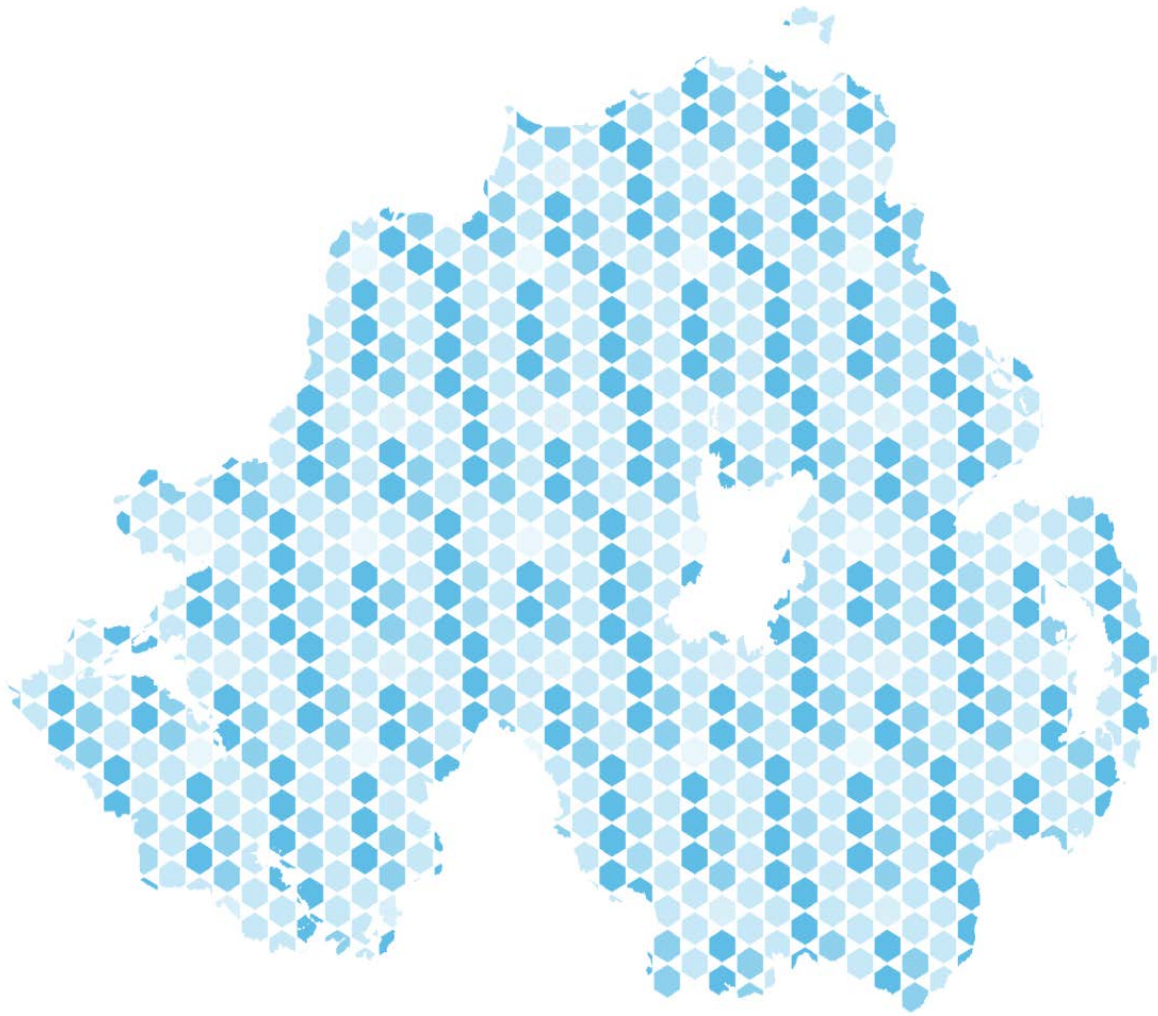


# PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training  
Inspectorate

St Patrick's Primary School and  
Nursery Unit, Cullyhanna,  
County Armagh

Maintained, co-educational

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

*eti*

The Education and Training Inspectorate  
Promoting Improvement

Providing inspection services for:

