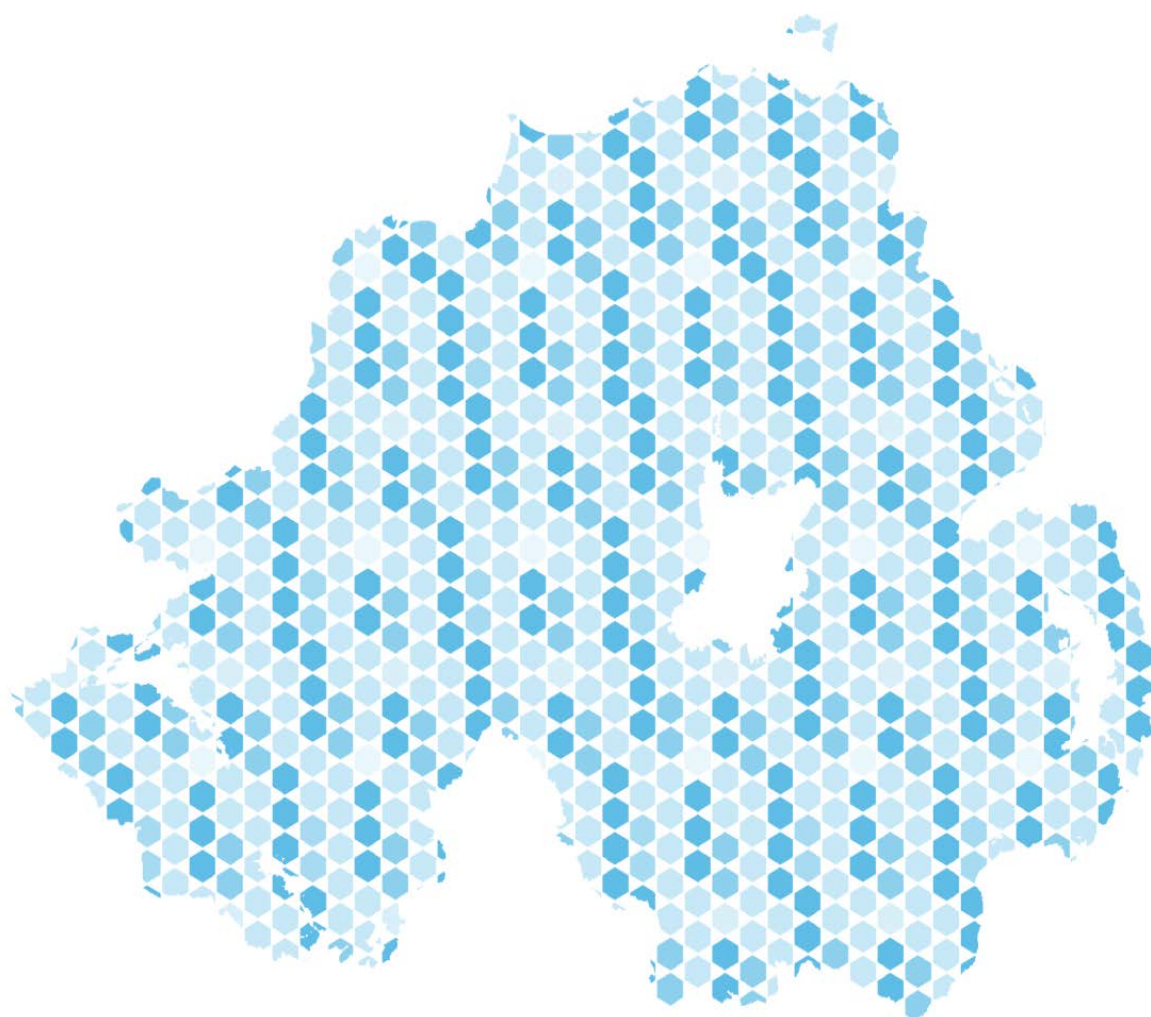


PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

St Teresa's Primary School, including
the Speech, Language and
Communication Centre, Belfast

Maintained, co-educational

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



The Education and Training Inspectorate
Promoting Improvement

Providing inspection services for:

Department of Education
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CUSTOMER
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EXCELLENCE



Sustaining Improvement Inspection of St Teresa's Primary School, Belfast (103-6589)

Introduction

The previous inspection in December 2014 evaluated the overall effectiveness of St Teresa's Primary School as good¹. In the interim, there has been changes in staffing, including new appointments to key co-ordinator roles. The enrolment has increased steadily since the time of the last inspection from 463 to 542 children. The school has received a number of external awards in recognition of aspects of teaching and the curricular and extra-curricular achievements of the children. A sustaining improvement inspection (SII) was conducted on 24 September 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 teachers would be co-operating with the inspectors. The principal and the designated teacher for child protection co-operated with the inspection team in relation to their leadership and safeguarding responsibilities. 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 school provided evidence of provision for safeguarding and documentation relating to the lines of inquiry as part of the inspection.

The lines of inquiry during the SII, which were identified as areas for improvement at the time of the last inspection, were to:

- review and improve the quality of planning to ensure appropriate challenge and progression in the children's learning; and
- develop more regular opportunities for writing, with greater attention being given to developing the children's accuracy in spelling.

Key findings

- The school development plan has been informed by the analysis of data and in consultation with the whole school community, and appropriate targets have been identified to support the school's improvement agenda.
- The school had undertaken a comprehensive review of planning in all areas of the curriculum to meet better the learning needs of all of the children and to promote consistent progression in their learning. The school has developed a coherent writing and spelling programme. Based on the documentation provided, the evaluations of learning and teaching strategies and the children's progress in their learning are used well to inform future planning; the programme of teacher professional learning was tailored well to support this work. Subsequently, samples of the children's work and the school's internal data show improvement in the children's outcomes in literacy.

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.

- In discussions with inspectors, a small group of year 7 children spoke very positively about the opportunities provided for them to read for pleasure, develop their skills in writing in a range of genres and improve their accuracy in spelling. A group of year 6 children reported that they appreciate the help and support provided by the school staff and their peers, the welcoming ethos of the school and the wide range of extra-curricular activities provided for them.

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. In discussions with the inspectors, a group of year 6 children reported that they feel safe and know what to do if they have any concerns about their safety or well-being. However, 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 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 children. This will be reflected in future inspection activity.

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