

Education and Training Inspectorate PRIMARY INSPECTION



Dromore Primary School, Omagh, County Tyrone

Controlled, co-educational DE Ref No: 201-2707

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



The Education and Training Inspectorate
Promoting Improvement

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Sustaining Improvement Inspection of Dromore Primary School, Omagh, County Tyrone (201-2707)

Introduction

The previous inspection in November 2016 evaluated the overall effectiveness of Dromore Primary School as having the capacity to identify and bring about improvement. Since then, the school has continued to engage in a shared education partnership with two local primary schools and a neighbouring post-primary school. A sustaining improvement inspection (SII) was conducted on 3 December 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. 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 inspection. The senior leadership co-operated with the inspection in relation to their 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.

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
- a line of inquiry was not selected by the school from the development plan priorities.

Key findings

- A group of year 6 and year 7 children met with the inspector and spoke positively about their learning experiences across the primary curriculum. The children value their opportunities to participate in a range of extra-curricular activities and highlight their enjoyment of the shared education opportunities, including a residential, with two other local primary schools.
- The children report that they have good opportunities to develop their leadership capabilities within through their roles in the school- and eco-councils.
- 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 line 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 the school and that they are aware of what to do if they have any concerns about their safety or welfare. Whilst compliant, the school has identified accurately a review of the drugs and relationships and sexuality education (RSE) policies during this school year. The addressing bullying policy has also been identified for review in preparation for the impending changes to statutory requirements. 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:

- establish a schedule to ensure an accurate and timely review of all associated safeguarding policies.

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.

APPENDIX

Health and safety/Accommodation

The health and safety matter identified in the [previous inspection report](#) has still to be resolved by the employing authority. The perimeter fence at the rear (in the gardening area) and at the side of the main school building is too low to secure fully potential access to or exit from the school grounds.

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