

# Education and Training Inspectorate

## PRIMARY INSPECTION



St Patrick's Primary School and Magheradroll Nursery Unit,  
Ballynahinch, County Down

Maintained, co-educational DE Ref No (403-1665)

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



The Education and Training Inspectorate  
Promoting Improvement

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## INTRODUCTION

### 1. Context

St Patrick's Primary School and Magheradroll Nursery Unit are situated off the Main Street in Ballynahinch, consequently, the children attending the school and the nursery unit come from the town and surrounding rural areas. The enrolment has remained steady over the past four years. Approximately one-third of the children are in receipt of free school meals and a similar number are identified as requiring additional support with aspects of their learning. Over the past number of years, there has been a significant number of staff changes with six teachers retiring and new appointments. The school is in the fourth year of a 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 designated teacher for child protection co-operated with the inspection team in relation to 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.

St Patrick's Primary School and Magheradroll Nursery Unit	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Enrolment	275	282	280	265
% School attendance	94.9	95.5	95.6	N/A
% NI Primary school average	95.5	95.5	94.9	N/A
FSME <sup>1</sup> percentage	35.6	37.2	35.7	34.7
No. of children on SEN register	83	94	92	80
% of children on SEN register	30.2	33.3	32.9	30.1
No. of children with statements of educational need	7	10	13	12
No. of newcomers	22	24	23	21

**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:

- outcomes for children with a particular focus on numeracy and literacy;

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<sup>1</sup> The term 'FSME percentage' refers to the percentage of children entitled to free school meals.

- 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

<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
<b>Nursery unit provision</b>	No performance level available

### KEY FINDINGS

#### 5. Outcomes for learners

- The inspectors spoke with a group of year 7 children who read fluently with great interest; they are able to use a range of strategies to explain the meaning of unfamiliar words and phrases. Another group of children use competently and flexibly their knowledge of number and mathematical strategies to solve problems across all areas of mathematics.

The ETI was unable to evaluate:

- 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 inspectors, a group of year 6 children discussed how they were given opportunities to take on roles of leadership and develop their teamwork and decision-making skills through various roles in, for example, the Eco-Committee, as school councillors or mentors in the 'playground buddy system.'

The ETI was unable to evaluate:

- 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 informed through consultation with the staff, parents and children and by the school's self-evaluation baselines. The action plans reflect the school's priorities for development.
- During discussions with representatives of the governors, they outlined their role in overseeing school improvement and how they support and challenge appropriately the school leadership. They discussed how they utilised their skillset and varying levels of experience in carrying out the different governing roles to maintain a focus on the children's development, well-being and progression.

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 ETI met with a group of year 6 children who reported that they feel safe in school and know what to do if they have any concerns about their safety and well-being. They described knowledgeably the measures they would take to keep themselves safe online. 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. The school is a high priority for future inspection with no further notice.

### 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) in 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, vice-principal and representatives of the board of governors;
- meetings with designated teachers for safeguarding; and
- discussions with children from year 6 and year 7.

## 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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