

PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Rathmore Primary School, Bangor,
County Down

Controlled, co-educational

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



The Education and Training Inspectorate
Promoting Improvement

Providing inspection services for:

Department of Education
Department for the Economy
and other commissioning Departments



Sustaining Improvement Inspection of Rathmore Primary School, Bangor, County Down (401-6430)

Introduction

The previous inspection in February 2014, evaluated the overall effectiveness of Rathmore Primary School as very good¹. A sustaining improvement inspection (SII) was conducted on 8 May 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 as made 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 line of inquiry selected by the school, and agreed with the inspector, during the SII was:

- the development of a people-centred culture and personalised staff development to enhance further learning and teaching across the school.

Key findings

- The strategic development of personalised staff development programmes is well-informed, reflective and focused on improving the provision for the children and associated learning outcomes.
- The school collects a wide range of performance data on the children which it uses to set individual targets, monitor progress and target appropriate intervention, where necessary. The school demonstrated clearly, using the available data, how the new approaches have impacted positively and improved outcomes for the children.

The ETI was unable to evaluate:

- the quality 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 previously evaluated 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 the arrangements for safeguarding reflect² the guidance issued by the relevant Departments. The children report that they feel safe in school and are aware of who to speak to and what to do if they have any concerns about their safety or welfare.

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 overall quality of education being provided for the children. This will be reflected in future inspection activity.

² From January 2017, arrangements previously evaluated as comprehensive are reported as reflect the guidance.

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