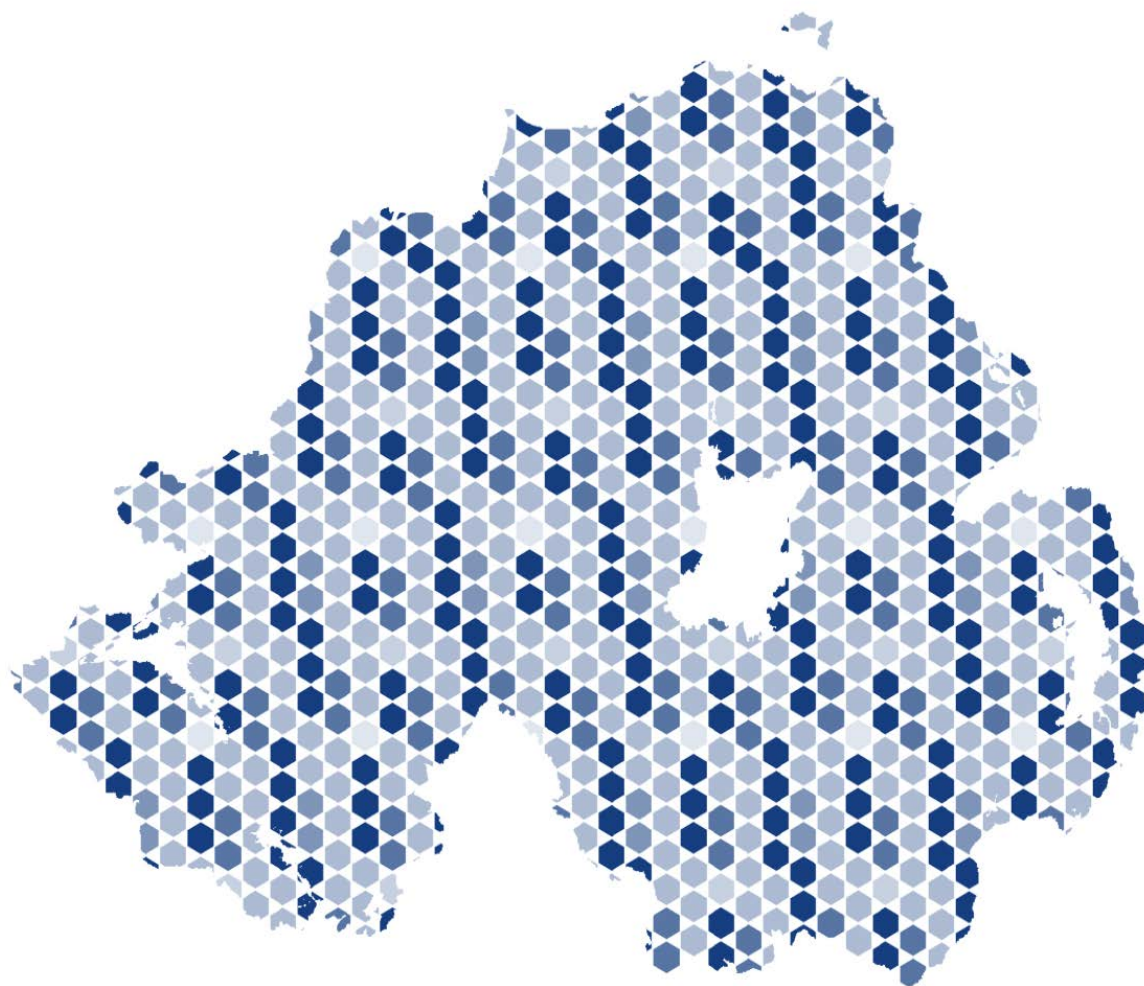


Education and Training Inspectorate

POST-PRIMARY INSPECTION



Clounagh Junior High School, Portadown, County Armagh

Controlled 11-14 all ability co-educational school DE Ref No (521-0043)

Report of a Sustaining Improvement Inspection (Involving Action Short of Strike) in May 2019



The Education and Training Inspectorate
Promoting Improvement

Providing inspection services for:

Department of Education
Department for the Economy
and other commissioning Departments



Sustaining Improvement Inspection of Clounagh Junior High School, Portadown, County Armagh (521-0043)

Introduction

The previous inspection in March 2016¹ evaluated the overall effectiveness of Clounagh Junior High School as demonstrating the capacity to identify and bring about improvement.

