



*The Education and Training Inspectorate -
Promoting Improvement*

**Providing Inspection Services for
Department of Education
Department for Employment and Learning
Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure**



Education and Training Inspectorate

**Leaney Primary School
Ballymoney**

Inspection Letter

June 2015

INSPECTION OF LEANEY PRIMARY SCHOOL, BALLMONEY (301-3325)
1 JUNE 2015

INSPECTION LETTER

The Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) notified Leaney Primary School of its forthcoming inspection scheduled for 1, 2 and 3 June 2015 in line with its standard inspection notification protocols. Prior to the inspection, the school informed ETI that nearly all of the senior leadership team and nearly all of the teachers would not be co-operating with the inspectors on advice from their trade union. Nearly all of the teachers in the school are involved in action short of strike. The action is not connected with the inspection process itself. Where the inspection is not carried out in full, parents and stakeholders have no complete external evaluation of the quality of education being provided by the school.

The inspectors were able to:

- observe learning and teaching in a small number (3) of lessons;
- evaluate the range of the children's written work across literacy and numeracy;
- scrutinise the school's internal assessment data on the attainment and progress of the children;
- discuss the leadership and management of the school with the principal, including safeguarding arrangements and the school development plan;
- discuss the governance of the school with representatives of the board of governors;
- elicit the views of the parents through the parental questionnaire normally distributed by the school; and
- meet with children and principal to discuss the arrangements for safeguarding and pastoral care.

Owing to the non co-operation of nearly all of the teachers and post holders, including nearly all of the senior leadership team, the inspectors were not able to assess the quality of learning for the children, to identify areas where provision is effective or where improvements are needed.

They were not able to:

- observe learning and teaching in nearly all of the classes, including the achievements and standards reached;
- observe directly nearly all the children at work, including the extent to which they develop effective personal and social skills, dispositions, and capabilities, or to talk to them in detail about their work;
- evaluate the quality of the provision including the arrangements made for the children with special educational needs;
- evaluate the working relationships between the children and staff;

- evaluate, and discuss the development of, the key curricular areas under focus with nearly all of the co-ordinators and senior leadership team;
- evaluate the quality of leadership and management at all levels;
- observe directly nearly all of the children working or talk to them in detail about their work in the classrooms;
- evaluate in detail how effective the overall assessment arrangements are in promoting learning; and
- evaluate the quality of the self-evaluation and action planning processes in nearly all of the curriculum areas.

Context

Leaney Primary School is a controlled primary school located in Ballymoney, County Antrim. The enrolment has increased from 292 in 2011 to the current figure of 300 children. Approximately 20% of the children have been identified by the school as requiring support with aspects of their learning and 40% of the children are entitled to free school meals. There are currently nine children with statements of special educational needs.

The arrangements for this inspection included:

- a meeting with representatives from the governors;
- meetings with groups of children; and
- the opportunity for the parents, teaching and support staff to complete a confidential questionnaire.

Six percent of parents responded to the questionnaires and nine of the responses contained additional written comments. They highlighted their appreciation of the caring ethos, the diligent work of the staff, and the effective leadership of the principal. A very small number of concerns raised in the written comments were discussed with the governors and the principal. A small number of the teachers and a minority of the support staff completed questionnaires and their responses were positive.

Achievements and Standards

- The school's internal performance data in English and mathematics shows that a majority of the children achieve in line with their ability or above expectation.

Provision

- An examination of a range of the children's written work shows that the teachers mark the children's work regularly and supportively. In the best practice, in most classes, the written feedback focuses well on how the children can improve the quality and standard of their work.
- A review of a sample of the children's written work shows a range of work provided in both English and mathematics in the majority of classes, including, in the best practice, many opportunities for extended writing in a variety of forms.

Leadership and management

- The parents, staff and school community can have confidence in the aspects of governance inspected. The governors understand and exercise their role in providing an effective leadership, challenge and support function to the principal. The governors are presently and appropriately developing their role further, to review and challenge, where necessary, evidence presented to them from the full range of post holders on the effectiveness of the action being taken to raise standards within their areas of responsibility. The inspection would endorse this as an appropriate priority.
- The principal has been in post for four years. She has worked effectively to develop links with the parents and wider local community and under her leadership the school has identified appropriate priorities for development including literacy and numeracy. The school is presently in the second year of a three-year development plan. The audit process used was rigorous and included appropriate consultation with a range of key stakeholders.
- The current action plans underpinning the school development plan for the various curricular areas need adjusted to identify more specifically the dates for completion of the work set out and to focus more clearly on identifying the specific actions in relation to learning and teaching which will bring about the improvement aimed for in the children's learning. In particular, the action plans need to be underpinned by a wider range of first-hand evidence gathered by the co-ordinators on the effectiveness of the action taken.
- On the basis of the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the school has comprehensive arrangements in place for safeguarding children. These arrangements reflect the guidance issued by the Department of Education. During the inspection, the inspectors met with a group of year 6 children. The year 6 children spoke with enthusiasm and confidence about their experiences in school. They reported that they feel happy and safe in school and know what to do if they have any concerns.
- The planning for and co-ordination of information and communication technology (ICT) across the school is effective.

Conclusion

The school's inspection is incomplete. The ETI will return as soon as possible and with little or no additional notice to complete the inspection and to issue a published report. This will include undertaking all the aspects of the inspection which were not possible during this inspection.

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