

Education and Training Inspectorate

PRIMARY INSPECTION



St Brendan's Primary School and Nursery Unit, Craigavon, County Armagh

Maintained, co-educational DE Ref No: 503-6101

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



The Education and Training Inspectorate
Promoting Improvement

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Introduction

The previous inspection in January 2015 evaluated the overall effectiveness of St Brendan's Primary School and Nursery Unit as good¹. In the interim, changes have taken place in the senior leadership team. A sustaining improvement inspection (SII) was conducted on 14 January 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. Members of the senior leadership co-operated with the inspection in relation to their safeguarding responsibilities. The ETI has a statutory duty to monitor, inspect and report on the standards of education and professional practice among teachers 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 met with the inspectors and spoke positively about how they respect others in school and recognise their collective responsibility for their social engagement and their learning behaviours. The children reported that they have opportunities to develop their leadership skills, particularly through the eco-council.

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 inspectors met with a group of year 6 children; they reported that they feel safe in school. They 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.

¹ From September 2015, the overall effectiveness of a school evaluated previously as good has been reported as the school demonstrating the capacity to identify and bring about improvement.

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.

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