

PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

St Mary's Primary School,
Cloughcor, County Tyrone

Maintained, co-educational

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



The Education and Training Inspectorate
Promoting Improvement

Providing inspection services for:

Department of Education
Department for the Economy
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CUSTOMER
SERVICE
EXCELLENCE



Sustaining Improvement Inspection of St Mary's Primary School, Cloughcor, County Tyrone (203-6095)

Introduction

The original inspection in May 2015 evaluated the overall effectiveness of St Mary's Primary School as good¹. In the interim: there have been changes in staffing at all levels, including the appointment of a new principal; and, a shared education programme between three local schools has been established. A sustaining improvement inspection was conducted on 23 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 none of the staff 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 improvement through self-evaluation and effective school planning; and
- lines of inquiry were not selected by the school from the development plan priorities.

Key findings

- In discussion with inspectors, a group of year 6 children stated that they feel well supported by staff and were appreciative of the trips and opportunities to learn beyond the classroom environment.

The ETI was unable to evaluate fully:

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

Safeguarding

During the inspection, the school provided evidence that the arrangements for safeguarding children reflect broadly the guidance from the Department of Education. However, owing to the action short of strike, the ETI was unable to evaluate fully, through discussions with staff and the children, the outworking of the arrangements for safeguarding in the school. The children in year 6, who spoke to the inspectors, reported that they feel safe and are aware of what to do if they have any concerns about their safety or well-being.

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.

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

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