

PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Loughries Integrated Primary School,
Newtownards, County Down

Controlled integrated, co-educational

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



The Education and Training Inspectorate
Promoting Improvement

Providing inspection services for:

Department of Education
Department for the Economy
and other commissioning Departments



Sustaining Improvement Inspection of Loughries Integrated Primary School, Newtownards, County Down (405-6710)

Introduction

The previous inspection in December 2014 evaluated the overall effectiveness of Loughries Integrated Primary School as very good¹. A sustaining improvement inspection (SII) was conducted on the 13 June 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 chair of the board of governors and principal met 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 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

- The chair of the board of governors reported that they are actively involved in, and well-informed about, all aspects of the life and work of the school. They exercise their challenge function in relation to the school's development plan and children's attainment.

The ETI was unable to evaluate fully:

- the 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.

¹ From September 2015, the overall effectiveness of a school evaluated previously as outstanding or very good has been reported as a school demonstrating a high level of capacity for sustained improvement.

Safeguarding

- During the inspection, the school provided evidence that the arrangements for safeguarding children reflects broadly the guidance from the Department of Education. The school has developed a wide range of policies and procedures to safeguard the children. A group of year 6 children reported that they feel safe and happy in school. They know what to do and who to talk to if they are concerned about their safety or well-being. However, owing to action sort 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. This will be reflected in future inspection activity.

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