Department of Education  
Department for the Economy  
and other commissioning Departments



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## INTRODUCTION

### 1. Context

St Patrick's Primary School and Nursery Unit is situated in the heart of Cullyhanna village in South Armagh. A new principal was appointed to the school in February 2015. The children who attend the school come from the village and the surrounding rural areas. The school's enrolment has increased steadily over recent years. Over the past four years, the percentage of children requiring support with aspects of their learning has remained steady while the proportion of children entitled to free school meals has increased. The school is an integral part of the local community and has an excellent tradition in promoting sport, music and the Irish language. The school's commitment to the Eco Award has resulted in its attainment of two successive green flag awards.

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 the teachers would not 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.

St Patrick's Primary School and Nursery Unit, Cullyhanna	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
Enrolment in the primary school	180	186	191	197
Enrolment in the nursery unit	26	26	26	27
% School attendance	95.6	95.9	96.2	95.1
% NI Primary school average	95.6	95.4	N/A	N/A
FSME Percentage <sup>1</sup>	43	42	43	47
No. of children on SEN register	51	58	42	46
% of children on SEN register	25	27	20	23
No. of children with statements of educational need	*	*	*	*
No. of newcomer children	*	*	*	*

<sup>1</sup> **Source:** data as held by the school.

N/A not available

\* fewer than 5

### 2. Views of parents and staff

Thirty-two percent of parents, seventy percent of the teaching staff and all 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 highlighted the school as being central to the community, the positive learning environment created by the caring, approachable staff and their children's

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

contentment in school. The responses to the teaching and support staff questionnaire were also very positive; the staff emphasised their enjoyment of working in the school, their pride in the children's achievements and their appreciation of the proactive and positive changes made by the new principal. The staff reported that the principal provides strong leadership and guidance. 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.

### 3. Focus of the inspection

The ETI was unable to evaluate the:

- outcomes for children with a particular focus on numeracy and 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 numeracy and literacy including across the curriculum and the nursery unit; 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

<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 Unit</b>	No performance level available

## KEY FINDINGS

### 5. Outcomes for learners

- During the inspection, a group of year 7 children read with fluency and expression; they talked at length about their enjoyment of reading, their favourite authors and how they are encouraged to read by their teachers.
- During the inspection, a group of children from year 7 displayed confidence and a keen interest in numeracy. They have a very good understanding of mathematical concepts, could think flexibly in problem-solving tasks and completed calculations with accuracy.

The ETI was unable to evaluate:

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

## 6. Quality of provision

- There is a strong sense of community in the school. The school's mission statement, *"to nurture and maximise the learning potential of each child and foster their spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development,"* is evident in the child-centred ethos of the school.
- Inspectors had the opportunity to meet with a group of year 6 children; they spoke with enthusiasm about the very positive experiences they have in school. In particular, the children talked about their enjoyment of learning and the opportunities they have to participate in a wide range of activities beyond the classroom including music and sport. The children are very proud of their school and their behaviour is exemplary.
- The school has placed an appropriate focus on identifying and addressing underachievement; the evidence indicates that the interventions are having a positive impact.

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 ETI was able to evaluate aspects of leadership and management.

- During the inspection, the ETI met with the chair of the board of governors. The governors are highly committed to and well-informed about the life and work of the school. They have a wide range of complementary skills and expertise and, understand well the challenges and opportunities facing the school. The governors are involved appropriately in decisions regarding the strategic direction and development of the school.
- The school improvement process is informed by extensive consultation with all stakeholders and is clearly guided by a comprehensive school development plan (SDP) and associated action plans. The key priorities identified in the SDP focus appropriately on improving further the quality and consistency of the children's learning experiences and the outcomes they attain. A high priority is given to the ongoing professional development of staff which is linked closely to the school improvement agenda. The improvement work is led very effectively by the senior leadership team and the co-ordinators monitor and evaluate well their areas of responsibility to bring about whole-school improvement.

- 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 inspectors met, report that they feel safe in the school and that they 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 including self-evaluation and the development planning process.

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

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.

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



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