

# Education and Training Inspectorate

## PRIMARY INSPECTION



Kells and Connor Primary School, Ballymena, County Antrim

Controlled, co-educational DE Ref No (301-0835)

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



The Education and Training Inspectorate  
Promoting Improvement

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Department of Education  
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## **Sustaining Improvement Inspection of Kells and Connor Primary School, Ballymena, County Antrim (301-0835)**

### **Introduction**

The previous inspection in June 2016 evaluated the overall effectiveness of Kells and Connor Primary School as having the capacity to identify and bring about improvement. The school is participating in a shared education partnership with a maintained school. A sustaining improvement inspection (SII) was conducted on 6 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 leadership 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**

- The inspector met with a group of year 6 children who spoke very positively and maturely about aspects of school life. They highlighted their enjoyment of participating in the shared education programme; and, singing in the school choir at a harvest service, church carol services and on a local radio station. The children appreciate the range of after-school activities offered in the school, for example, various sports, art, cookery and Scripture Union. The children talked positively about their opportunities for developing leadership through the School Council and as 'playground buddies.'

The ETI was unable to evaluate:

- the 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. The inspector met with a group of year 6 children who reported that they feel very safe and know what to do if they have any concerns about their safety or well-being. They articulated clearly how to stay safe 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.

The school needs to:

- construct a summary safeguarding leaflet.

### **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.

## **APPENDIX**

### **Health and Safety**

- There is a need for a secure perimeter fence and gate, at an appropriate height, to secure the premises.
- The board of governors and principal are working with the Education Authority to relocate an electrical installation.

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