

PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

St Patrick's Primary School and
Nursery Unit, Crossmaglen,
County Down

Maintained, co-educational

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



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 Patrick's Primary School and Nursery Unit, Crossmaglen, County Down (503-1148)

Introduction

The previous inspection in November, 2013 evaluated the overall effectiveness of St Patrick's Primary School and Nursery Unit, Crossmaglen, as very good¹. A sustaining improvement inspection (SII) was conducted on 15 June 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 lines of inquiry during the SII were:

- the school's work to develop the provision for play-based learning; and
- raising the standards achieved by the children in numeracy at key stage (KS) 1.

Key findings

- The school's provision for play-based learning has developed through greater collaboration between the staff in the Nursery Unit and the foundation stage. Planning and progression are being informed well by the new methods for observing and recording the learning of individual children.
- The school has worked consistently to improve the children's standards in numeracy at KS1. Data has been used effectively to identify areas for improvement at whole class and individual child level and appropriate interventions have been implemented; the available data showed improved outcomes for the children.

The ETI was unable to evaluate:

- 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. In discussion with the ETI, a group of year 7 children reported that they enjoy their learning, feel safe and secure within the school and know 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.

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