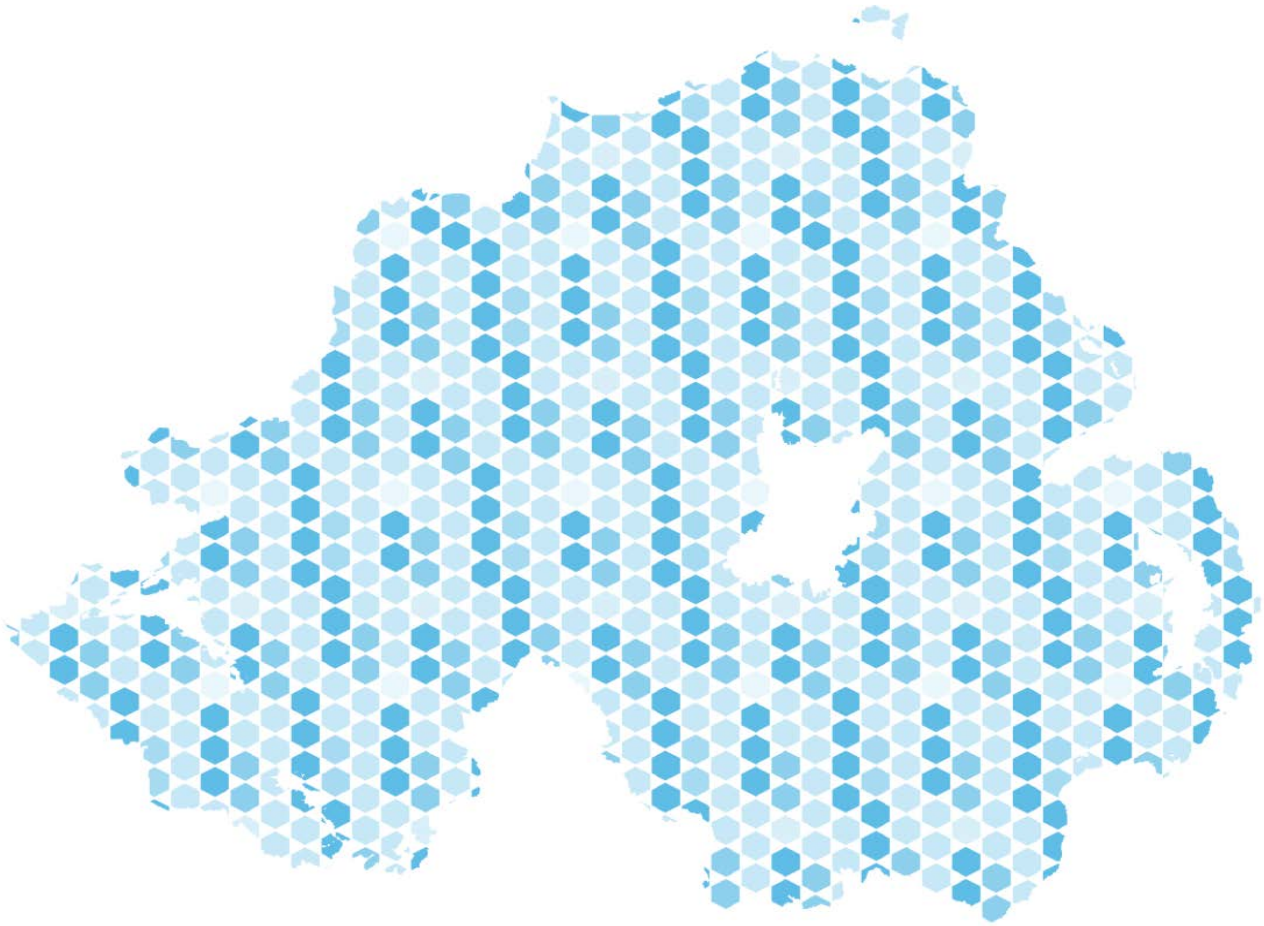


# PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training  
Inspectorate

Tobermore Primary School,  
Tobermore, County Londonderry

Controlled, co-educational

Report of an inspection (Involving Action  
Short of Strike) in March 2017



The Education and Training Inspectorate  
Promoting Improvement

Providing inspection services for:

