

# Education and Training Inspectorate

## PRIMARY INSPECTION



Poyntzpass Primary School, Poyntzpass, County Down

Controlled, co-educational DE Ref No (501-6078)

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



The Education and Training Inspectorate  
Promoting Improvement

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## INTRODUCTION

### 1. Context

Poyntzpass Primary School is a controlled primary school situated in the village of Poyntzpass. All of the children attending the school come from the surrounding rural area. The new leadership was appointed in 2016. The school is involved in a shared education partnership with a neighbouring maintained primary school. The school has achieved the Art of Brilliance award as an 'Outstandingly Happy 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 almost all of the teachers would not be co-operating with the inspectors. The senior leadership co-operated with the inspection team in relation to their child protection 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.

Poyntzpass Primary School	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Enrolment	110	112	121	125
% School attendance	98.5	96.6	95.4	N/A
% NI Primary school average	95.5	95.5	N/A	N/A
FSME Percentage <sup>1</sup>	19.1	24.1	26.4	22.4
No. of children on SEN register	26	22	21	23
% of children on SEN register	23.6	19.6	17.4	18.4
No. of children with statements of educational need	*	*	*	5
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

Sixty-seven percent of the parents and all of the staff responded to the online, confidential questionnaire. The responses to the parental questionnaire were mostly positive and the written comments affirmed the caring, inclusive ethos of the school, the variety of learning experiences available for the children and the high regard for the school within the local community. The majority of responses to all of the staff questionnaire were positive. In the written comments, the staff highlighted: the support to develop the emotional well-being of the children; the teamwork between staff to meet the needs of the children; and, the opportunities for children to achieve in all aspects of school life.

All of the children responded to the online, confidential questionnaire. Their responses were wholly positive and indicated satisfaction with the care and support given to them by their teachers. They highlighted their enjoyment of the school's links with the local community through, for example, an intergenerational play project.

The ETI has communicated to the principal and the chair of the board of governors the main findings, and any issues, from the questionnaires.

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<sup>1</sup> 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 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.

### 4. Overall findings of the inspection

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Unable to assure the quality of education
<b>Outcomes for learners</b>	No performance level available
<b>Quality of provision</b>	No performance level available
<b>Leadership and management</b>	No performance level available

## KEY FINDINGS

### 5. Outcomes for learners

- The group of year 7 children, who met with the inspectors, report that they enjoy reading news articles, they read daily and for a range of purposes. They are developing their knowledge of authors, book genres and their particular preferences. The children were keen to read in front of adults and their peers and explained a range of strategies to help them decode words that are unfamiliar to them.
- The inspectors met with three groups of children who were friendly, courteous and willing to discuss their views about learning.

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 has introduced a new health and well-being initiative to empower the children to be confident, positive, resilient and caring individuals. The children raise awareness of this child-led programme within the school community, including with the governors and the local primary school.
- The children with whom the inspectors met discussed their appreciation of the many learning opportunities provided by the school, such as, the school trips, participating in a range of sporting activities and in musical theatre. The children report that their school is a happy, welcoming place where everyone can achieve their goals.

- There are clear systems to identify and monitor the children who require support with their learning. There is a range of interventions to support the children's literacy, physical and sensory needs and the school reports that these are helping the children to make progress. They are developing links with external agencies to support the inclusive ethos of the school and appropriately there is a focus on continuing professional development for the classroom assistants.
- The Parent Teacher Association has supported the school in developing the information and communication technology (ICT) provision and the delivery of the emotional health and well-being programme.

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 (SDP) is informed by consultations with the children, parents and staff. While appropriate areas for improvement are identified, the evaluations are not sufficiently robust to inform detailed baseline positions. Further review of the roles and responsibilities is required to enable a more equitable and manageable monitoring of the school's strategic priorities and their impact on improvement.
- The school is developing links with businesses in the local community and through the shared education partnership; the children participate in cross-community sports, such as football and rugby. The children nominate and support generously an annual charity.
- The governors have been recently reconstituted. They are committed to the school and enhancing the learning experiences of the children through, for example, supporting effectively the shared education partnership. The governors are kept informed about the progress being made in the SDP and have identified the need to monitor further the outcomes of the children through, for example, links with the co-ordinators.

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 (DE). 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:

- review the anti-bullying and intimate care policies in line with the DE guidance; and
- ensure that the risk assessments reflect the current guidance from DE and the Education Authority.

## **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**

1. The safety arrangements around school traffic flow and car parking require urgent review, to include a thorough risk assessment detailing the measures required for the children to access and exit safely the school grounds.

### 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 representative(s) 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.

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:

- meetings with the principal and senior teacher to discuss their leadership and safeguarding duties;
- a meeting with a representative from the board of governors;
- the review of documentation pertaining to safeguarding;
- discussions with groups of children; and
- access to the responses from the staff, parents and children's online, confidential questionnaires.



## 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 management<sup>2</sup>:

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.

<sup>2</sup> 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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