

PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

New Row Primary School,
Castledawson, County Derry

Maintained, co-educational

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



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 New Row Primary School, Castledawson (303-2109)

Introduction

The previous inspection in May 2014, evaluated the overall effectiveness of New Row Primary School as very good¹. Since the last inspection, a new principal, vice-principal and two new teachers have been appointed. A sustaining improvement inspection (SII) was conducted on 5 April 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 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 available at the time of the inspection.

Focus of the inspection

The inspection focused 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.

The lines of inquiry during the SII were:

- to develop further the effective use of data at whole-school level to improve the learning experiences and outcomes for the children; and
- to develop further the role of the co-ordinators in leading, monitoring and evaluating more effectively the provision in their respective areas.

Key findings

- The new senior leadership provides clear, strategic direction for the continued improvement of the school. The priorities for development have been selected skilfully in order to effect change at an appropriate pace, underpinned by a whole-school culture of collaborative learning, support and challenge. Through well-conceived capacity-building work by the senior leadership, the staff, governors and parents have been empowered to understand the school's data and its place in the school improvement process. The teachers use data well to inform planning for learning at all levels.

The ETI was unable to evaluate:

- the work of the co-ordinators; and
- the outworking of the teachers' planning for learning, the learning and teaching within the classrooms and the standard of the children's work in their books.

¹ 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.

Safeguarding

- During the inspection, the school provided evidence that satisfactory arrangements for safeguarding reflect broadly the guidance issued by the relevant Departments. In discussion with a group of year 6 children, they reported that they enjoy school and feel safe. The children spoke positively and with maturity about their learning and progress, their working relationships with their teachers and the range of enrichment and extra-curricular provision available to them. 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. This will be reflected in future inspection activity.

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