

Education and Training Inspectorate

PRIMARY INSPECTION



Sacred Heart Primary School, Derry

Maintained, co-educational DE Ref No (203-6259)

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 Sacred Heart Primary School, Derry (203-6259)

Introduction

The previous inspection in September 2015 evaluated the overall effectiveness of Sacred Heart Primary School as having a high level of capacity for sustained improvement. A sustaining improvement inspection (SII) was conducted on 20 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 acting principal and acting vice-principal co-operated with the inspection team 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

The ETI was unable to evaluate:

- 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 (DE). Currently, the school is reviewing and updating its pastoral policies in line with current DE guidance. In discussion with a group of children in year 6, they reported that they are happy and safe at school and know 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.

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