

Education and Training Inspectorate

PRIMARY INSPECTION



Knocknagin Primary School, Desertmartin, County Derry

Maintained, co-educational DE ref no (303-2197)

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



The Education and Training Inspectorate
Promoting Improvement

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INTRODUCTION

1. Context

Knocknagin Primary School, situated in the village of Desertmartin, draws children from a wide catchment area. The past four years have seen a significant increase in the enrolment and the school now operates almost at capacity. Over the same period, the percentage of children who require additional support with aspects of the learning and the percentage of those entitled to free school meals have also increased. The school participates in a well-established and successful shared education partnership with a local controlled primary school.

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 principal and representatives of the governors co-operated with the inspectors regarding their safeguarding and leadership 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.

Knocknagin Primary School	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Enrolment	52	63	73	71
% School attendance	96.8	96.4	95.1	N/A
% NI Primary school average	96.4	95.91	N/A	N/A
FSME Percentage ¹	9.6	15.9	17.8	16.9
No. of children on SEN register	*	10	8	13
% of children on SEN register	*	15.9	11	18.3
No. of newcomer children	*	*	*	*

Source: data as held by the school.

* fewer than 5

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 online, confidential questionnaire information to children, parents and staff. Therefore, it is not possible to report on the views of children, parents and staff.

3. Focus of the inspection

The ETI was unable to evaluate the:

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

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

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

KEY FINDINGS

5. Outcomes for learners

- A group of year 7 children read confidently and with interest from a variety of books and discussed a range of reading strategies they use. They spoke enthusiastically about their reading preferences, including their favourite books and authors, and how they access reading materials both inside and outside school. The children explained how, as 'reading buddies', they enjoy sharing their learning, and developing their own reading skills and those of the younger children.

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

- In discussion with the inspectors, a group of year 6 children talked enthusiastically about their learning across the curriculum, including the wide range of activities with their friends within the shared education partnership. They explained how they contribute to aspects of decision making through membership of the School Council and the Eco Council, and how they support their peers as 'playground buddies'. They highlighted their enjoyment of extra-curricular activities both in school and in the wider community.

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

- The school development plan is underpinned by wide consultation with all stakeholders. The school's progress in meeting the targets within the action plans is monitored and evaluated regularly.
- The governors reported that the recent introduction of link governors for key learning areas has strengthened their role in the school improvement process and makes effective use of their individual skills and experiences. The governors highlighted their pride in, and the importance of, the shared education work and the links with the wider community which support and enhance the curriculum.
- It will be important that the employing authority, school governors and 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.

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. The year 6 children reported that they feel safe in school and are aware of what to do if they have any concerns 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.

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.

Health and safety/Accommodation

1. The employing authority, governors and principal need to carry out a risk assessment in relation to access to and within the site.
2. There is no wheelchair access to the main school building.

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

The arrangements for this inspection included:

- a meeting with the principal and representatives from the governors;
- a meeting with a group of year 6 children;
- a meeting with a group of year 7 children; and
- access to the school's documentation relating to child protection/safeguarding and school development planning.

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 impact 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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