Department of Education  
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## INTRODUCTION

### 1. Context

Tobermore Primary School is a controlled, co-educational primary school located in Tobermore, County Londonderry. Most of the children come from within the town boundaries with a small number coming from the rural community. Over the past four years the enrolment and the proportion of children entitled to free schools meals have both decreased; and the proportion of children on the special needs register has increased significantly. The school has established shared educational links with two maintained primary schools and the local district council. Last year, the school received a flagship award from the Ulster Scots society. A new principal was appointed in September 2016.

Four of the teaching unions which make up the Northern Ireland Teachers' Council have declared industrial action primarily in relation to a pay dispute. This includes non-co-operation with ETI. Prior to the inspection, the school informed the ETI that none of the teaching staff 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 limited evaluations are based on the evidence available at the time of the inspection.

Tobermore Primary School	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
Enrolment	73	64	63	53
% School attendance	95.3	95.6	95.5	95.2
% NI Primary school average	95.6	95.4	N/A	N/A
FSME Percentage <sup>1</sup>	26	25	17	15
No. of children on SEN register	10	8	5	12
% of children on SEN register	14	13	8	23
No. of children with statements of educational need	*	*	*	*
No. of newcomer children	*	*	*	*

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

\* fewer than 5

N/A not available

### 2. Views of parents and staff

Just over twelve percent of the parents and all of the non-teaching and support staff responded to the confidential questionnaire. All of the parental responses were in agreement that the school is well led and managed, at all levels. The responses from the non-teaching and support staff indicated high levels of satisfaction with their role in the school.

### 3. Focus of the inspection

The ETI was unable to evaluate:

- outcomes for children with a particular focus on numeracy including across the curriculum (and how the school is addressing low attainment and underachievement where applicable);

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

- quality of provision; and
- quality of leadership and management.

Where it has been possible to evaluate aspects of the focus, they are 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

### KEY FINDINGS

#### 5. Outcomes for learners

The ETI was able to evaluate partially the standards attained by the children.

- A small group of children from year seven demonstrated a knowledge and understanding of key numerical concepts but limited flexibility when solving a range of unfamiliar mathematical problems.

The ETI was unable to evaluate:

- 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 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
- care and welfare.

## **7. Leadership and management**

The ETI was able to evaluate aspects of leadership and management.

- The principal has been in post for five months. In that time, areas for improvement in safeguarding have been identified and addressed; roles and responsibilities within the school have been reviewed; and a one-year interim school development plan (SDP) has been drafted. The interim SDP was produced through consultation with all stakeholders and identifies priorities for improvement; however, the associated action plans require a greater focus on learning and teaching with measurable targets to monitor and track the children's progress.
- Based on the evidence available at the time of inspection, the ETI's evaluation is that there can be limited confidence in the aspects of governance evaluated. The governors have identified the need to: develop further their role in monitoring and evaluating the quality of the learning experiences and the outcomes attained by the children; and, to monitor the effectiveness of their challenge and support function. There is a need to strengthen the governance of the school.
- During the inspection, the school provided evidence that satisfactory arrangements for safeguarding reflect broadly the guidance issued by the relevant Departments. In discussion with the inspectors, a group of children from year 6 reported that they feel safe and secure in school and know what to do if they have any concerns about their wellbeing. 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.
- It will be important that the employing authority, school governors and the staff plan for, and manage, issues related to the sustainability of the school provision and school budget, in order to address the current and future needs of the children and the staff.

The ETI was unable to evaluate fully the impact and effectiveness of:

- the strategic leadership;
- the middle leadership; and
- action to promote and sustain improvement.

## **CONCLUSION**

### **8. 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. The school is a high priority for future inspection with no further notice.

### **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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