

EDUCATION AND TRAINING INSPECTORATE

PRIMARY INSPECTION

Gaelscoil Uí Néill, Oileán an Ghuail,
County Tyrone

Irish-medium, co-educational, DE Ref No: 504-6637

Report of a Follow-up Inspection in October 2022



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Follow-up to the Inspection of Gaelscoil Uí Néill, Oileán an Ghuail, Contae Thír Eoghain/County Tyrone, BT71 4PU

The Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) carried out a follow-up inspection of Gaelscoil Uí Néill in March 2019¹. Owing to the action short of strike, ETI was unable to evaluate fully the impact of the actions taken and the extent to which the important area for improvement had been addressed, namely:

- leadership and management, at all levels, need to embed the processes of monitoring and evaluation to ensure that the identified priorities and associated action plans effect improvement in the children's learning experiences and outcomes.

Consequently, there remained a need for Gaelscoil Uí Néill to address the important area for improvement.

The school's development plan and associated action plans were adjusted in light of the inspection findings and the feedback given by ETI.

ETI carried out a monitoring visit in April 2022 and a third follow-up inspection in October 2022.

In the interval since the initial inspection, the school has received external support from the Education Authority (EA) in relation to: strategic leadership and management; school development planning relating to whole-school improvement; and, aspects of provision, in particular, planning for learning and teaching and provision for special educational needs.

Over the same period, the key actions or changes which affect the work of the school include:

- an acting principal took up post in September 2022 and the position of vice-principal ceased in 2019;
- the senior leadership team has been restructured and now comprises: an acting principal; a literacy co-ordinator; a numeracy co-ordinator; a special educational needs co-ordinator; and, an assessment co-ordinator;
- a more strategic and collegial approach has been implemented to the school development planning process;
- the school improvement sub-committee of the governors plays an active role in monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness and impact of self-evaluation processes;

¹ [Follow-up Inspection \(Involving Action Short of Strike\) Gaelscoil Uí Néill, Oileán an Ghuail](#)

- there has been a reduction in the enrolment number by almost 15 percent; and
- a number of new appointments have been made to the teaching and non-teaching staff.

As a consequence of the external support and the key changes and actions taken within the school, there have been significant improvements in the quality of education as reported in the key findings below.

Views of parents/carers and staff

Fifteen percent of parents and over 80% of the staff responded to the confidential, online questionnaire. The responses to the parental questionnaire were very positive and all of the written comments indicated high levels of satisfaction with the life and work of the school. The responses to the staff questionnaire were also wholly positive and endorsed the collaborative working at all levels, improved communication and staff morale. The ETI has communicated to the acting principal and the chair of the board of governors the main findings, and any individual issues arising, from the questionnaires.

Key findings

The outcomes for learners remain good.

Most of the children are attentive; contribute confidently to whole-class discussions; and, engage well in the individual and shared tasks set for them by their teachers. They are making good progress, across the key stages, in their learning and are developing well their ability to: make decisions about and manage their own learning; and, work with others. The children have a good understanding of Irish and most speak Irish fluently and confidently, as they progress through the school. The children from Rang 7 who met with the inspectors read fluently in Irish and English; discussed their favourite authors and books; and, justified their choices.

The quality of provision has improved and is now good.

Planning for learning and teaching is comprehensive and guides effectively classroom practice. The quality of almost all of the learning and teaching observed was good or better. In the most effective practice: all of the children are suitably challenged and provided with opportunities to take responsibility for and engage actively in their learning; teachers use a range of effective immersion strategies and skilful questioning to support and extend the children's learning, thinking and spoken Irish; and, classroom assistants support the children effectively.

The quality and effectiveness of leadership, management and action to promote improvement have improved and are now good.

There is a greater understanding of the process and purpose of self-evaluation and an increased capacity and confidence to monitor and evaluate the quality of provision and the outcomes for children across the curriculum. Leadership at all levels, including governance, has a more collegial approach and shared vision for whole-school improvement. The school development plan is informed by consultation with a range of stakeholders; there remains variation however in the quality and succinctness of the supporting action plans.

Overall effectiveness

Gaelscoil Uí Néill now demonstrates the capacity to identify and bring about improvement in the interests of all the learners. The ETI will monitor how the school sustains improvement in:

- developing further their processes of self-evaluation and action planning in order to continue to effect improvement in the quality of provision and raise further the outcomes for all children.

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