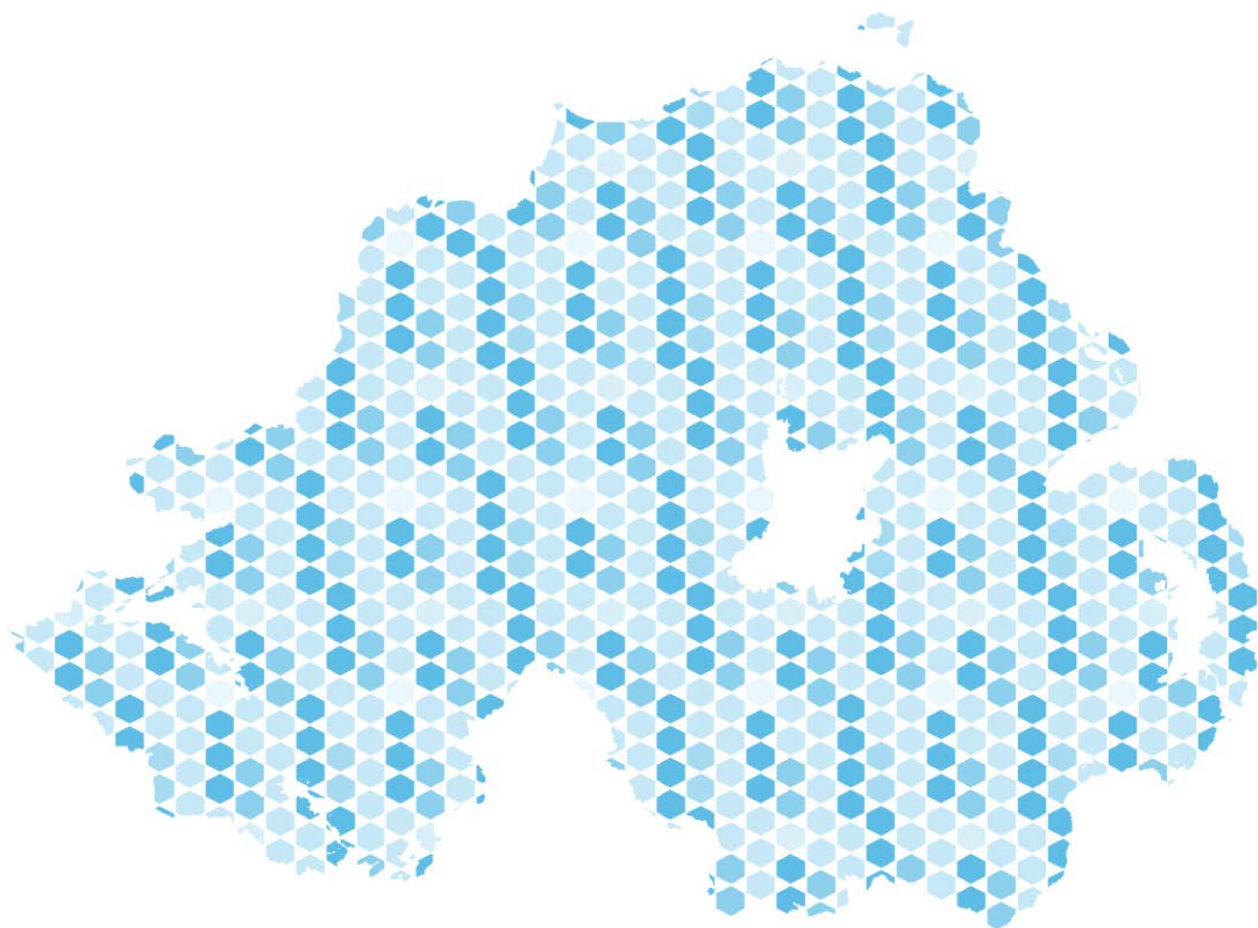


PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

St Brigid's Primary School,
Altamuskin, County Tyrone

Maintained, co-educational

Report of a Follow-up Inspection
(Involving Action Short of Strike) in
October 2018



The Education and Training Inspectorate
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FOLLOW-UP TO THE INSPECTION OF ST BRIGID'S PRIMARY SCHOOL, ALTAMUSKIN, COUNTY TYRONE, BT79 9JA (203-2573)

The Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) carried out a follow-up inspection (FUI) of St Brigid's Primary School in May 2017¹, which concluded that the school needed to address an important area for improvement in the interest of all the learners.

