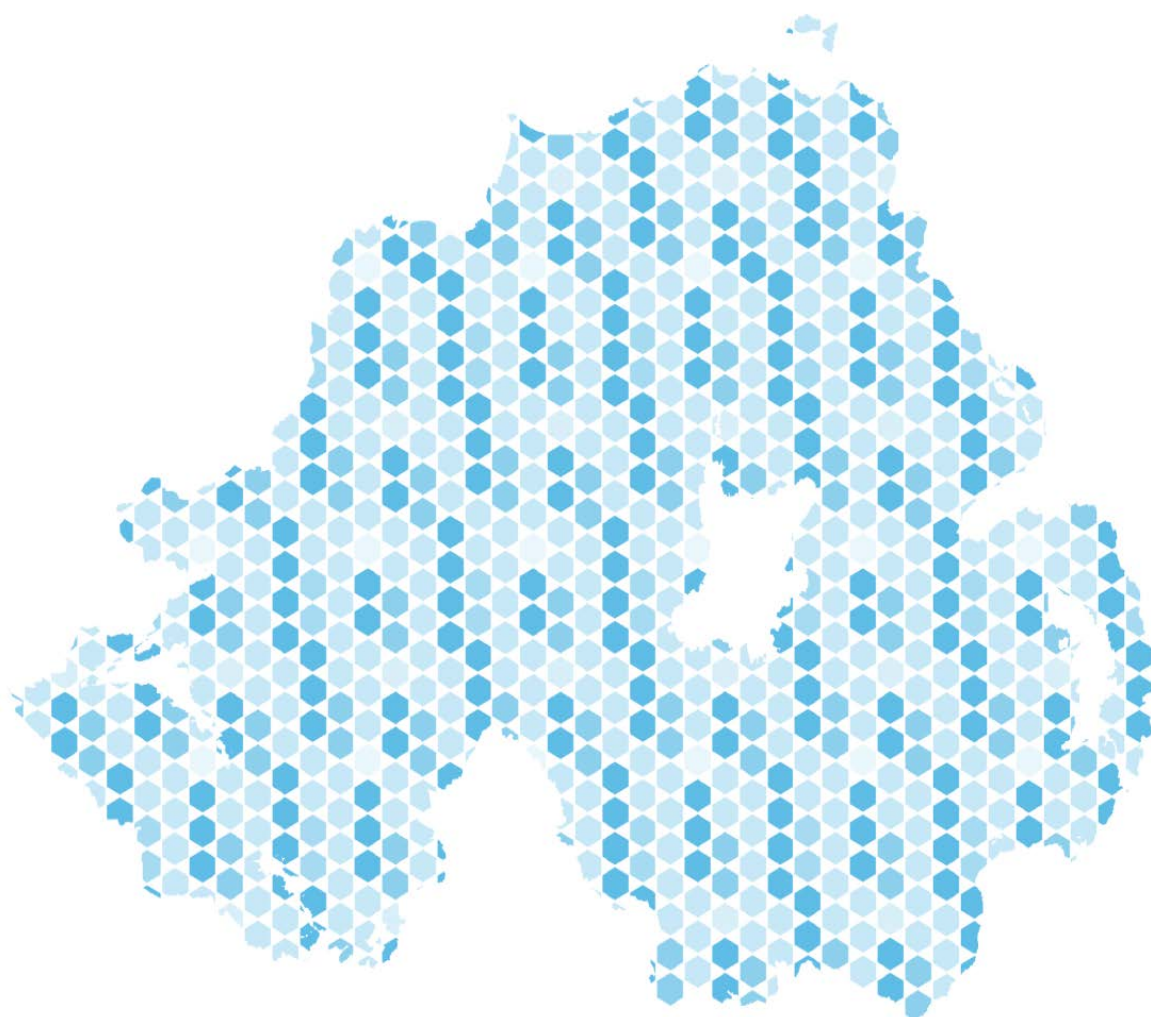


PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

St Joseph's Primary School,
Ballymartin, County Down

Maintained, co-educational

Report of a Sustaining Improvement
Inspection (Involving Action Short of
Strike) in May 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 St Joseph's Primary School, Ballymartin, County Down (503-1325)

Introduction

The previous inspection in 2014, evaluated the overall effectiveness of St Joseph's Primary School as very good¹. A sustaining improvement inspection (SII) was conducted on 4 May 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 line of inquiry during the SII was:

- the further development of numeracy with a focus on mental mathematics and problem solving.

Key findings

- There is evidence of appropriate, ongoing improvement work in the school.
- Children from year 7 display a high level of interest in and enjoyment of mathematics. They are able to address confidently a variety of mathematical challenges and justify their answers effectively using accurate mathematical language. The children have a very good understanding of mathematical concepts, display flexibly in mental calculations, problem-solving tasks and in their mathematical reasoning.

The ETI was unable to evaluate:

- the line of inquiry fully; and
- the quality of learning and teaching within the classrooms.

¹ From September 2015, the overall effectiveness of a school previously evaluated 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 satisfactory arrangements for safeguarding reflect broadly the guidance issued by the relevant Departments. The children, with whom inspectors met, reported 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 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.
- 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.

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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