

eti

*The Education and Training Inspectorate -
Promoting Improvement*

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



Education and Training Inspectorate

**St Joseph's Convent Primary School
Newry**

Inspection Letter

March 2012

**INSPECTION OF ST JOSEPH'S CONVENT PRIMARY SCHOOL, NEWRY -
26 MARCH 2012**

INSPECTION LETTER

The Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) notified St Joseph's Convent Primary School, Newry of its forthcoming inspection scheduled for the week beginning 26 March 2012. Prior to the inspection, the school informed the ETI that almost all of its teachers would not be co-operating with the Inspectors, on advice from one of the teaching unions. The teachers are involved in action short of strike in relation to pay, pensions and terms and conditions of employment and reductions in the education budget.

The Inspectors spent two days in the school on the 26 and 27 March and were able to:

- observe teaching and learning in a small number of lessons;
- scrutinise all of the school's written documentation that was made available;
- discuss arrangements for child protection, pastoral care and healthy eating with a group of the year 6 children;
- scrutinise the school's internal assessment data on the attainment and progress of the children;
- analyse the school's performance in end of key stage assessments over the past four years;
- examine samples of the children's books from all of the classes;
- elicit the views of the parents and support staff through confidential questionnaires;
- observe the children as they went about the school and in the playground;
- carry out interviews with the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO), the acting assessment co-ordinator and the designated teacher for child protection;
- discuss the leadership and management of the school with the Principal; and
- meet with representatives of the Board of Governors (governors).

Owing to the non co-operation of almost all of the teachers, the Inspectors were not able to assess fully the quality of learning for the children to identify areas where provision is strong or where improvements are needed. They were not able to:

- observe learning and teaching in almost all of the classes;
- observe directly the children at work or to talk to them about their work, in almost all of the classes;

- evaluate the quality of the provision made across the school for the children with special educational needs within classrooms; or
- discuss the development of the key curricular areas under focus with the co-ordinators.

CONCLUSION

The school's inspection is incomplete. The ETI will return as soon as possible and with little or no additional notice to complete the inspection and to issue a published report. This will include undertaking all the aspects of the inspection which were not possible during this inspection.

The ETI has reported its findings from the two day visit to the governors, the Principal, an officer from the Southern Education and Library Board (SELB) and a representative of the employing authority. Any areas for improvement identified during this incomplete inspection have been mediated to the school enabling the school to begin addressing them in the interim. The school has provided the ETI with written assurances that the school's arrangements for the safeguarding of the children comply fully with the Department of Education's (DE) requirements.

APPENDIX 1

HEALTH AND SAFETY

- Access to the school campus from the main road is not secured; a risk assessment should be carried out on access to and from the school grounds
- Access to the main school building and to a number of mobile classrooms is not secured.

ACCOMMODATION

- The toilet facilities for children in the main school building are not satisfactory.
- There are a number of mobile classrooms without adjoined toilets for the children and this requires the younger children to be escorted by an adult to an outside toilet block. This is disruptive to learning, impedes the development of independence in younger children and creates particular difficulties during inclement weather.

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