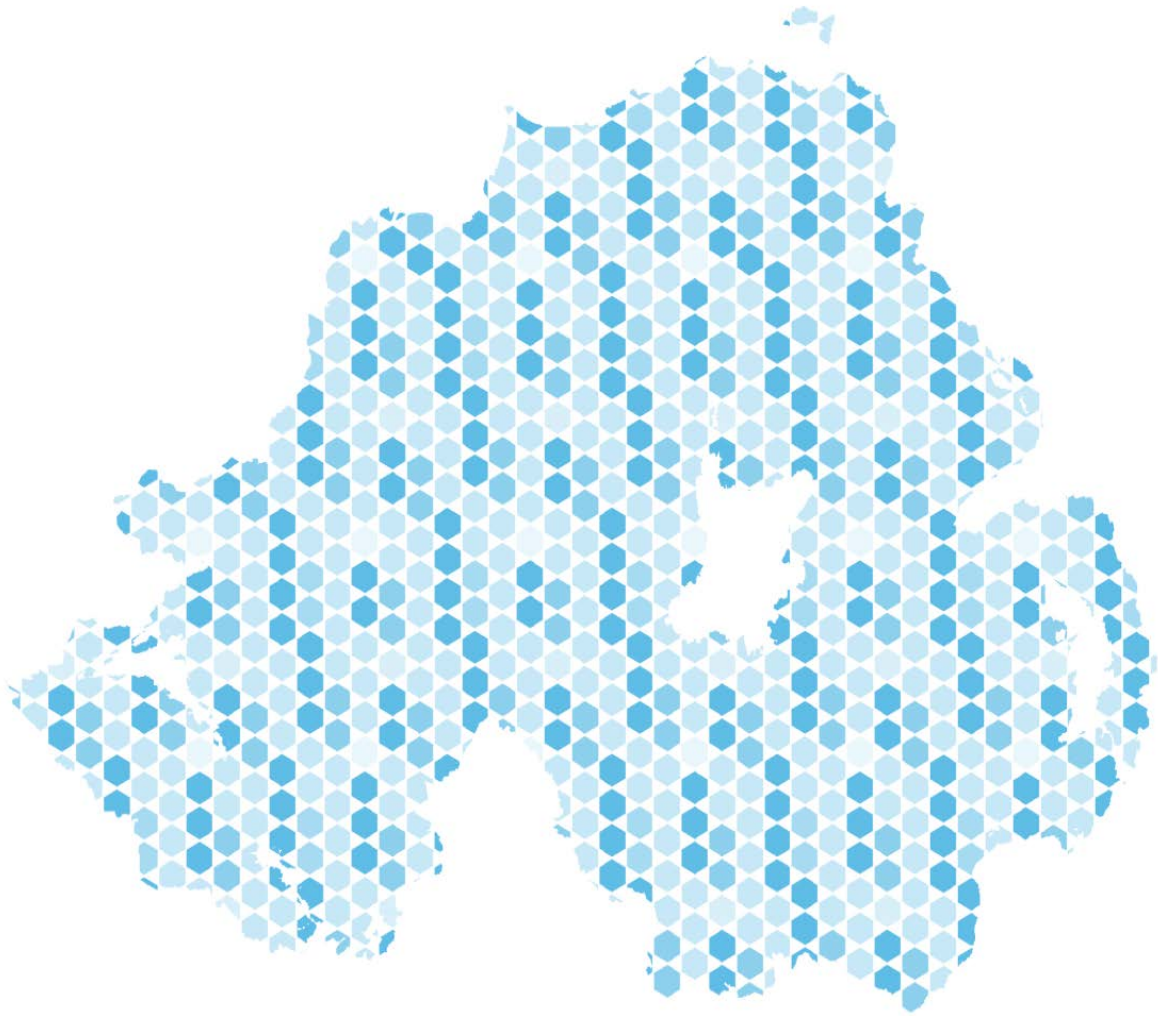


PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Dromintee Primary School,
Newry, County Down

Maintained, co-educational

Report of an Inspection (Involving
Action Short of Strike) in
June 2017

eti

The Education and Training Inspectorate
Promoting Improvement

Providing inspection services for:

Department of Education
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INTRODUCTION

1. Context

Dromintee Primary School is situated in an area of outstanding beauty in the parish of Dromintee in South Armagh. The children who attend the school come from the village and the surrounding rural areas. Over the past four years, the percentage of children requiring support with aspects of their learning has fluctuated slightly. The school is an integral part of the rural community and has strong links with the local parish and the Gaelic football club. A new principal was appointed in September, 2016.

Four of the teaching unions which make up the Northern Ireland Teachers' Council (NITC) have declared industrial action primarily in relation to a pay dispute. This includes non co-operation with the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI). Prior to the inspection, the school informed the ETI that none of the teachers would be co-operating with the inspectors. The ETI has a statutory duty to monitor, inspect and report on the quality of education under Article 102 of the Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 1986. Therefore, the inspection proceeded and the following evaluations are based on the evidence as made available at the time of the inspection.

Dromintee Primary School	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
Enrolment	178	182	187	190
% School attendance	96.5%	96.3%	96.5%	95.7%
% NI Primary school average	95.6	95.4	95.5	N/A
FSME Percentage ¹	28.6%	28.5%	24.0%	26.3%
No. of children on SEN register	35	38	31	29
% of children on SEN register	19.7%	20.9%	16.6%	15.3%
No. of children with statements of educational need	*	*	*	*
No. of newcomer children	0	0	0	0

¹Source: data as held by the school.