The area for improvement was:

- for the staff to make more evaluative use of the range of information gathered about learning and teaching in order to inform the setting of more rigorous baselines and targets in the action plans.

As a consequence, the Department of Education made the decision that the school remained within the Formal Intervention Process under the Every School a Good School policy² on 25 November 2015.

The school's post inspection action plans were of a good quality.

The ETI carried out an interim follow-up visit October 2017 and a second follow-up inspection in October 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 the teachers would not be engaging with the inspection. The acting principal and representative of the board of governors co-operated regarding their safeguarding and leadership 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.

In the interval since the follow-up inspection, the representative of the board of governors reported that the school has received external support provided by the Education Authority (EA) in relation to:

- the update of safeguarding training for new members of staff;
- the development of risk assessment processes; and
- the further development of co-ordinator roles to monitor and evaluate learning and teaching.

During this period, other actions or changes which affect the work of the school include:

- an acting-principal was appointed in September 2018;

¹ <https://www.etini.gov.uk/sites/etini.gov.uk/files/publications/follow-up-inspection-st-brigids-primary-school-altamuskin-county-tyrone-203-2573.pdf>

² <https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/de/ESAGS%20Policy%20for%20School%20Improvement%20-%20Final%20Version%2005-05-2009.pdf>

- the staff received support from the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools (CCMS) to enable the effective induction of the acting-principal and to promote the effectiveness of whole-school teamwork; and
- the board of governors implemented guidance from the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools (CCMS) to enable the sub-committees to monitor more robustly the work of the co-ordinators and the completion of the school building work.

Key findings

- During the follow-up inspection, the school provided evidence that the arrangements for safeguarding children reflect broadly the guidance from the Department of Education. In discussions with the inspectors, a group of year 6 children reported that they feel very safe and happy in school and know whom to talk to 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
- The quality of the learning and teaching observed at the interim visit was of a good quality. During the follow-up inspection, a small group of foundation stage children were able to talk about and read their own writing; and in key stage (KS) 2, a small group of children explained their topic work with confidence and expressed enjoyment of learning new facts and creating models. The year 6 children spoke about their enjoyment of learning. The variety of interesting displays of the children's work indicate that the school continues to utilise opportunities for connected learning across the curricular areas of literacy, numeracy, history, geography and art.

However, owing to the action short of strike, the ETI was unable to evaluate fully the quality of the learning and teaching.

- The representative of the governors outlined a greater understanding of the governors' challenge function regarding the development of school policies and the quality of children's learning experiences and outcomes. The effective oversight of the securing of the school site, building work and painting of the classrooms has greatly enhanced the quality of the learning environment which is now bright and stimulating for the children and the staff. However, owing to the action short of strike, the ETI was unable to evaluate fully the effectiveness of governance.
- It continues to be important that the employing authority, governors and the staff plan for, and manage, issues related to the sustainability of the school in order to address the current and future needs of the children and the staff.

Owing to action short of strike, the ETI was unable to evaluate fully the following area for improvement:

- more evaluative use of the range of information gathered about learning and teaching in order to inform the setting of more rigorous baselines and targets in the action plans.

Consequently, there remains a need for St Brigid's Primary School to address the important area for improvement³.

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. This will be reflected in future inspection activity.

³ The Department of Education will seek assurance from the Education Authority (and/or employing authority) that they are working with the school in relation to the inspection report

Accommodation

1. There remains a need to ensure the privacy of the secretary's office to conduct business at a distance from the desk.

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