

Education and Training Inspectorate

PRIMARY INSPECTION



Gortin Primary School, Gortin, County Tyrone

Controlled, co-educational DE Ref No (201-6395)

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



The Education and Training Inspectorate
Promoting Improvement

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Sustaining Improvement Inspection of Gortin Primary School, Gortin, County Tyrone (201-6395)

Introduction

The previous inspection in June 2016 evaluated the overall effectiveness of Gortin Primary School as having a high level of capacity for sustained improvement. The school is engaged in a three-school shared education partnership. A sustaining improvement inspection (SII) was conducted on 12 June 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 senior leadership co-operated with the inspection team in relation to safeguarding and leadership 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

- There is a well-constructed school development plan which is informed through a wide range of consultation and sets out a clear rationale with high expectations and appropriate actions for sustaining whole-school improvement. The whole school community worked together to achieve recently the 'Best Kept School Award' in the Western Region.

- A group of year 6 and 7 children report that they have very good opportunities to develop their leadership capabilities and roles of responsibility through the Eco-and School-Councils and they have contributed to the recycling and attractive presentation of the school grounds. The children stated that they enjoy literacy and numeracy lessons and a wide range of extra-curricular activities which extend their interest in gardening, Scottish dancing and the development of their musical skills. A recent residential trip to an activity pursuit centre was highly valued by the children to experience water sports and social group activities. The children report that they benefit from shared education activities and travel to school on the bus with their friends from the partnership.
- The attractive displays on the corridors celebrate a broad range of learning experiences and celebrate the children's achievements. There are examples of the preventative curriculum including work completed on anti-bullying and the development of the children's awareness of their own and others' feelings.
- 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

- a 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. A group of year 6 reported that they feel safe in school and know what to do if they have any concerns about their safety or well-being. The children expressed high levels of satisfaction with the care and support provided by all the staff. 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.

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

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