

PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Gaelscoil an Chaistil, Baile an Chaistil/
Ballycastle, County Antrim

Irish-medium, co-educational

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



The Education and Training Inspectorate
Promoting Improvement

Providing inspection services for:

Department of Education
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CUSTOMER
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EXCELLENCE



Sustaining Improvement Inspection of Gaelscoil an Chaistil, Baile an Chaistil/ Ballycastle, County Antrim (304-6653)

Introduction

The previous inspection in November 2015 evaluated the overall effectiveness of Gaelscoil an Chaistil as having a high level of capacity for sustained improvement. A sustaining improvement inspection (SII) was conducted on 26 November 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 none of the teachers would 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
- lines of inquiry were not selected by the school from the development plan priorities.

Key findings

The ETI was unable to evaluate:

- the lines of inquiry; and
- the quality of learning and teaching within the classrooms.
- It will be important that the employing authority, school governors and the staff 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.

Safeguarding

- During the inspection, the school provided evidence that the arrangements for safeguarding children reflect broadly the guidance from the Department of Education (DE). However, there is a need to review a few aspects of the school's child protection and associated policies to ensure that they reflect more fully the most recent guidance from the DE, and, in particular, elements of the positive behaviour policy. There is also a need to ensure that all members of the newly-constituted board of governors receive the necessary safeguarding training.

- In discussions with the inspectors, a group of year 6 children reported that they were happy in school and spoke positively about the caring and friendly working relationships they have with one another. They reported that they feel safe in school and know what to do and who to talk to if they are concerned 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 principal and teachers, 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.

Health and safety/Accommodation

1. The school has assessed the risks surrounding the security arrangements of the access to the temporary classrooms. An application for minor works funding regarding this has been submitted.
2. There is a need for the school to review the security arrangements of the main school gate.

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