

# Education and Training Inspectorate

## PRIMARY INSPECTION



Whitehead Primary School and Nursery Unit, Whitehead,  
County Antrim

Controlled, co-educational DE Ref No (301-0874)

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



The Education and Training Inspectorate  
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## INTRODUCTION

### 1. Context

Whitehead Primary School and Nursery Unit is situated in the town of Whitehead, County Antrim. The children who attend come from the town and the wider surrounding rural area. The school has a shared education partnership with several other schools in the Lame area.

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 co-operated with the inspectors in relation to their leadership and safeguarding responsibilities. In addition, the inspection team met with the chair of the board of governors and groups of children from years six and seven. 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.

Whitehead Primary School and Nursery Unit	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Enrolment	430	444	448	441
Nursery Unit	51	52	52	46
% School attendance	96.0	96.4	96.1	N/A
% NI Primary school average	95.5	95.5	94.9	N/A
FSME Percentage <sup>1</sup>	16.3	16.4	14.7	15.4
No. of children on SEN register	59	56	56	80
% of children on SEN register	13.7	12.6	12.5	20.2
No. of children with statements of educational need	*	*	6	*
No. of newcomer children	8	8	7	6

**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 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 numeracy and literacy;
- quality of the provision with a particular focus on numeracy and literacy, including across the curriculum; and
- quality of leadership and management.

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

#### 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 inspectors spoke with a group of year 7 children about their learning in mathematics. They had a very good understanding of a wide range of mathematical concepts. The children applied their mathematical knowledge and skills accurately and flexibly to solve numeracy challenges, selecting and explaining various appropriate strategies. Another group of year 7 children read fluently and with expression showing a mature understanding of authors' use of language and more complex vocabulary. They also summarised confidently how to read and research non-fiction texts efficiently to extract relevant information.

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 inspectors met with a groups of year 6 and 7 children who spoke confidently and positively about their learning experiences in the school, including the varied range of sporting and cultural after-school activities and the opportunities to take on additional responsibility through the 'Pupil Voice', Eco-Council and 'Yellow Caps' buddy scheme. The children also articulated the important wider learning and enjoyment they gained from participating in activities such as money week, school productions and educational trips and visits.

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 based on comprehensive and systematic consultation with the staff, parents and children and informed by the school's analysis of a range of qualitative and quantitative data. The action plans reflect the school's current priorities in learning and teaching. The school has a broad range of systematic processes in place to monitor and evaluate the impact of the action plans on the learning and teaching and the standards which the children attain.
- A representative of the governors reported that they are well-informed about the life and work of the school, including through the regular contact they have with the senior leadership and 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. In discussions with the inspectors, a group of year six children reported that they feel very safe and happy in school and know what to do and who to talk to if they have any concerns about their safety and well-being. They could explain clearly how they welcome and include new children to the school and how they stay 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. 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 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:

- a meeting with the chair of the board of governors;
- meetings with the principal and the designated teacher for safeguarding;
- the review of the school development plan and associated documentation;
- scrutiny of the safeguarding and associated pastoral care documentation; and
- meetings with groups of year 6 and year 7 children.

## 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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