

PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

St Paul's Primary School,
Ahoghill, County Antrim

Maintained, co-educational

Report of a Follow-up Inspection
(Involving Action Short of Strike)
in October 2018



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



FOLLOW-UP TO THE INSPECTION OF ST PAUL'S PRIMARY SCHOOL, AHOGHILL, COUNTY ANTRIM, BT42 1LF (303-6683)

The Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) carried out an inspection of St Paul's Primary School ¹in November 2016, which concluded that the school needed to address urgently the significant areas for improvement identified in the interest of all the learners.

The areas for improvement were to:

- review the roles, responsibilities and practice of strategic leadership at all levels;
- develop robust systems to monitor and evaluate the quality of planning, learning and teaching and assessment to improve further the progression and outcomes for the children;
- address urgently the deficits in, and poor management and use of the accommodation to meet effectively the needs of the children; and
- address the unsatisfactory safeguarding arrangements outlined in the report including:
 - developing policies and safeguarding procedures for activities held outside of school hours;
 - completing governors and safeguarding training for recruitment and selection; and
 - attendance of designated and deputy designated teacher at updated child protection training.

As a consequence, the Department of Education entered the school into the Formal Intervention Process under the Every School is a Good School ²policy in January 2017.

The school's action plans were of a good quality and were adjusted appropriately in light of the feedback given by the ETI. The school's development plan was adjusted in light of the inspection findings and an interim school development plan is in place.

The ETI carried out an interim follow-up visit in September 2017 and a follow-up inspection in October 2018.

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 most of the teachers would not be engaging with the inspection. The principal and representatives of the board of governors co-operated regarding their safeguarding and leadership responsibilities, this included documentation relating to literacy and numeracy. 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.

¹ https://www.etini.gov.uk/sites/etini.gov.uk/files/publications/primary-inspection-st-pauls-primary-school-ahoghill-county-antrim-303-6683_0.pdf

² <https://www.education.ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/de/ESAGS%20Policy%20for%20School%20Improvement%20-%20Final%20Version%2005-05-2009.pdf>

In the interval since the initial inspection, the school has received appropriate external support provided by the Education Authority (EA) in relation to:

- strategic leadership and management including governance; and
- planning, learning, teaching and assessment.

During this period, other actions or changes which affect the work of the school include:

- significant changes in the school's governance including additional voting capacity and the recent appointment of an interim chair of governors;
- re-distribution of co-ordinators' roles and review of their responsibilities;
- external support provided by the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools (CCMS) in relation to governance and strategic leadership; and
- review of aspects of the management and use of accommodation resulting in all children now being taught in classrooms.

Key findings

- During the follow-up inspection, the school provided evidence that the arrangements for safeguarding children reflects broadly the guidance from the Department of Education. All outstanding safeguarding training has been completed, and policies and safeguarding procedures for activities held outside school hours are now in place. In discussions with the inspectors, a group of year 6 children reported that they feel safe and happy in school and they know who to talk to if they have concerns about their safety and well-being. However, owing the action short of strike, the ETI was unable to evaluate fully the outworking of the arrangements for safeguarding in the school.
- The representatives of the board of governors outlined how they now have a greater understanding of the school's provision and the standards the children attain. They exercise their challenge function appropriately.
- The literacy action plan identifies and monitors appropriate areas for improvement. The varied samples of key stage (KS) 2 work reflect the recent developmental work in planning, teaching and assessment. The school's recent internal data shows that most of the children are achieving in line with or above expectation in literacy and numeracy. During the inspection, the inspectors spoke to a selection of KS2 children; they read with enthusiasm and fluency and were able to speak about their favourite authors, and how to read different texts for a range of purposes. The ETI was unable to evaluate the quality of learning and teaching within the classrooms.

Owing to action short of strike, the ETI was unable to evaluate fully the impact of actions taken and the extent to which the following areas for improvement have been addressed:

- to review the roles, responsibilities and practice of strategic leadership at all levels;
- to develop robust systems to monitor and evaluate the quality of planning, learning and teaching and assessment to improve further the progression and outcomes for the children; and
- to address urgently the deficits in, and poor management and use of the accommodation to meet effectively the needs of the children.

Consequently, there remains a need for St Paul's Primary School to address urgently the significant areas for improvement³.

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/pupils. This will be reflected in future inspection activity.

³ The Department of Education will seek assurance from the Education Authority and/CCMS that they are working with the school in relation to the inspection report.

Health and Safety

- The school's limited accommodation continues to present serious challenges for the organisation and use of space for the well-being of staff and children, and the education of the children.

© CROWN COPYRIGHT 2018

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