

PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

St Oliver's Primary School,
Carrickrovaddy, Newtownhamilton,
County Down

Maintained, co-educational

Report of a Sustaining Improvement
Inspection (Involving Action Short of
Strike) in February 2017



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



Sustaining Improvement Inspection of St Oliver's Primary School, Carrickrovaddy, Newtownhamilton, County Down (503-1135)

Introduction

The previous inspection in September 2013, evaluated the overall effectiveness of St Oliver's Primary School as very good¹. In the interim there has been a change in the senior leadership, with the appointment of a new principal. A sustaining improvement inspection (SII) was conducted on 20 February 2017.

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

The lines of inquiry during the SII were:

- the use of data to inform improvement; and
- the development of literacy and in particular, reading, across the school.

Key findings

- The school is making progress in implementing the key priorities identified in the school development plan. Data is used effectively to identify areas for development at whole school, class and individual child level; as a result, underachievement and low achievement are being addressed through a range of interventions. In addition, the children's progress is being monitored and tracked appropriately.
- Reading is being developed well across the school; there is a greater focus on improving the children's comprehension skills. This work is being supported well by staff development, investment in additional resources and greater involvement of parents in the learning process. Appropriate processes are in place for monitoring and evaluating the impact of the literacy improvement work.

The ETI was unable to evaluate:

- The quality of learning and teaching, the quality of work in the children's books and the impact of the improvement work on the children's learning and achievement.

¹ From September 2015, the overall effectiveness of a school previously evaluated as outstanding or very good has been reported as a school demonstrating a high level of capacity for sustained improvement.

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.

Safeguarding

During the inspection, the school provided evidence that arrangements for safeguarding continue to reflect² the guidance issued by the relevant Departments. The children report that they feel safe in school and are aware of what to do if they have any concerns about their safety or welfare.

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.

² From January 2017, arrangements previously evaluated as comprehensive are reported as reflect the guidance.

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