

Education and Training Inspectorate

PRIMARY INSPECTION



St Mary's Primary School, Teemore, County Fermanagh

Maintained, co-educational DE Ref No (203-6181)

Report of a Sustaining Improvement Inspection (Involving Action Short of Strike) in June 2019



The Education and Training Inspectorate
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Sustaining Improvement Inspection of St Mary's Primary School, Teemore, County Fermanagh (203-6181)

Introduction

The previous inspection in April 2016 evaluated the overall effectiveness of St Mary's Primary School as having a high level of capacity for sustained improvement. Since that inspection, the school enrolment has increased steadily. A sustaining improvement inspection (SII) was conducted on 12 June 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 senior leadership co-operated with the inspection 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
- a line of inquiry was not selected by the school from the development plan priorities.

Key findings

- A group of year 6 children met with the inspector and spoke positively about their learning experiences. They summarised enthusiastically the large range of opportunities they have to participate in sporting, cultural and creative extra-curricular activities which extend their learning. The children also described the very good opportunity they have to develop their leadership capabilities through their roles on the Eco-Council.
- The children described their efforts to support the work of a charity. They explained that their teachers, as well as their peers, listen to their views and provide guidance and encouragement to support their learning. The children spoke positively about their opportunities to learn alongside children from another school as part of the Collaboration and Sharing in Education (CASE) Peace IV Shared Education Project.

The ETI was unable to evaluate:

- a line 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). A review of almost all pastoral care policies has been undertaken during the last 18 months. The improved policies are compliant with the relevant DE guidance and have been ratified by the board of governors. The inspector met with a small group of year 6 children who stated that they feel safe in school. The children listed accurately the external expertise who guide and support the school's preventive curriculum and reported that they know what to do and who to talk to if they are concerned about their safety or well-being both in school and when online. 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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