

# PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training  
Inspectorate

St Mary's Primary School, Aughlisnafin,  
Castlewellan, County Down

Maintained, co-educational

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

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The Education and Training Inspectorate  
Promoting Improvement

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# **Sustaining Improvement Inspection of St Mary's Primary School, Aughlisnafin, Castlewella, County Down (403-3002)**

## **Introduction**

The previous inspection in June, 2015 evaluated the overall effectiveness of St Mary's Primary School, Aughlisnafin, as good<sup>1</sup>. A sustaining improvement inspection (SII) was conducted on 17 May 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 all of the teachers, including the principal, would not 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 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 ETI was unable to evaluate:

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

## **Safeguarding**

- During the inspection, the school did not provide evidence that the arrangements for safeguarding children reflect or reflect broadly the guidance from the Department of Education<sup>2</sup>.

## **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 and safeguarding being provided for the children. The school is a high priority for future inspection with no further notice.

The ETI will return to the school within six weeks to evaluate the progress in addressing the arrangements for safeguarding.

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

<sup>2</sup> The Department of Education will seek assurance from the Education Authority that they are working with the school in relation to the inspection report.

## **ADDENDUM TO THE REPORT ON THE INSPECTION OF ST MARY'S PRIMARY SCHOOL, AUGHNISNAFIN (403-3002) IN MAY 2018**

The ETI returned to the school on 20 September 2018 to monitor and report on arrangements for safeguarding.

The purpose of the visit was to provide the school with a further opportunity to provide evidence on its arrangements for safeguarding. Owing to action short of strike, the school did not provide evidence that the arrangements for safeguarding children reflect or reflect broadly the guidance from the Department of Education at the time of the inspection on 17 May 2018.

During the follow-up visit, the school provided evidence that the arrangements for safeguarding children reflect broadly the guidance from the Department of Education. The school needs to: develop a Relationships and Sexuality Education policy in consultation with staff and parents; and, continue to implement the appropriate planned review of policies and procedures to reflect current guidance and best practice. 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.

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