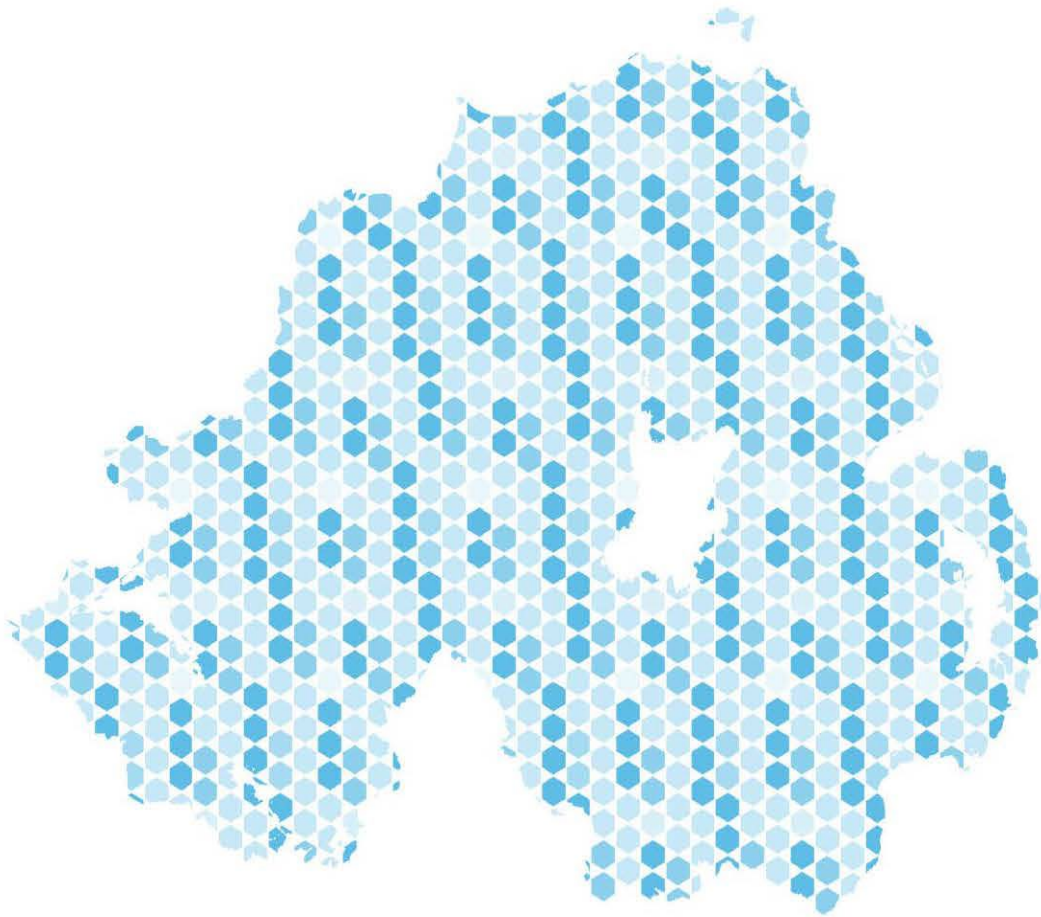


PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

St Mary's Gortnaghey Primary
School, Dungiven, County Derry

Maintained, co-educational

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



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 Mary's Gortnaghey Primary School, Dungiven, County Derry (203-6458)

Introduction

The previous inspection in September 2015 evaluated the overall effectiveness of St Mary's Gortnaghey Primary School as having the capacity to identify and bring about improvement. In the interim: the number of children enrolled in the school has remained steady; there is a minor works extension to the facilities underway; and a shared education programme between three local schools has been established. A sustaining improvement inspection (SII) was conducted on 17 September 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 most of the teachers would not be co-operating with the inspector. The principal and designated teacher for child protection co-operated with the inspector in relation to their 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 group of year 6 children report that they have very good opportunities to: have their opinions heard; develop their understanding of roles and responsibilities through, for example, the School-Council and Eco-Committee; and, include all children in the life and work of the school with the use of a specialist strategy regarding communication skills.

The ETI was unable to evaluate fully:

- 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. The children in year 6, who spoke to the inspector, reported that they feel safe 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.

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