

Education and Training Inspectorate

PRIMARY INSPECTION



Florencecourt Primary School and Little Bridges Community Nursery Unit, Enniskillen, County Fermanagh

Controlled, co-educational DE ref no (201-1881)

Report of a Sustaining Improvement Inspection (Involving Action
Short of Strike) in January 2019



The Education and Training Inspectorate
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Sustaining Improvement Inspection of Florencecourt Primary School and Little Bridges Community Nursery Unit, Enniskillen, County Fermanagh (201-1881)

Introduction

The previous inspection in January 2016 evaluated the overall effectiveness of Florencecourt Primary School and Little Bridges Community Nursery Unit as having the capacity to identify and bring about improvement. Since that inspection, a new principal has been appointed and the school has continued to engage in a Shared Education partnership with three local maintained primary schools. A sustaining improvement inspection (SII) was conducted on 23 January 2019.

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 the teachers would not be co-operating with the inspectors. The principal co-operated with the inspection in relation to his 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.

Focus of the inspection

Owing to the school's participation in industrial action:

- the inspection was unable to focus on evaluating the extent to which the school is capable of demonstrating its capacity to effect improvement through self-evaluation and effective school planning; and
- a line of inquiry was not selected by the school from the development plan priorities.

Key findings

- A group of year 6 children met with the inspector and spoke positively about their learning experiences including the classroom activities they enjoy, their participation in extra-curricular sport and their opportunities to learn alongside children from other schools as part of the shared education project.
- The children report that they have good opportunities to develop their leadership capabilities through their roles in the School- and Eco-Councils

The ETI was unable to evaluate fully:

- a line of inquiry; and
- the quality of learning and teaching within the classrooms.
- It will be important that the employing authority, school governors and the 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.

Safeguarding

- During the inspection, the school provided evidence that the arrangements for safeguarding children reflect broadly the guidance from the Department of Education (DE). A review of almost all pastoral care policies has been undertaken since the arrival of the new principal. The amended policies, which have been ratified by the board of governors, now reflect more accurately the relevant DE guidance.
- The inspector met with a small group of year 6 children who stated that they feel happy and safe in school. The children reported that they know what to do and who to talk to if they are concerned 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.

Conclusion

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.

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