

# The Inspection Process

## Information for Parents

### INSPECTION OF POST-PRIMARY SCHOOLS

#### WHY IS MY CHILD'S SCHOOL BEING INSPECTED?

All schools are inspected and visited regularly by inspectors from the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI).

In order to promote improvement in the interests of all pupils, the purpose of a post-primary inspection is to:

- > evaluate the quality of the provision and the outcomes for the pupils;
- > evaluate the school's leadership and management and its capacity to effect and sustain improvement in its provision and standards; and
- > inform the school's planning for improvement.

The inspection in your child's school will tell you and others about how well: the pupils are progressing in their learning; the school is helping them to learn and develop; the school is attending to the pupils' care, welfare and safety.

#### WHO INSPECTS?

An inspection team has inspectors from ETI who have experience and qualifications in education. In most inspections an Associate Assessor will join the team to give an additional perspective on the life and work of the school. The team is led by the Reporting Inspector (RI) who is in charge of the inspection and the report of the findings.

#### WHAT HAPPENS DURING AN INSPECTION?

During the inspection, the inspectors:

- > observe the pupils at work;
- > talk to the pupils about what they are learning and why;
- > listen to the pupils' account of their learning and other experiences;
- > look carefully at samples of the pupils' work;
- > observe the teaching, and talk to the teachers; and
- > discuss aspects of the school's work with teachers, senior and middle leaders, co-ordinators, governors and the principal.

They assess:

- > the standards attained by the pupils in literacy, numeracy, ICT and in public examinations;
- > the way in which the school looks after the pupils' needs, including the school's arrangements for care and support and child protection/safeguarding;
- > the extent to which the curriculum offer is broad and balanced and meets the needs, aspirations and career goals of the pupils;
- > how well the pupils are learning, being taught and making progress in line with their ability;
- > how well the school is run and led;
- > the effectiveness of the governance of the school; and
- > how well the school relates to the parents and the wider community.

Two members of the team will also talk informally to groups of pupils outside the classroom and without a member of staff being present. During these discussions the inspectors will talk to the pupils about:

- > the things they enjoy at school;
- > how they are supported in their learning;
- > how the school deals with good or bad behaviour;
- > how they are supervised outside the classroom;
- > and how their concerns and worries are dealt with.

#### HOW CAN I CONTRIBUTE TO THE INSPECTION PROCESS?

It is very important to ETI that you take the opportunity to give your views on how well the school is meeting the needs of your child. Primarily, you can do this by completing a confidential online questionnaire. You can ask for a paper version of the confidential questionnaire from Inspection Services Branch, if you have difficulty accessing the online version.

The ETI will be piloting pupil questionnaires in some inspections this year.

It is important to remember that ETI does not pursue/investigate individual complaints on the part of parents. Your child's school will have a procedure for handling complaints/enquiries and it is important that any concerns are brought, in the first instance, to the attention of the principal. Following that, additional lines of communication open to you are the board of governors of your child's school and the employing authority.

#### WHAT HAPPENS AFTER AN INSPECTION?

When the report on the school is published, a copy of the report will be available on the ETI website at [www.etini.gov.uk](http://www.etini.gov.uk) or at the school.

If the report on the school finds that there are important or significant areas for improvement to be addressed, a follow-up inspection will take place in the following school year.

If you wish to comment on any aspect of the inspection or the report, or to receive any further information about the inspection process you should write to the Chief Inspector at the address below.

**The Chief Inspector, The Reporting Inspector and Inspection Services Branch may be contacted at:**

**The Department of Education  
Rathgael House  
Rathgill  
43 Balloo Road  
BANGOR  
Co Down  
BT19 7PR**

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