

Education and Training Inspectorate

PRIMARY INSPECTION



Maghera Primary School, Maghera, County Londonderry

Controlled, co-educational DE Ref No (301-2291)

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



The Education and Training Inspectorate
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Sustaining Improvement Inspection of Maghera Primary School, Maghera, County Londonderry (301-2291)

Introduction

The previous inspection in April 2016 evaluated the overall effectiveness of Maghera Primary School as having a high level of capacity for sustained improvement. The school participates in a shared education partnership with a local maintained primary school. A sustaining improvement inspection (SII) was conducted on 12 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 senior leadership co-operated with the inspection team in relation to their 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 year 6 children report that they have very good opportunities to develop their leadership capabilities through their roles as 'digital leaders' and through participation in the School- and Eco-Councils. They stated that they enjoy participating in the wide range of extra-curricular activities afforded to them.
- 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.

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. In discussions with a group of year 6 children, they reported that they feel safe in school and know who to talk to if they have any concerns about their safety or well-being. They also stated that they know how to stay safe online in school and at home. 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 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.

Health and safety/Accommodation

1. While the school has carried out risk assessments and is implementing the risk reduction measures, the access points to the school grounds require immediate attention to ensure the safety of the children.

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