

# PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training  
Inspectorate

Nettlefield Primary School,  
Belfast

Controlled, co-educational

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



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## **Sustaining Improvement Inspection of Nettlefield Primary School, Belfast (101-0267)**

### **Introduction**

The previous inspection in May 2014, evaluated the overall effectiveness of Nettlefield Primary School as very good<sup>1</sup>. A sustaining improvement inspection (SII) was conducted on 6 November 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 development of information and communication technology (ICT) as a tool to support learning and teaching across the curriculum; and
- the development of the children's writing.

Owing to the school's participation in industrial action:

- the inspection was unable to evaluate the extent to which the school is capable of demonstrating its capacity to effect improvement through self-evaluation and effective school planning.

### **Key findings**

- The school development plan identifies appropriate priorities for improvement. The current action plans are of a variable quality; a number of the targets on the action plans are not sufficiently measurable. The co-ordinators, who met with the inspectors, are knowledgeable and focused clearly on continuous improvement within their areas of the curriculum. Very good links have been established with businesses and other external support agencies to enhance the provision for ICT and provide continuous professional development for the staff. A small group of children from years 6 and 7 engage, with growing confidence, with a range of ICT applications including robotics and coding; and, explain how they use ICT across the curriculum. The development of coding in ICT provides the children with good opportunities to develop their resilience, perseverance and problem-solving skills.
- Due to the impact of the action short of strike action, the ETI was not able to evaluate fully the development of the children's writing across the curriculum.

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<sup>1</sup> 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 reflect broadly the guidance from the Department of Education. The children report that they feel safe in the school and that they are aware of what to do if they have any concerns about their safety or welfare. 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 teachers, 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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