In the interim period, there have been a number of key appointments at senior and middle leadership. As a consequence roles and responsibilities of the senior leadership team (SLT) have been clarified. There have also been a number of teaching appointments. Capacity building leadership opportunities in the current academic year have included secondment of an assistant literacy co-ordinator and an assistant numeracy co-ordinator.

Pupil enrolment has continued to increase since the time of the last inspection and the school is now oversubscribed on entry to year 8.

A sustaining improvement inspection (SII) was conducted in May 2019.

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 the principal and vice-principal would be co-operating with the inspection. 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 purpose of the SII was to evaluate the extent to which the school is capable of demonstrating its capacity to effect improvement through self-evaluation and effective school development planning. The school also provided evidence of provision for safeguarding as part of the inspection.

The lines of inquiry during the SII were the school's actions to continue to raise the standards achieved by the pupils through:

- using data to further develop and inform self-evaluation and associated action planning; and
- ongoing prioritisation of literacy and numeracy across the curriculum.

Owing to the action short of strike, the ETI was unable to evaluate fully the outworking and impact of the identified actions associated with the lines of inquiry.

¹ <https://www.etini.gov.uk/sites/etini.gov.uk/files/publications/follow-up-inspection-clounagh-junior-high-school-portadown.pdf>

Key findings

- Since the last inspection, there has been a strategic focus on the collation and analysis of a wide range of academic and pastoral data to further develop and inform self-evaluation and action planning at whole school and departmental level. With tailored staff development sessions, staff have focused on using data for example to: baseline and track pupil progress; quality assure internal assessments; and inform curriculum planning. As a consequence, the use of the data to identify pupils presenting with barriers to their learning has led to targeted pastoral and academic interventions, including for literacy and numeracy. There is clear evidence of the impact for individual pupils identified as being at risk of disengagement. There has also been modification of the qualifications offer for pupils at Key Stage 4 in the learning support centre.
- The ongoing prioritisation of literacy and numeracy across the curriculum is evident, with action planning for these priorities informed by data analysis and review. Co-ordinators have provided whole-staff inset and, in the period since the last inspection, they have presented to the governors in terms of progress in these areas. However, owing to the action short of strike, the ETI was unable to see the outworking and impact of the school's actions.
- The pupils who met with inspectors are respectful of each other and expressed their appreciation for the support of the teachers. They enjoy opportunities to partake in extra-curricular activities, in particular sports and recognise the role of older pupils as "friendly faces" in providing support for younger pupils. They spoke about how peer literacy leaders and peer numeracy leaders have promoted greater literacy and numeracy awareness through school assemblies. The older pupils spoke about their career aspirations and were appreciative of the facilities provided for their practical subjects.

Safeguarding

During the inspection, the school provided evidence that arrangements for safeguarding pupils reflect broadly the guidance from the Department of Education. As part of the ongoing review of key policies and procedures, the school has necessarily prioritised the need to update the anti-bullying, the child protection and the relationships and sexuality education policies. In discussion with the inspectors, the pupils reported that they feel safe and are aware of what to do if they have any concerns about their safety or well-being. Owing to the action short of strike, the ETI was unable to evaluate fully the outworking of the arrangements for safeguarding in the school.

Conclusion

Owing to the impact of action short of strike being taken by almost all of the teachers, the ETI is unable to assure parents/carers, the wider school community and stakeholders of the quality of education provided for the pupils. This will be reflected in future inspection activity.

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