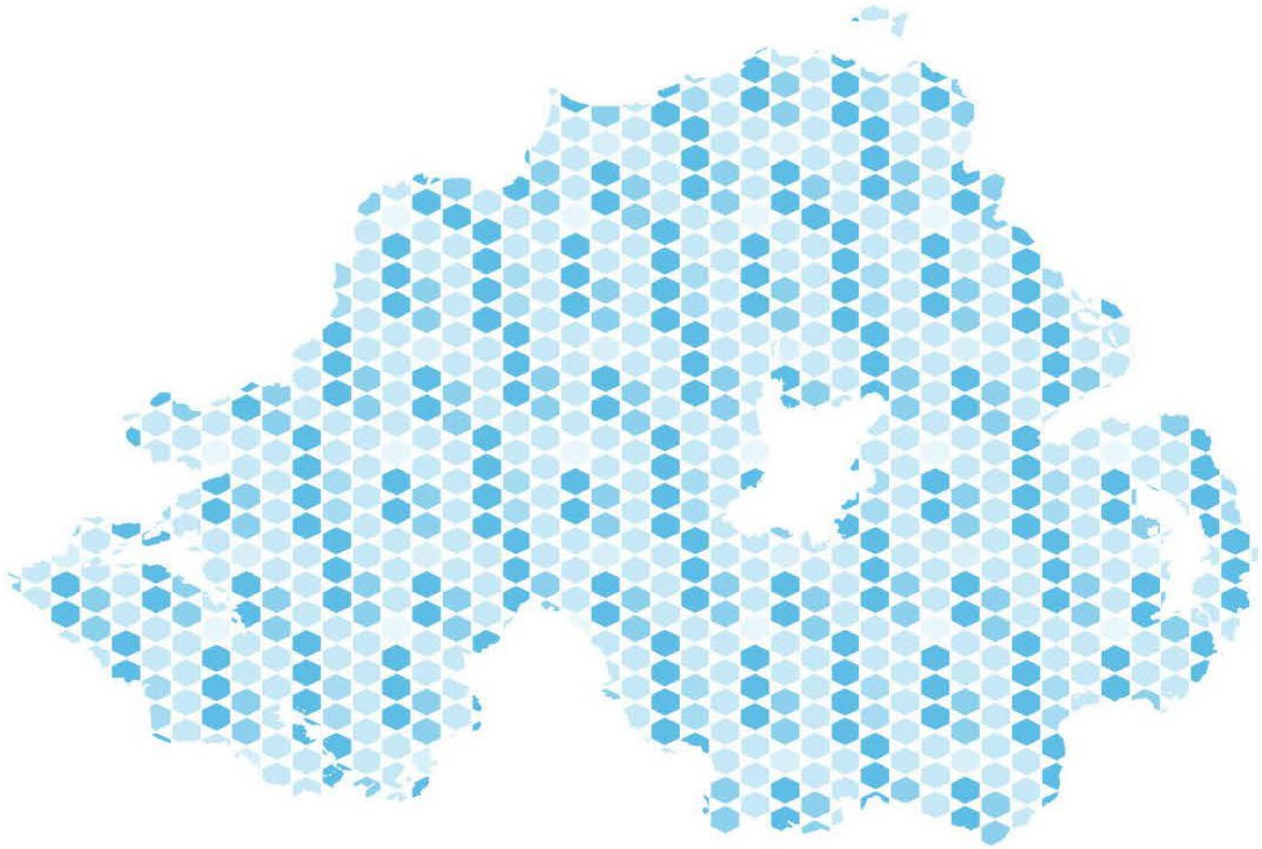


# Education and Training Inspectorate

## PRIMARY INSPECTION



### The Irish Society's Primary School and Nursery Unit, Coleraine, County Londonderry

Controlled, co-educational DE Ref No (301-6264)

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



The Education and Training Inspectorate  
Promoting Improvement

Providing inspection services for:

Department of Education  
Department for the Economy  
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# **Sustaining Improvement Inspection of The Irish Society's Primary School and Nursery Unit, Coleraine, County Londonderry (301-6264)**

## **Introduction**

The previous inspection in April 2016 evaluated the overall effectiveness of The Irish Society's Primary School and Nursery Unit as having the capacity to identify and bring about improvement. Since the previous inspection, the enrolment has decreased notably by around 15% and currently stands at 269 children. The school appointed a new principal in September 2018. A sustaining improvement inspection (SII) was conducted on 4 April 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 all of the teachers, including the principal, would not be co-operating with the inspectors. The 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
- a line of inquiry was not selected by the school from the development plan priorities.

## **Key findings**

- A group of children from year 6, who met with the inspectors, were friendly, confident and spoke well. They talked positively about their experiences in school and were very appreciative of their teachers' care and support for them. The children enthused about aspects of mathematics, creative writing and investigative work in science. They commended the extra-curricular provision, which has a broad variety of offer and high participation levels. The children spoke well about the many opportunities the school provides them to develop leadership roles, including those through the School Council, as peer mediators and as 'digital leaders' when they reach year 7.

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. In discussion with the inspectors, the group of year 6 children stated that they feel safe and 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 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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