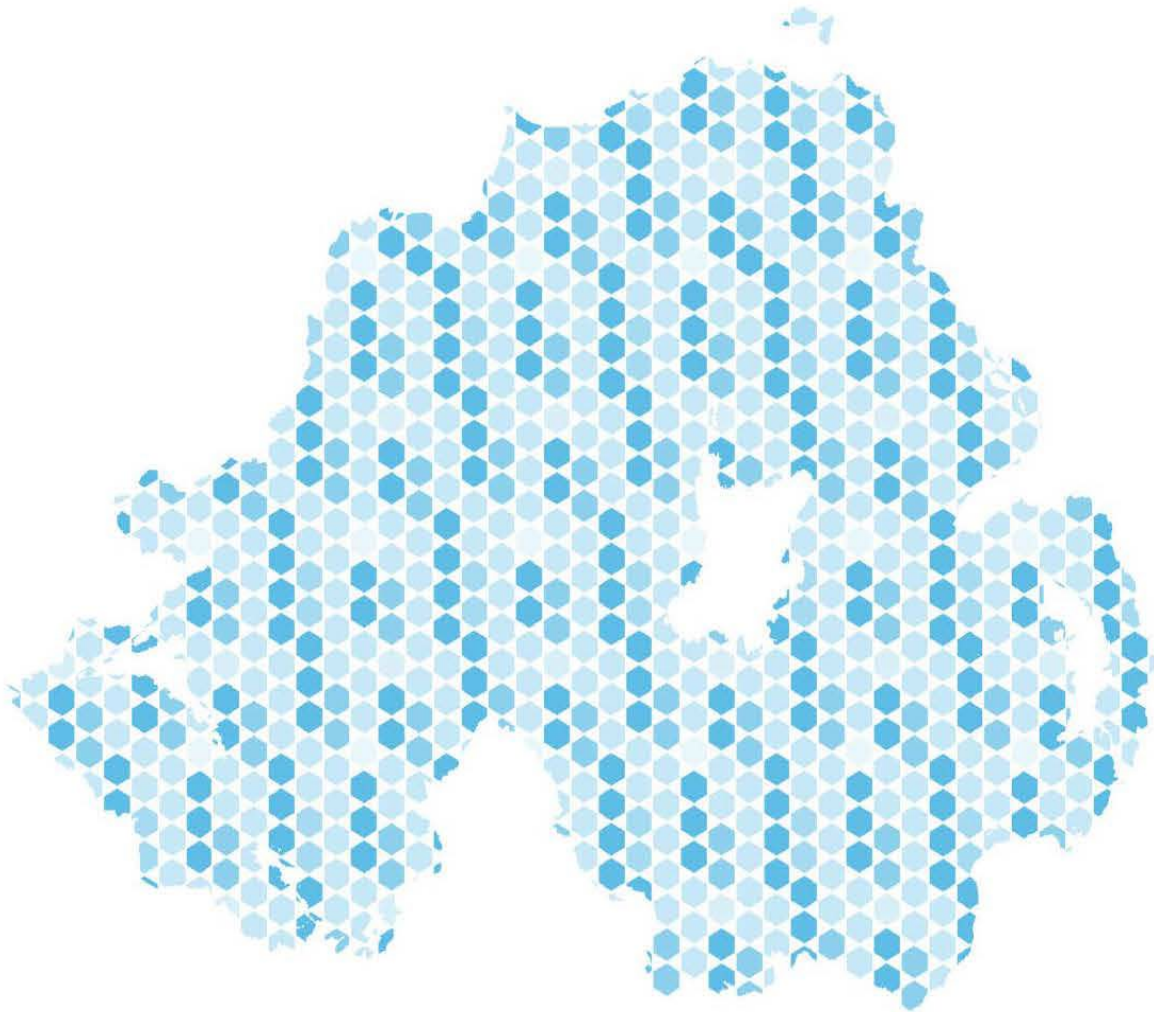


PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Mountnorris Primary School,
Mountnorris, County Armagh

Controlled, co-educational

Report of a Sustaining Improvement
Inspection (Involving Action Short of
Strike) in October 2018



The Education and Training Inspectorate
Promoting Improvement

Providing inspection services for:

Department of Education
Department for the Economy
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CUSTOMER
SERVICE
EXCELLENCE



Sustaining Improvement Inspection of Mountnorris Primary School, Mountnorris, County Armagh (501-1161)

Introduction

The previous inspection in October, 2014 evaluated the overall effectiveness of Mountnorris Primary School as outstanding (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). In the interim, a new principal was appointed and significant enhancements have been made to the fabric of the building, resulting in a very attractive environment for learning. The school has continued to be an active member of a well-established shared education partnership. A sustaining improvement inspection (SII) was conducted on 22 October 2018.

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 the staff would not be co-operating with the inspectors. The principal co-operated with the inspection team in relation to safeguarding. 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 and 7 children spoke very positively about their learning experiences including those facilitated through the shared education partnership. The children reported that they benefit from the work of the school council, various leadership opportunities and extra-curricular activities.

The ETI was unable to evaluate:

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

It will be important that the employing authority, school governors and the staff continue to 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.

Safeguarding

During the inspection, the school provided evidence that the arrangements for safeguarding children reflect broadly the guidance from the Department of Education. In discussions with the inspector, a group of year 6 and 7 children reported that they feel very happy and safe in school and are aware of what to do if they have any concerns about their safety or well-being. 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 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

- The school has raised the need for secure boundary fencing with the relevant authorities; this work needs to proceed as a matter of urgency.

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