

Education and Training Inspectorate PRIMARY INSPECTION



Ampertaine Primary School, Upperlands, County Londonderry

Controlled, co-educational DE Ref No: 301-2234

Report of a Sustaining Improvement Inspection (Involving Action Short of Strike) in November 2019



The Education and Training Inspectorate
Promoting Improvement

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Sustaining Improvement Inspection of Ampertaine Primary School, Upperlands, County Londonderry (301-2234)

Introduction

The previous inspection in November 2016 evaluated the overall effectiveness of Ampertaine Primary School as having the capacity to identify and bring about improvement. Since the last inspection, a new member has been appointed to the senior leadership team. The school participates in a shared education partnership with a local, maintained primary school. A sustaining improvement inspection (SII) was conducted on 28 November 2019.

The trade unions which make up the Northern Ireland Teachers' Council (NITC) have declared industrial action primarily in relation to a pay dispute, and also workload and other management issues. The industrial action 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 inspection. The senior leadership co-operated with the inspection in relation to safeguarding responsibilities. The ETI has a statutory duty to monitor, inspect and report on the standards of education and professional practice among teachers 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.

Focus of the inspection

Owing to the school's participation in industrial action:

- the inspection was unable to focus on evaluating the extent to which the school is capable of demonstrating its capacity to effect improvement through self-evaluation and effective school planning; and
- lines of inquiry were not selected by the school from the development plan priorities.

Key findings

- In discussion with a group of year 6 children they talked enthusiastically about their opportunities to develop leadership skills through membership of the school council and the 'playground pals' scheme. They expressed their enjoyment of participation in a recent curricular, industrial link and how working with local industry makes their learning fun in a real-life context.

The ETI was unable to evaluate fully:

- the lines of inquiry; and
- the quality of learning and teaching within the classrooms.

Safeguarding

During the inspection, the school provided evidence that the arrangements for safeguarding children reflect broadly the guidance from the Department of Education. The children report that they feel safe in school and online 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 school needs to:

- continue to update the suite of policies to reflect more fully the current guidance from the Department of Education.

Conclusion

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.

Health and safety/Accommodation

During inspection, the following health and safety/accommodation matter was observed:

- the perimeter wall at the front of the school needs to be secured.

The school continues to take mitigating action through risk reduction measures.

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