

Education and Training Inspectorate

PRIMARY INSPECTION



Sacred Heart Primary School, Dungannon, County Tyrone

Maintained, co-educational DE Ref No (503-6136)

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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Sustaining Improvement Inspection of Sacred Heart Primary School, Dungannon, County Tyrone (503-6136)

Introduction

The previous inspection in June 2016 evaluated the overall effectiveness of Sacred Heart Primary School as having a high level of capacity for sustained improvement in the interest of all of the learners. A sustaining improvement inspection (SII) was conducted on 10 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 the senior and middle leadership 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

The inspection focussed on evaluating the extent to which the school is capable of demonstrating its capacity to effect improvement through self-evaluation and effective school planning. The school also provided evidence of provision for safeguarding as part of the inspection.

The lines of inquiry during the SII were:

- to improve further the provision for, and outcomes in, numeracy, with a particular focus on measure; and
- to build the children's resilience and support their health and well-being through a range of initiatives, programmes and partnerships.

Key findings

- There is a consistent approach to school improvement and to how the school is taking forward the lines of inquiry. The co-ordinators keep the targets under review and monitor regularly the impact of the actions taken on the children's learning. The feedback from the children, parents and staff is used to inform future planning.
- The children spoke positively about their learning across the curriculum and their enjoyment of the after-school activities and educational visits. A group of year seven children articulated how they apply their learning in numeracy, with a particular focus on measure, to real-life situations, and discussed the importance of mathematics in certain careers. They reported that they had great fun during 'mathematics week' and 'measures day', when they had the opportunity to share and discuss their learning and complete practical numeracy tasks in teams and in various settings.

- Through the establishment of links with a wide range of outside agencies, the school has introduced new initiatives and programmes throughout the school and across the curriculum to support the children's health and wellbeing. The school presented evidence of positive parental feedback to this work. The children from years six and seven, who met with the inspectors, explained a range of the strategies they use to help them, for example, if they are feeling anxious. They talked about the sporting activities they do to stay healthy, including the 'daily mile challenge' within their school grounds.

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. A group of year six children reported that they are safe in school and know what to do if they have any concerns about their safety or well-being. They highlighted the importance of their role in keeping others safe, particularly the younger children during break and lunch time in the playground. 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 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. This will be reflected in future inspection activity.

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