

# PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training  
Inspectorate

Gaelscoil na mBeann,  
Cill Chaoil/Kilkeel, County Down

Irish-medium, co-educational

Report of a Sustaining Improvement  
Inspection (Involving Action Short of  
Strike) in April 2018



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## **Sustaining Improvement Inspection of Gaelscoil na mBeann, Cill Chaoil/Kilkeel (504-6692)**

### **Introduction**

The follow-up inspection in May 2015 evaluated the overall effectiveness of Gaelscoil na mBeann as good<sup>1</sup>. In January 2016, the school moved into purpose-built, modular, temporary accommodation within the grounds of the adjacent post-primary school and the teacher in charge of the school was appointed as principal. Since the time of the follow-up inspection, the enrolment has increased by over one-third from 42 to 64 children. A sustaining improvement inspection (SII) was conducted on 18 April 2018.

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**

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 and sustain improvement through self-evaluation and effective school development planning; and
- lines of inquiry were not selected by the school from the development plan priorities.

### **Key findings**

The ETI was unable to evaluate:

- the progress being made in addressing an area for improvement from the follow-up inspection in 2015, namely, the need to continue to develop further monitoring and evaluating at all levels in order to inform better future planning to meet the needs of all children;
- the lines 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.

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<sup>1</sup> From September 2015, the overall effectiveness of a school evaluated previously as good has been reported as a school demonstrating the capacity to identify and bring about improvement.

## **Safeguarding**

During the inspection, the school provided evidence that arrangements for safeguarding children reflect broadly the guidance from the Department of Education (DE). However, there is a need to review aspects of the school's child protection and associated policies to ensure that they reflect more fully the most recent guidance from the DE, and to increase the pace of the work to implement the relationships and sexuality education policy. There is also a need to ensure that all governors receive the necessary safeguarding training.

The children reported that they feel safe in school and that they are aware of what to do if they have any concerns 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 principal and teachers, the ETI is unable to assure parents/carers, and 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.

**Health and safety**

1. The school needs to review the security arrangements of the shared access to the school grounds.

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