

# Education and Training Inspectorate

## PRIMARY INSPECTION



### Millisle Primary School and Nursery Unit, Millisle, County Down

Controlled, co-educational DE Ref No: 401-1681

Report of a Sustaining Improvement Inspection (Involving Action Short of Strike) in February 2020



The Education and Training Inspectorate  
Promoting Improvement

Providing inspection services for:

Department of Education  
Department for the Economy  
and other commissioning Departments

CUSTOMER  
SERVICE  
EXCELLENCE



## **Introduction**

The previous inspection in February 2017 evaluated the overall effectiveness of Millisle Primary School and Nursery Unit as having a high level of capacity for sustained improvement. A sustaining improvement inspection (SII) was conducted on 6 February 2020.

The trade unions which make up the Northern Ireland Teachers' Council (NITC) have declared industrial action primarily in relation to a pay dispute, and also workload and other management issues. The industrial action 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 inspection. The principal and designated teacher for child protection co-operated with the inspection team in relation to their leadership and 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**

- A group of year 6 children spoke positively about their interesting learning experiences and access to a wide variety of cultural and sporting extra-curricular opportunities, trips and visitors. They reported that the engaging approaches and resources they are using in reading, mathematics, the World Around Us and information and communication technology (ICT) are motivating them, particularly when their learning contains additional challenge and opportunities to extend their interests, creativity and thinking skills. The children also articulated well their understanding of diversity and the importance of accepting difference in others.
- The school development plan (SDP) is well-informed by systematic self-evaluation processes; a well-embedded culture of continuous reflection, rigorous analysis of relevant data and meaningful consultation with the children, parents, staff and governors underpins all aspects of school improvement. The evidence presented by the school indicates that the staff complete detailed action plans and related professional development to keep improving their knowledge and skills in the best interests of the children.

- The designated teacher for child protection and staff have developed carefully conceived and well-connected holistic approaches to the children's safeguarding, care and welfare. The policies and procedures reflect well the school's nurturing and respectful ethos and are responsive to the evolving challenges the children may encounter as they mature.

The ETI was unable to evaluate fully:

- the lines 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 children report that they feel safe and cared for in the school and are aware of what to do if they have any concerns about their safety or welfare. They know how to stay safe online using a range of mobile devices and when out and about in the local community, on rural roads and near the sea. However, owing to the action short of strike, the ETI was unable to evaluate 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. This will be reflected in future inspection activity.

© CROWN COPYRIGHT 2020

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part, except for commercial purposes or in connection with a prospectus or advertisement, provided that the source and date thereof are stated.

Copies of this report are available on the ETI website: [www.etini.gov.uk](http://www.etini.gov.uk)