

Education and Training Inspectorate

PRIMARY INSPECTION



Gaelscoil Éadain Mhóir, Doire/Derry

Irish-medium, co-educational DE Ref No (204-6646)

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



The Education and Training Inspectorate
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Sustaining Improvement Inspection of Gaelscoil Éadain Mhóir, Derry (204-6646)

Introduction

The previous inspection in June 2016 evaluated the overall effectiveness of Gaelscoil Éadain Mhóir as having the capacity to identify and bring about improvement. Since the follow-up inspection (FUI) in 2016, the enrolment has increased by almost one-quarter and stands at 171 children in the gaelscoil and naíscóil. The school is preparing to take delivery of two modular classrooms and a multi-purpose room. A sustaining improvement inspection (SII) was conducted on 30 May 2019.

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 would be co-operating with the inspectors. The leadership co-operated with the inspection in relation to 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
- lines of inquiry were not selected by the school from the development plan priorities.

Key findings

- A group of year 6 children spoke very positively in Irish about their learning experiences in school. During the discussions, they highlighted: the friendly and supportive environment which helps them learn; the high standards of behaviour throughout the school and the associated awards; and, the opportunities they have to develop their leadership skills, for example, as *cairde clóis* ('playground buddies') to the younger children and as members of the Eco- and School-Councils.

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 group of year 6 children reported that they feel safe in school and 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:

- ensure that policies currently in draft form are ratified and implemented.

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

1. The school needs to review and address the security arrangements into and within the school grounds in order to restrict public access to the play areas.

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