

ETI (Education and Training Inspectorate) INSPECTION – November 2024

We are pleased that The Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) has recognised the progress being made by St. Patrick's & St. Brigid's College and that our 'vision is supporting well the school in nurturing and developing young people academically, spiritually, socially and emotionally'. Inspectors have reported that 'the curriculum is well planned and is informed by the learners' interests, abilities and ambitions in line with the school's vision that all can achieve'. Here is a summary of their other findings:

What the Education and Training Inspectorate said about Safeguarding:

- 'At the time of the inspection, the evidence provided by the school demonstrates that the arrangements for child protection align to the current statutory guidance. The pupils who spoke to inspectors know what to do and who to speak to if they have any concerns about their safety or wellbeing.'

What the Education and Training Inspectorate said about Pastoral Care:

- 'The school creates a highly supportive culture that values the emotional health and wellbeing of the pupils and the close links with home to best support the personal journey of each pupil.'
- 'In discussions with the inspectors, pupils expressed their appreciation of the friendly, caring staff who are interested in them as individuals and support them with their work.'
- 'The pupils benefit from a multi-disciplinary pastoral support team including a key stage (KS) 3 learning mentor, a school counsellor and a KS 4 wellbeing lead, which is impacting positively on the pupils' readiness to learn and their outcomes.'
- 'Through close links with the local primary schools, all pupils are supported effectively, settle quickly and develop confidence in their new school routines on starting year 8.'
- 'The pupils' successes are celebrated well: in class; through engaging wall displays around the school; in assemblies; and effectively through the school's social media platform.'
- 'A new house system is planned to facilitate collegiality, provide further opportunities to celebrate success and embed further the Christian values of the school.'
- 'As a result of nominations and votes from parents, the school successfully achieved the 'Families First Pastoral Care and Mental Health Awards' in 2023-24.'
- 'A significant number of events throughout the year are organised for the pupils to support others, mainly through fund-raising for charitable causes.'

What the Education and Training Inspectorate said about Pupil Behaviour:

- 'The school has recently updated their positive behaviour policy and has prioritised the re-establishing of clear expectations of positive behaviours for learning. The wide range of intervention strategies, increased consistency in classrooms routines and the close collaboration of pastoral staff is resulting in improved pupil behaviour in the classrooms and a reduction in the number of behaviour-related incidents.'

Here is what the Education and Training Inspectorate said about Curriculum Provision:

- 'The curriculum is well planned and is informed by the pupils' interests, abilities and ambitions, in line with the school's vision that all pupils can achieve.'
- 'The curriculum is broad, balanced and is informed by the learners' interests, abilities and ambitions, in line with their vision that 'all pupils can achieve'. The curriculum offer at KS 4 reflects the school's high expectations of all pupils.'
- 'There is close collaboration between the SEN staff and the subject teachers to provide a bespoke and flexible curriculum to meet the needs of the pupils across the key stages.'
- 'The planning for the preventative curriculum is progressive and addresses contemporary issues within real-life contexts.'
- 'The provision for relationships and sexuality education (RSE) has recently been consulted upon, reviewed and is being implemented this academic year.'
- 'The KS 3 pupils talked positively about their involvement in a wide range of extra-curricular activities such as sporting, art, music and drama activities. They particularly appreciate the addition of rugby for all pupils to the extra-curricular offer.'
- 'At KS 4, a well-being enrichment curriculum is planned and is at an early stage of development; this includes, for example support programmes for the development of pupils' resilience and study skills.'

Here is what the Education and Training Inspectorate said about the Quality of Learning and Teaching:

- 'The staff know the pupils well and understand how to identify and address barriers to learning at an early stage through a range of intervention programmes which meet well the needs of all of the pupils.'
- 'The pupils' individual education plans are of a high quality and include comprehensive targets.'
- 'The staff use effectively quantitative data and pastoral information to inform learning pathways for the pupils.'
- 'In discussions with inspectors, the pupils reported that they like the target-setting process and that it helps them to improve on their work, particularly, in those subjects that give them meaningful feedback following their homework and assessments.'
- 'A key feature of the most effective lessons observed was how the staff developed well the pupils' skills through carefully planned, contextual, relevant and meaningful opportunities for purposeful learning. Additionally, the learning activities had been planned well to reflect the pupil's needs and abilities.'
- 'In the more effective lessons, the pupils engage in learning that builds on prior knowledge and engages them well in their learning. They have opportunities to take part in paired work which develops well their self-management skills and builds further their confidence.'

Here is what the Education and Training Inspectorate said about Partnership Working:

- 'The school is developing and growing well its community of learning through improved links with a broader range of stakeholders.'
- 'Groups of year 7 pupils from local primary schools have had opportunities to attend and participate in a range of activities in St Patrick's and St Brigid's College.'
- 'There are a range of multi-agency partnerships in place to support the pastoral, personal and academic needs of the pupils.'
- 'The year 12 pupils have good opportunities to attend careers talks with a range of post-primary schools and the further education college. Additionally, an advisor from the Careers Service Northern Ireland provides all year 12 pupils with a face-to-face interview in the school.'
- 'The pupils from years 8 and 9, who spoke to inspectors, particularly valued the opportunity to develop new friendships prior to, and in the transition from, their primary school. Community links were also reported in the online questionnaire by all teachers as having a positive impact on the pupils' learning experiences and outcomes.'
- 'Meaningful experiences in learning are provided through, for example, attendance at the Youth Assembly in Stormont and an engineering and advanced manufacturing careers education, information, advice and guidance event for pupils in years 10, 11 and 12.'
- 'In discussions with inspectors, the pupils report that the effective collaboration with an Invest Northern Ireland-funded industry led network, Generating Engineering & Manufacturing Excellence in the North West (GEMX) which allowed them to participate and engage in a range of interactive experiences, gain insights into industry and importantly improve their knowledge of progression pathways and potential career choices into engineering.'

Pupil Feedback:

- 'In discussions with the inspectors, the pupils talked about how they have developed their confidence, self-esteem and leadership skills since attending the school.'

Staff Feedback:

- 'Almost all teachers responded to the questionnaire and their responses were extremely positive.'
- 'Replies from classroom assistants and support staff were also highly positive.' In the written responses provided, they report how they feel that they belong to a welcoming community as a whole.'

Parents Feedback:

- 'Responses from parents reported that their child is happy in school and is making good progress.'
- 'Parents expressed how there is a sense of unity between parents and teachers.'

Governors Feedback:

- 'The governors who met with the inspectors have a clear understanding of the school's current context and know well the life and work of the school. They spoke enthusiastically about their role in re-establishing a shared vision and expressed with passion their commitment to the school.'

Areas for Action:

- to improve the consistency and quality of the planning, teaching and assessment for successful learning; and
- to implement more rigorous monitoring and evaluating processes across the school, including better use of the views of pupils.

You can access the full report from the college website:

<https://www.etini.gov.uk/sites/etini.gov.uk/files/publications/report-of-a-post-primary-inspection-st-patricks-and-st-brigids-college-223-0122.pdf>