

# PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training  
Inspectorate

Ballyholland Primary School,  
Newry, County Down

Maintained, co-educational

Report of a Sustaining Improvement  
Inspection (Involving Action Short of  
Strike) in May 2017



The Education and Training Inspectorate  
Promoting Improvement

Providing inspection services for:

Department of Education  
Department for the Economy  
and other commissioning Departments



## **Sustaining Improvement Inspection of Ballyholland Primary School, Newry, County Down (503-1558)**

### **Introduction**

In the last inspection held in May 2014, Ballyholland Primary School was evaluated overall as very good<sup>1</sup>. A sustaining improvement inspection (SII) was conducted on 11 May 2017.

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, including the principal, 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.

### **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 development planning; and
- a line of inquiry was not selected from the development plan priorities.

### **Key findings**

The ETI was unable to evaluate:

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

### **Safeguarding**

During the inspection, the school did not provide evidence that satisfactory arrangements are in place for safeguarding learners.

### **Conclusion**

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 and safeguarding being provided for the children. The school is a high priority for future inspection with no further notice.

The ETI will return to the school within six weeks to monitor and report on the arrangements for safeguarding.

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<sup>1</sup> From September 2015, the overall effectiveness of a school evaluated previously as outstanding or very good has been reported as a school demonstrating a high level of capacity for sustained improvement.

## **ADDENDUM TO THE REPORT ON THE SUSTAINING IMPROVEMENT INSPECTION OF BALLYHOLLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL, NEWRY, COUNTY DOWN (503-1558)**

### **SAFEGUARDING**

The ETI returned to the school on 29 September 2017 to monitor and report on arrangements for safeguarding.

The purpose of the visit was to provide the school with a further opportunity to provide evidence on its arrangements for safeguarding; owing to action short of strike, the school did not provide evidence that satisfactory arrangements were in place at the time of the Sustaining Improvement Inspection on 11 May 2017.

During the follow-up visit, the school provided evidence that arrangements for safeguarding reflect broadly the guidance issued by the Department of Education.

In discussion with a group of year 6 children, they reported that they feel safe in school. They know what to do and who to talk to if they are concerned about their safety or well-being.

Owing to the ongoing action short of strike, the ETI was unable to evaluate fully the outworking of the arrangements for safeguarding in the school.

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