

PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Downshire Primary School,
Hillsborough, County Down

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
and other commissioning Departments

CUSTOMER
SERVICE
EXCELLENCE



Sustaining Improvement Inspection of Downshire Primary School (401-1633)

Introduction

The previous inspection in January 2014 evaluated the overall effectiveness of Downshire Primary School as good¹. In the interim a new vice principal has been appointed. A sustaining improvement inspection (SII) was conducted on 30 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 none of the teachers would be co-operating with the inspectors. 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

The inspection focused 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. The school also provided evidence of provision for safeguarding as part of the inspection.

The lines of inquiry during the SII were:

- the action planning process in response to the original inspection findings; and
- the school development planning process.

Key findings

- The principal reported evidence of progress in addressing the area for improvement identified in the original inspection and a sharper, more collegial approach to self-evaluation.

The ETI was unable to evaluate:

- an area for improvement which the school needed to address from the original inspection in 2014, that being, to monitor and evaluate rigorously the quality of learning and teaching in the school in order to ensure more consistency in the teaching and raise further the standards in the children's learning; and
- the quality of the work in the children's books, the quality of the learning and teaching within the classroom, the effectiveness of the work of the co-ordinators.

¹ A school previously evaluated as good has been reported as the school demonstrating the capacity to identify and bring about improvement.

Safeguarding

- During the inspection, the school provided evidence that arrangements for safeguarding continue to reflect² the guidance issued by the relevant Departments.

Conclusion

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

² ²From January 2017, arrangements previously evaluated as comprehensive are reported as **reflect** the guidance.

© CROWN COPYRIGHT 2017

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part, except for commercial purposes or in connection with a prospectus or advertisement, provided that the source and date thereof are stated.

Copies of this report are available on the ETI website: www.etini.gov.uk