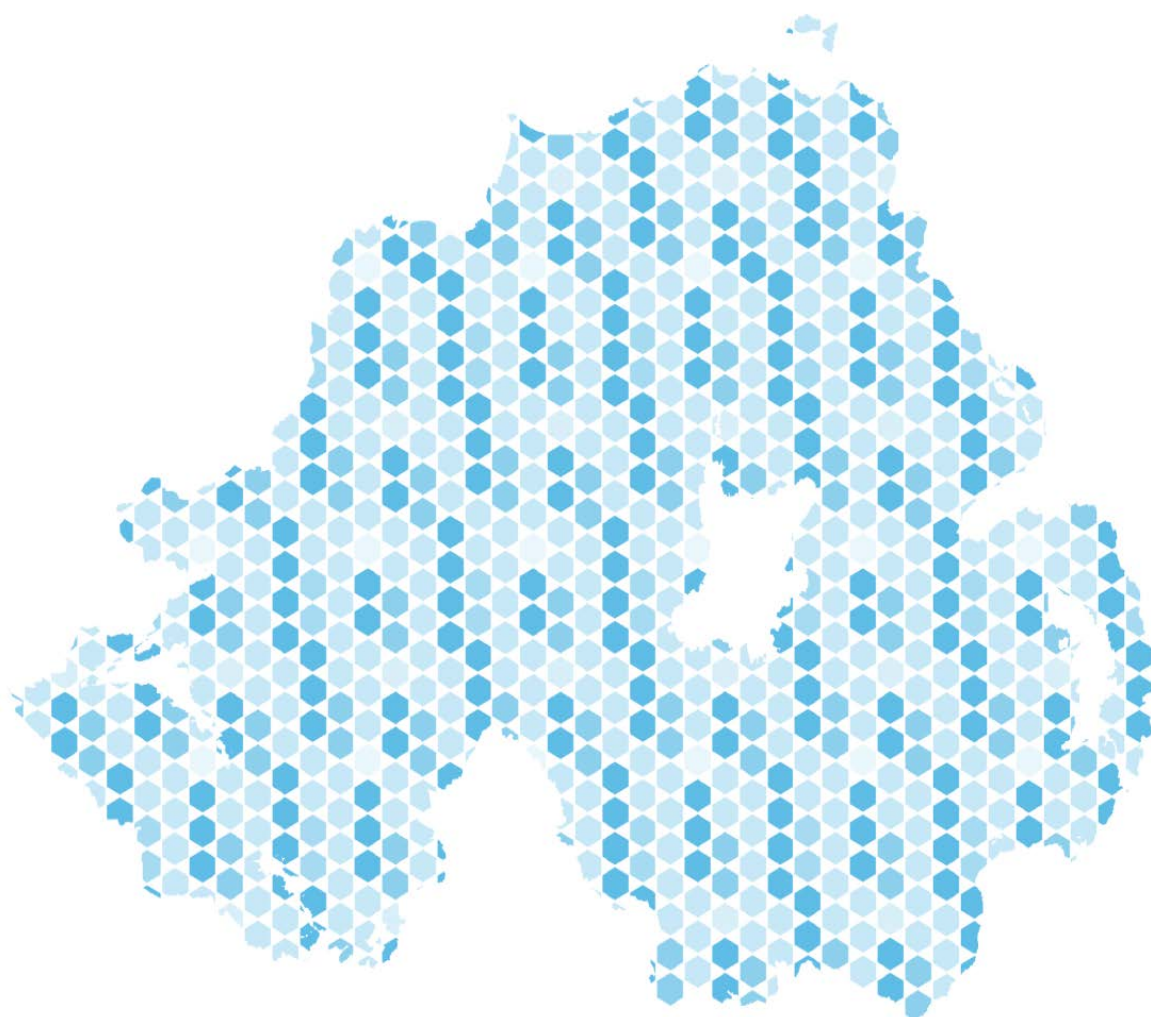


PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Ballymacash Primary School and
Nursery Unit, Lisburn, County Antrim

Controlled, co-educational

Report of a Sustaining Improvement
Inspection (Involving Action Short of Strike)
in January 2017



The Education and Training Inspectorate
Promoting Improvement

Providing inspection services for:

Department of Education
Department for the Economy
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CUSTOMER
SERVICE
EXCELLENCE



Sustaining Improvement Inspection of Ballymacash Primary School and Nursery Unit, Lisburn (401-6441)

Introduction

The previous inspection in October 2013, evaluated the overall effectiveness of Ballymacash Primary School and Nursery Unit as good¹. A sustaining improvement inspection (SII) was conducted on 18 January 2017.

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 all of the teachers and the principal would not be co-operating with the inspectors. The ETI have 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 development planning; and
- lines of inquiry, including an area for improvement which the school needed to address from the original inspection, were not selected from the development plan priorities.

Key findings

The ETI was unable to evaluate an area for improvement which the school needed to address from the original inspection in 2013, namely, to improve:

- the quality and effectiveness of communication and the working links between management at all levels, with a focus on developing more robust and effective processes for monitoring and evaluating the quality of the provision.

Safeguarding

During the inspection, the school did not provide evidence that satisfactory arrangements are in place for safeguarding learners.

Conclusion

Owing to the impact of the action short of strike being taken by the principal and teachers, the ETI is unable to assure parents/carers, the wider school community and stakeholders of the quality of education and safeguarding being provided for the children. The school is a high priority for future inspection with no further notice.

The ETI will return to the school within six weeks to evaluate and report on the arrangements for safeguarding.

¹ From September 2015, a school previously evaluated as good has been reported as the school demonstrating the capacity to identify and bring about improvement.

ADDENDUM TO THE REPORT ON THE SUSTAINING IMPROVEMENT INSPECTION OF BALLYMACASH PRIMARY SCHOOL AND NURSERY UNIT, IN JANUARY 2017

The ETI returned to the school on 7 March 2017 to monitor and report on arrangements for safeguarding.

The purpose of the visit was to provide the school with a further opportunity to provide evidence on its arrangements for safeguarding: owing to action short of strike, the school did not provide evidence that satisfactory arrangements were in place at the time of the inspection on 18 January 2017.

Owing to the ongoing action short of strike, the ETI was unable to evaluate fully the outworking of the arrangements for safeguarding in the school.

During the follow-up visit, the school provided evidence that satisfactory arrangements for safeguarding reflect broadly the guidance issued by the Department of Education.

In discussion, the children reported that they feel safe and cared for in the school. They know what to do and who to talk to if they are concerned about their safety or well-being.

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