

# Education and Training Inspectorate

## PRIMARY INSPECTION



St Brigid's Primary School and Nursery Unit, Carnhill,  
County Derry

Maintained, co-educational DE Ref No (203-6142)

Report of an Inspection (Involving Action Short of Strike) in June 2019



The Education and Training Inspectorate  
Promoting Improvement

Providing inspection services for:

Department of Education  
Department for the Economy  
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CUSTOMER  
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## INTRODUCTION

### 1. Context

St Brigid's Primary School and Nursery Unit is a maintained primary school situated in the Carnhill area of Derry. There is a full-time single nursery class, a foundation and key stage (KS) 1 autism class and a KS2 learning support class in the school. Almost all of the children attending the school come from the local and surrounding area. There is nurture provision in the school; all of the staff have been trained in nurture principles and a significant minority are nurture network qualified. The school holds a Green Flag Award as an Eco-school and has received a Gold Award for Investors in People.

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 leadership for child protection co-operated with the inspection team in relation to leadership and safeguarding responsibilities. 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.

St Brigid's Primary School and Nursery Unit	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Enrolment	340	363	384	382
% School attendance	87.1	90.7	91.0	N/A
% NI Primary school average	95.5	95.5	N/A	N/A
FSME Percentage <sup>1</sup>	69.4	68.6	67.2	66.7
No. of children on SEN register	98	110	122	101
% of children on SEN register	28.8	30.3	31.8	28
No. of children with statements of educational need	28	25	36	37

**Source:** data as held by the school.

\* fewer than 5

N/A not available

### 2. Children's, parents' and staff questionnaire responses

Six percent of parents and 23% of the staff responded to the online, confidential questionnaires. The responses to the parental questionnaire were highly positive and the written comments indicated high levels of satisfaction with the life and work of the school, in particular, how happy their children were at school and the good progress they were making. The responses to the staff questionnaire endorsed the effective working relationships within the school and the inclusive and welcoming ethos for all members of the school community. Most of the year 7 children completed the online questionnaire; overall, the responses were positive, with the children appreciating, for example, the approachable supportive teachers who help them progress their learning and the wide range of learning experiences available to them.

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

The ETI has communicated to the principal and the chair of the board of governors the main findings, and any individual issues arising, from the questionnaires.

### 3. Focus of the inspection

The ETI was unable to evaluate fully:

- outcomes for children with a particular focus on numeracy and literacy;
- quality of provision with a particular focus on numeracy and literacy including across the curriculum and the nursery class and learning support centre; and
- quality of leadership and management.

### 4. Overall findings of the inspection

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Unable to assure the quality of education
<b>Outcomes for learners</b>	No performance level available
<b>Quality of provision</b>	No performance level available
<b>Leadership and management</b>	No performance level available
<b>Nursery Class</b>	No performance level available
<b>Learning Support Centre</b>	No performance level available

## KEY FINDINGS

### 5. Outcomes for learners

- A sample group of children from year 7 met with the inspectors to discuss their learning. They read with enjoyment from a range of fiction and non-fiction books showing fluency, expression and understanding. The children spoke enthusiastically and maturely about their favourite authors and a wide range of genres. In mathematics, the children have a very good understanding of the key concepts across the curriculum. They are accurate in their mental calculations and the children explain the range of strategies they use when solving unfamiliar problems. The school's assessment data indicates that most of the children, including those who require additional help with aspects of their learning, make the expected progress.

The ETI was unable to evaluate fully:

- the learning outcomes for the children, including those who require additional support with aspects of their learning;
- progression in the children's learning; and
- the children's wider skills and dispositions.

### 6. Quality of provision

- The sample group of children from key stage (KS) 2, who met with inspectors, were confident and articulate. They spoke positively about the range of rewards available to them and the extensive extra-curricular clubs, such as sport, animation and coding clubs. The children talked enthusiastically about working with their peers to share ideas, problem solve, support the younger children as 'playground buddies' and develop their leadership skills as members of the Eco- and School-councils.

- The children's work is valued and their success celebrated through displays in the corridors reflecting connected learning across the curriculum.

The ETI was unable to evaluate fully:

- 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
- care and welfare.

## **7. Leadership and management**

- The school development planning process is underpinned by: a rigorous process of ongoing self-evaluation; effective use of the school's assessment data; and, an extensive consultation process with parents, staff and children. Staff professional development is afforded a high priority and is aligned appropriately to the key priorities.
- There are extensive links and partnerships with the local community and outside agencies to enhance the holistic development of every child. A majority of the children transfer from the local Surestart services; effective links have been established with the staff of the nursery class in planning provision to develop further the children's speech and language skills. There is a wide range of extended schools provision and high emphasis is afforded to Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM). The school has established effective links with local post primary schools which complements and enriches the STEM provision and supports the transition of the year 7 children.
- The governors are involved actively with the life and work of the school; they bring a broad range of skills and experience to their role. The governors are involved with the ongoing school improvement process and are well-informed about the outcomes of the children.

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.

## **8. Safeguarding**

During the inspection, the school provided evidence that the arrangements for safeguarding children reflect broadly the guidance from the Department of Education. In discussion with a group of children in KS2, they reported that they are happy and safe at school and know what to do if they have any concerns about their safety or well-being. 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.

## **9. Overall effectiveness**

Owing to the impact of the action short of strike being taken by the staff, 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.

**Health and safety/Accommodation**

1. To renew sections of the perimeter fencing in order to secure the site more fully.
2. To renew the alarm system in the school as a matter of urgency.
3. It would be important to secure the main gates to the staff car park when the children are in school.

### 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](#)

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.

The arrangements for inspection include:

- a meeting with representatives from the governors;
- meetings with groups of children; and
- the opportunity for the children, parents, teaching and support staff to complete an online, confidential questionnaire.

The arrangements for this inspection included:

- a meeting with representatives from the governors;
- the opportunity for the children, parents, teaching and support staff to complete an online, confidential questionnaire;
- access to documentation relating to child protection/safeguarding, school development planning and assessment data;
- meetings with groups of children; and
- meetings with the principal.



## 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 management<sup>2</sup>:

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

The ETI use the following levels when reporting on governance:

High degree of confidence
Confidence
Limited confidence

The ETI use the following levels when reporting on safeguarding:

Reflects the guidance
Reflects broadly the guidance
Unsatisfactory

The ETI use the following levels when reporting on care and welfare:

Impacts positively on learning, teaching and outcomes for learners.
Does not impact positively enough on learning, teaching and outcomes for learners.

<sup>2</sup> And the overall provision in a unit, as applicable.

## 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 in 12 to 18 months.
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 in 18 to 24 months.

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