effective practice, organisations can demonstrate their capacity to enhance progression and transition in the interests of all learners across the education system. Where improvement is not evident, leadership and management remains an issue.

The expertise of the individual teacher, lecturer or youth leader and well-focused continuous professional development remain key agents for change for the better in the quality of education, work-based learning and youth provision. Improvements in teaching, particularly ensuring that it meets the needs of all learners, contribute notably towards achieving overall improvement by at least one performance level by the time of the follow-up inspection.

The following are key statistical features of improvement through inspection:

- Improvement at the follow-up inspection was reported in 81% of instances; almost all follow-up inspections reported a satisfactory or better level of performance; the pattern of improvement is similar to that seen in the two previous business years.

¹ The Inspectorate also completed two evaluations for the Department of Culture Arts and Leisure, in each case based on a sample of organisations, and a joint evaluation with the Criminal Justice Inspectorate of Northern Ireland; all of these followed earlier evaluations.

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- Forty per cent of the follow-up inspections improved by two or more levels of performance on the original inspection evaluation while approximately the same percentage improved by one level of performance.
 - In three follow-up inspections there was an improvement by three levels of performance
 - Of the 17 follow-up inspections where the performance was evaluated to be less than satisfactory at the original inspection, only two remained less than satisfactory at the time of the follow-up inspection; 15 (88%) improved to a satisfactory or better level of performance.
 - Of the 40 follow-up inspections where the performance was evaluated satisfactory at the original inspection, 30 (75%) improved to a good or better level of performance.

Phase summaries

In the Early Years sector, 17 follow-up inspections were undertaken. Thirty-five per cent of the centres improved by one level of performance and 41% by at least two levels; four centres did not improve on their original satisfactory level of performance.

In the Primary school sector, there were 20 follow-up inspections, eight of which were evaluated as being less than satisfactory at the original inspection and entered the Department of Education's Formal Intervention Process, outlined in the *Every School a Good School* policy. Of the 20 schools, ninety per cent demonstrated their capacity to self-evaluate effectively and improve on aspects of provision - a stronger improvement than last year. Moreover, 40% of the 20 schools improved by two levels of performance and 10% improved by three levels. Seven of the eight schools in the formal intervention process have exited from it; one school remained less than satisfactory and continues within it.

In the Post-Primary school sector, there were eleven follow-up inspections, three of which were in organisations evaluated originally as having a less than satisfactory level of performance. Of the eleven schools, 64 % improved by one or two levels; one school's level of performance remained unchanged at satisfactory. Three schools, however, regressed from their original satisfactory level of performance and entered the Formal Intervention Process.

In the Special school sector, there was significant improvement by two levels of performance from satisfactory to very good in the one follow-up inspection undertaken.

In the Alternative Education Programme sector, no follow-up inspections were undertaken.

In the Work-Based Learning and Adult Employment sector, four follow-up inspections were completed, in one of which the performance level had originally been less than satisfactory. In two of the organisations, the levels of performance improved.

In the Further Education sector, there were two follow-up inspections² during which the overall provision was evaluated. Both of these demonstrated improvement by at least one performance level.

In the Youth sector, there were two follow-up inspections. In both providers, the level of performance improved by two levels from the original less than satisfactory level.

In the Teacher Education sector, no follow-up inspections were undertaken.

² In two other further education colleges, follow-up inspections of specific areas of provision were completed and demonstrated improvement by at least one level in all cases.

Extent of improvement in performance levels 2010-11

	Number	Remained less than satisfactory	Regressed to less than satisfactory	No change (satisfactory)	Improved one level	Improved two levels	Improved three levels
Early Years	17			4	6	6	1
Primary	20	1		1	8	8	2
Post-primary	11		3	1	5	2	
Special School	1					1	
AEP	0						
Work-based learning	4	1		1	1	1	
Further Education	2				2		
Youth	2					2	
Teacher Education	0						
Total	57	2 3.5%	3 5.3%	7 12.3%	22 38.6%	20 35.1%	3 5.3%



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