

Education and Training Inspectorate

PRIMARY INSPECTION



Drumlish Primary School, Omagh, County Tyrone

Maintained, co-educational DE Ref No (203-2677)

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

Sustaining Improvement Inspection of Drumlish Primary School, Omagh, County Tyrone (203-2677)

Introduction

The previous inspection in May 2015 evaluated the overall effectiveness of Drumlish Primary School as very good¹. Since the previous inspection, the enrolment has decreased by 18% and currently stands at 46 children. A new principal took up post in December 2017. A sustaining improvement inspection (SII) was conducted on 8 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 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

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

- It will be important that the employing authority, school governors and the staff continue to plan for, and manage, issues related to the sustainability of the school provision and school budget in order to address the current and future needs of the children and the staff.

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 did not provide evidence that the arrangements for safeguarding children reflect or reflect broadly the guidance from the Department of Education².

¹ From September 2015, the overall effectiveness of a school evaluated previously as outstanding or very good has been reported as a school demonstrating a high level of capacity for sustained improvement.

² The Department of Education will seek assurance from the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools (CCMS) that they are working with the school in relation to the inspection report.

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 and safeguarding being provided for the children. The school is a high priority for future inspection with no further notice.

The ETI will return to the school within six weeks to evaluate and report on the arrangements for safeguarding.

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