

Education and Training Inspectorate PRIMARY INSPECTION



Dundonald Primary School and Nursery Unit, Belfast

Controlled, co-educational DE Ref No: 401-1587

Report of an Inspection (Involving Action Short of Strike) in
September 2019



The Education and Training Inspectorate
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INTRODUCTION

1. Context

Dundonald Primary School is a controlled primary school situated in the centre of Dundonald. Since the last inspection, the arrangements for the nursery unit have changed from one full-time class of 26 children to two part-time sessions with 52 children in total. The nursery unit is in a separate refurbished building within the grounds of the school. The enrolment has increased from a total of 676 children within the primary school and nursery unit to 852 children; a very diverse range of nationalities is represented among the children enrolled. The school is involved in a shared education partnership with two local special education schools. The school have attained a range of awards including a Gold Rights Respecting School Award, Irish Football Association Silver Charter Award and the Eco School Award. The school has received the Derrytrasna Award for Pastoral Care.

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 inspection. The senior leadership co-operated with the inspection team in relation to their leadership and safeguarding responsibilities. 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.

Dundonald Primary School	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Enrolment	846	838	850	
% School attendance	95.7	94.4	N/A	N/A
% NI Primary school average	95.5	94.9	N/A	N/A
FSME Percentage ¹	18.1	18.4	15.1	12.84
No. of children on SEN register	137	118	136	82
% of children on SEN register	16.2	14.1	16.0	10.22
No. of children with statements of educational need	23	22	31	21
No. of newcomer children	74	45	27	38

Source: data as held by the school.

N/A not available

2. Children's, parents' and staff questionnaire responses

As a result of the action short of strike, the school did not distribute the confidential, online questionnaire information to year 7 children, parents and staff. Therefore, it is not possible to report on the views of children, parents and staff.

¹ The term 'FSME Percentage' refers to the percentage of children entitled to free school meals.

3. Focus of the inspection

The ETI was unable to evaluate fully:

- outcomes for children with a particular focus on numeracy and literacy;
- quality of provision with a particular focus on numeracy and literacy including across the curriculum and the nursery unit; and
- quality of leadership and management.

4. Overall findings of the inspection

Overall effectiveness	Unable to assure the quality of education
Outcomes for learners	No performance level available
Quality of provision	No performance level available
Leadership and management	No performance level available
Nursery Unit	No performance level available

KEY FINDINGS

5. Outcomes for learners

- The group of year 6 children who met with the inspectors spoke with pride about their contribution to school life giving examples of responsibilities they have undertaken in roles such as: digital leaders, and members of the school- and eco-councils. They understand and talk confidently about their own rights as set out in the United Nations Convention of Human Rights and the importance of showing care and respect for others.
- The group of year 7 children who met with the inspectors about their literacy spoke enthusiastically about their reading choices and preferences. They read with fluency and showed a clear understanding of meaning.
- Another group of year 7 children also met with the inspectors about their numeracy. In the areas discussed, the children were able to think flexibly, explaining a range of strategies they use to complete mathematical calculations and solve problems.

The ETI was unable to evaluate fully:

- the learning outcomes for the children, including those who require additional support with aspects of their learning;
- progression in the children's learning; and
- the children's wider skills and dispositions.

6. Quality of provision

- The school plans for an extensive range of extra-curricular activities to support the children's wider learning experiences, foster aspiration and promote health and well-being.

The ETI was unable to evaluate fully:

- the quality of the curriculum;
- the effectiveness of the guidance and support in bringing about high-quality individual learning experiences;
- the effectiveness and impact of planning, teaching, learning and assessment in promoting successful learning; and
- care and welfare.

7. Leadership and management

- There are well-established systems in place to guide the process of whole school improvement. The views of children, staff, parents and governors are used appropriately to inform the school development planning process. A range of qualitative and quantitative data along with teacher judgement are used to identify strengths and priority areas for development. The school is prioritising appropriately a closer focus on how actions to be taken will have a direct impact on the children's learning.
- Links have been developed with other schools and within the school community to identify and share best practice with a focus on learning and teaching.
- The governors, who bring a wide range of skills and insight to the management of the school, have a clear understanding of the strengths of the school and priorities for further development.
- The ETI was unable to evaluate fully:
 - the effectiveness of strategic leadership and governance;
 - the effectiveness and impact of middle leadership; and
 - the effectiveness of action to promote and sustain improvement.

8. 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 6 children reported that they feel safe in the school and during school trips, and that they are aware what to do if they have any concerns about their safety or welfare. 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.

The school needs to:

- complete the planned review and updating of their policy for promoting positive behaviour.

9. Overall effectiveness

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. This will be reflected in future inspection activity.

Inspection methodology and evidence base

The ETI's Inspection and Self-Evaluation Framework is available on the ETI website: [The Inspection and Self-Evaluation Framework \(ISEF\): Effective Practice and Self-Evaluation Questions for Primary | Education Training Inspectorate](#)

Inspectors observe learning and teaching, scrutinise documentation and the children's written work and hold formal and informal discussions with children, teachers and staff with specific responsibilities.

The arrangements for inspection include:

- a meeting with (a) representative(s) of the governors;
- meetings with groups of children; and
- the opportunity for the children, parents, teaching and support staff to complete a confidential, online questionnaire.

Where, owing to the action short of strike, this evidence base was not available, it has been referenced in the body of the inspection report.

The arrangements for this inspection included:

- a meeting with the principal and members of the board of governors;
- meetings with groups of children; and
- scrutiny of the documentation made available.

Reporting terms used by the Education and Training Inspectorate

Quantitative terms

In this report, proportions may be described as percentages, common fractions and in more general quantitative terms. Where more general terms are used, they should be interpreted as follows:

Almost/nearly all	-	more than 90%
Most	-	75% - 90%
A majority	-	50% - 74%
A significant minority	-	30% - 49%
A minority	-	10% - 29%
Very few/a small number	-	less than 10%

Performance levels

The ETI use the following performance levels when reporting on outcomes for learners, quality of provision and leadership and management²:

Outstanding
Very good
Good
Important area(s) for improvement
Requires significant improvement
Requires urgent improvement

The ETI use the following levels when reporting on governance:

High degree of confidence
Confidence
Limited confidence

The ETI use the following levels when reporting on safeguarding:

Reflects the guidance
Reflects broadly the guidance
Unsatisfactory

The ETI use the following levels when reporting on care and welfare:

Impacts positively on learning, teaching and outcomes for learners.
Does not impacts positively enough on learning, teaching and outcomes for learners.

² And the overall provision in a unit, as applicable.

Overall effectiveness

The ETI use one of the following inspection outcomes when evaluating the overall effectiveness of the school:

The school has a high level of capacity for sustained improvement in the interest of all the learners. The ETI will monitor how the school sustains improvement.
The school demonstrates the capacity to identify and bring about improvement in the interest of all the learners. The ETI will monitor how the school sustains improvement.
The school needs to address (an) important area(s) for improvement in the interest of all the learners. The ETI will monitor and report on the school's progress in addressing the area(s) for improvement. There will be a formal follow-up inspection in 12 to 18 months.
The school needs to address urgently the significant areas for improvement identified in the interest of all the learners. It requires external support to do so. The ETI will monitor and report on the school's progress in addressing the areas for improvement. There will be a formal follow-up inspection in 18 to 24 months.

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