N/A not available

* fewer than 5

2. Views of parents and staff

Seventeen percent of parents, a very small number of the teaching staff and most of the support staff responded to the confidential questionnaires. The responses to the parental questionnaire indicated very high levels of satisfaction with the life and work of the school. In particular, the parents acknowledged the mutual respect evident across the school community, the supportive learning environment created for the children and the high standards of behaviour within the school. The parents also highlighted their appreciation of the commitment and dedication of the staff; and expressed high levels of support for the enthusiastic new principal and the positive changes she has made in the school to date. The responses to the teaching and support staff questionnaires were also very positive. In particular, the staff highlighted the inclusive, welcoming, pastoral ethos in the school, the very good working relationships amongst the staff and their enjoyment of working in the school. The ETI has reported to the principal and the chair of the board of governors the main findings emerging from the parental and staff questionnaires.

¹ The term 'FSME Percentage' refers to the percentage of children entitled to free school meals.

3. Focus of the inspection

The ETI was unable to evaluate the:

- outcomes for children with a particular focus on literacy including across the curriculum and how the school is addressing low attainment and underachievement where applicable;
- quality of provision with a particular focus on literacy including across the curriculum; and
- quality of leadership and management.

Where it has been possible to evaluate aspects of the foci, they have been reported below.

4. Overall findings of the inspection

Overall effectiveness	Unable to assure the quality of education
Outcomes for learners	No performance level available
Quality of provision	No performance level available
Leadership and management	No performance level available

KEY FINDINGS

5. Outcomes for learners

- The achievements and successes of the children are valued and celebrated, evident in the various attractive displays around the school.
- During the inspection, a group of year 7 children read with very high levels of fluency and expression. They demonstrated a very good understanding of different genres and engaged enthusiastically in meaningful discussions with the inspectors about their favourite authors and books.

The ETI was unable to evaluate:

- the standards achieved by the children;
- progression in the children's learning; and
- the children's wider skills and dispositions.

6. Quality of provision

- The school's child-centred ethos is underpinned by the school's motto, 'An Léann, An Grá, An Spraoi', which focuses on the promotion of learning, love and enjoyment in all aspects of school life.

- The inspectors had the opportunity to meet with a group of year 6 children. The children talked very openly and positively about their experiences in school. In particular, the children spoke about their enjoyment of learning and how they benefit from their involvement in a wide range of activities beyond the classroom. The children also expressed appreciation for the opportunities they have to take on leadership roles in the school, for example, through the pastoral committee and Eco-council.

The ETI was unable to evaluate:

- the quality of the curriculum;
- the effectiveness of the guidance and support in bringing about high quality individual learning experiences;
- the effectiveness and impact of planning, teaching, learning and assessment in promoting successful learning; and
- the outworking of care and welfare.

7. Leadership and management

- The school development plan is at the end of the three-year cycle. The new school development plan details a number of well-considered, appropriate priorities and plans are in place to consult with key stakeholders to inform further the school improvement work.
- Effective use is made of performance data to monitor the standards achieved by the children and their progress over time; it is also used effectively to identify those children who may be underachieving or require additional support with aspects of their learning.
- During the inspection, the ETI met with the chair of the board of governors. The governors are clearly child-centred and have a very good range of complementary skills and expertise. They have a clear understanding of the work and context of the school and provide appropriate levels of support and challenge.
- During the inspection, the school provided evidence that satisfactory arrangements for safeguarding reflect broadly the guidance issued by the relevant Departments. The children, with whom the inspectors met, reported that they feel safe in the school and are aware of what to do if they have any concerns about their safety or welfare. However, owing to the action short of strike, the ETI was unable to evaluate fully the outworking of the arrangements for safeguarding in the school.

The ETI was unable to evaluate fully:

- the effectiveness of strategic leadership and governance;
- the effectiveness and impact of middle leadership; and
- the effectiveness of action to promote and sustain improvement.

CONCLUSION

8. Overall effectiveness

Owing to the impact of the action short of strike being taken by the teachers, the ETI is unable to assure parents/carers, the wider school community and stakeholders of the quality of education being provided for the children. This will be reflected in future inspection activity.

Inspection methodology and evidence base

The ETI's Inspection and Self-Evaluation Framework is available on the ETI website: [The Inspection and Self-Evaluation Framework \(ISEF\): Effective Practice and Self-Evaluation Questions for Primary | Education Training Inspectorate](#)

In order to conduct a primary inspection, inspectors observe learning and teaching, scrutinise documentation and the children's written work and hold formal and informal discussions with children, teachers and staff with specific responsibilities.

These arrangements include:

- meetings with the principal and teachers with specific responsibilities on the pre-inspection visit;
- a meeting with representatives from the governors;
- meetings with groups of children; and
- the opportunity for the parents, teaching and support staff to complete a confidential questionnaire.

Where, owing to the action short of strike, this evidence base was not available, it has been referenced in the body of the inspection report.

Reporting terms used by the Education and Training Inspectorate

Quantitative terms

In this 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%

Performance levels

The ETI use the following performance levels when reporting on outcomes for learners, quality of provision and leadership and management²:

Outstanding
Very good
Good
Important area(s) for improvement
Requires significant improvement
Requires urgent improvement

Overall effectiveness

The ETI use one of the following inspection outcomes when evaluating the overall effectiveness of the school:

The school has a high level of capacity for sustained improvement in the interest of all the learners. The ETI will monitor how the school sustains improvement.
The school demonstrates the capacity to identify and bring about improvement in the interest of all the learners. The ETI will monitor how the school sustains improvement.
The school needs to address (an) important area(s) for improvement in the interest of all the learners. The ETI will monitor and report on the school's progress in addressing the area(s) for improvement. There will be a formal follow-up inspection.
The school needs to address urgently the significant areas for improvement identified in the interest of all the learners. It requires external support to do so. The ETI will monitor and report on the school's progress in addressing the areas for improvement. There will be a formal follow-up inspection.

² And the overall provision in a subject area or unit, as applicable.

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