

Education and Training Inspectorate EOTAS INSPECTION



Lea Green EOTAS, Glengormley

Report of a Follow-up Inspection (Involving Action Short of Strike) in
February 2020



The Education and Training Inspectorate
Promoting Improvement

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SECOND FOLLOW-UP TO THE INSPECTION OF LEA GREEN PRIMARY REFERRAL UNIT, GLENGORMLEY

The Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) carried out a follow up inspection of Lea Green in May 2018¹ which concluded that the centre needed to address important areas for improvement in the interest of all the learners. The ETI then carried out an interim follow-up visit in January 2019 and a second follow-up inspection in February 2020. Two teachers and seven behaviour support assistants provide outreach support within schools.

The areas for improvement identified in the May 2018 inspection were the need to:

- evaluate the effectiveness of the planning and interventions and their impact on the outcomes for the children, particularly in literacy and numeracy; and
- develop a consistent approach to sharing support strategies with the children.

The centre's action plans were of a good quality and included key actions to promote improvement.

The trade unions which make up the Northern Ireland Teachers' Council (NITC) have declared industrial action primarily in relation to a pay dispute and also workload and other management issues. The industrial action include non-co-operation with the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI). Prior to the inspection, the centre informed the ETI that the teachers would not be co-operating with the inspection. The leadership co-operated with the inspection in relation to their leadership duties. The ETI has a statutory duty to monitor, inspect and report on the quality of education and professional practice among teachers 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.

In the interval since the initial inspection, the following actions or changes which affect the work of the centre have taken place:

- the mobile unit used by Lea Green staff to accommodate children withdrawn for intensive centre support has been temporarily closed due to health and safety issues whilst the Education Authority (EA) source more suitable accommodation;
- the teachers and behaviour support assistants are providing outreach and targeted support within schools until new accommodation is available;
- staff have been relocated to another EA building;
- the number of behaviour support assistants has increased from four to seven;
- there is a greater focus on therapeutic work and interventions to support the social emotional and behavioural development of the children; and
- staff have participated in development and training opportunities relating to emotional health and well-being and effective behaviour interventions.

¹ <https://www.etini.gov.uk/publications/follow-inspection-leagreen-primary-referral-unit-glengormley>

Key Findings

The centre provided data that showed that nine children over the past two years benefitted from support within the centre and 75 children received outreach support. The majority of the children who received support from the centre maintained their mainstream school placement and a small number transferred to a special school. All of the children who received outreach support were also able to maintain their school placement.

The children are learning to self-regulate their behaviour and manage their emotions through individual interventions and social skills group work facilitated by the Lea Green staff.

The Lea Green staff have implemented a therapeutic curriculum using appropriate contextualised resources to meet the diverse and complex needs of the children. The outreach reports provide clear prioritised targets and strategies for each child. However it is important that the children's progress in achieving the targets is more effectively monitored and recorded both by outreach and school staff along with the effectiveness of the intervention strategies.

The centre management has reviewed the model of provision and the development of staff. They have introduced a system to enable schools to provide feedback on the quality of outreach support they provide. Further work is required to detail how effective the school have been in implementing the interventions and strategies identified by Lea Green staff. The centre leadership has identified appropriately the need to monitor further the effectiveness and consistency of outreach support.

Owing to action short of strike, the ETI was unable to evaluate:

- the quality of learning and teaching support within the classroom;
- the effectiveness of the planning and interventions and their impact on the outcomes for the children within the classroom; and
- the implementation of a consistent approach by teachers to sharing support strategies with the children.

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 pupils.

This will be reflected in future inspection activity.

The ETI will monitor and report on the centre's progress in addressing the areas for improvement.

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