

PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

St Joseph's Primary School,
Carnacaville, Newcastle, County Down

Maintained, 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 St Joseph's Primary School, Carnacaville, Newcastle, County Down (403-1663)

Introduction

The original inspection in February 2011, evaluated the overall effectiveness of St Joseph's Primary School, Carnacaville as very good¹. The school took part in the pilot of the sustaining improvement inspection (SII). In the interim, the school premises has undergone extensive refurbishment and has been extended significantly with the addition of four new classrooms, a new multi-purpose hall, resource rooms and additional car parking. The enrolment has steadily increased and currently stands at 197 children. A second SII was conducted on 10 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 school also provided evidence of provision for safeguarding as part of the inspection.

The lines of inquiry during the SII were:

- developing further the quality of guided reading throughout the school; and
- raising further the quality of the children's learning experience in numeracy, focusing on the teaching of shape and space using active learning strategies, and promoting associated mathematical language.

Key findings

- The school development plan has been devised through appropriate consultation and identifies priorities along with clear action plans to bring about improvement in the learning experiences for, and the outcomes achieved by, the children. The school gives high priority to the development of children's physical and mental health and well-being through a wide range of planned curricular programmes and after-school activities. The children report they have regular opportunities to participate in school improvement through their involvement in the school- and Eco- councils. The school has been awarded recently its first green Eco flag.

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.

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 satisfactory arrangements for safeguarding reflect broadly² the guidance issued by the relevant Departments. The children reported that they feel safe in the school and that they are aware of what to do if they have any concerns about their safety or welfare. 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.

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

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