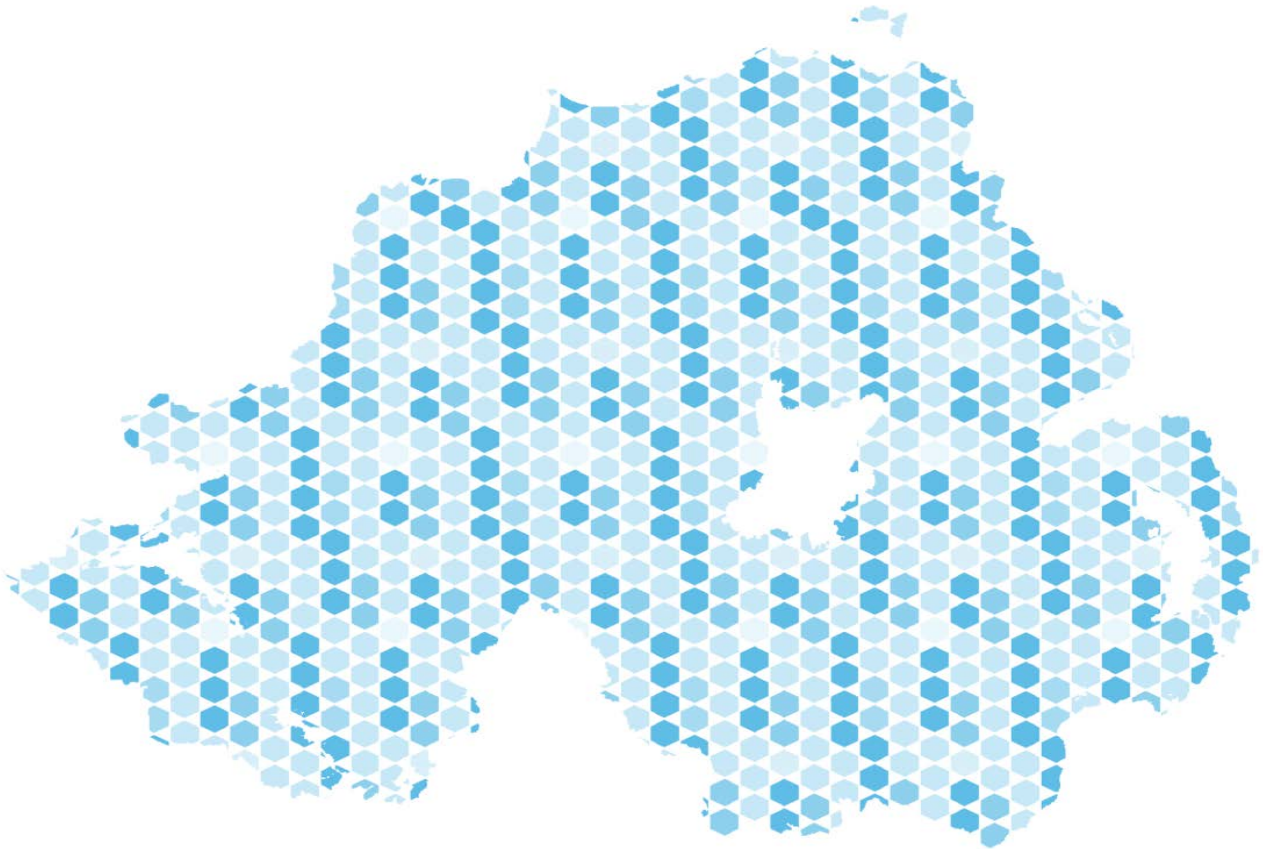


# Education and Training Inspectorate PRIMARY INSPECTION



Fairview Primary School, Ballyclare, County Antrim

Controlled, co-educational DE Ref No: 301-6414

Report of an Inspection (Involving Action Short of Strike) in  
November 2019



The Education and Training Inspectorate  
Promoting Improvement

Providing inspection services for:

Department of Education  
Department for the Economy  
and other commissioning Departments

CUSTOMER  
SERVICE  
EXCELLENCE



## CONTENTS

SECTION	PAGE
1. Context	1
2. Children's, parents' and staff questionnaire responses	1
3. Focus of the inspection	2
4. Overall findings of the inspection	2
5. Outcomes for learners	2
6. Quality of provision	3
7. Leadership and management	3
8. Safeguarding	4
9. Overall effectiveness	4

### APPENDICES

- A. Health and safety/Accommodation
- B. Inspection methodology and evidence base
- C. Reporting terms used by the Education and Training Inspectorate

## INTRODUCTION

### 1. Context

Fairview Primary School is a controlled primary school situated in Ballyclare. The children come from the town and surrounding areas. The school has achieved a wide range of accredited awards including the Primary Science Quality Mark Gold Award; Forest School status; a Sustrans<sup>1</sup> Gold Award and their fifth Eco Flag. In addition, the school has become the first Zero Waste School in Ireland. The staff share willingly their expertise by supporting and mentoring co-ordinators from other primary schools. The school has begun a shared education partnership with a maintained primary school and participates in a key stage 2/3 transition programme with a local post-primary school.

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 includes non-co-operation with the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI). Prior to the inspection, the school informed the ETI that a minority of the teachers would be co-operating with the inspection. The senior leadership co-operated with the inspection in relation to leadership and safeguarding responsibilities. The ETI has a statutory duty to monitor, inspect and report on the standards 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.

Fairview Primary School	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Enrolment	531	513	518	504
% school attendance	96.8	96.4	N/A	N/A
% NI Primary School average	95.5	94.9	N/A	N/A
% of children entitled to Free School Meals (FSME)	20.2	20.9	21.0	21.0
No. of children on SEN register	87	83	73	52
% of children on SEN register	16.4	16.2	14.1	10.3
No. of children with statements of educational needs	8	9	9	7
No. of newcomer children	0	*	*	*

**Source:** data as held by the school.

\* fewer than 5

N/A not available

### 2. Children's, parents' and staff questionnaire responses

A small number of parents, the majority of the staff and almost all of the year 7 children responded to the confidential, online questionnaires. The responses to the parental questionnaire were very positive and almost all of the written comments indicated high levels of satisfaction with the life and work of the school. They highlighted, in particular: the highly effective pastoral care exhibited by the professional and caring staff; the regular and informative communication provided; and, the high quality learning environment. The responses to the staff questionnaire were highly positive and endorsed the effective collaborative working relationships within the school and the wide range of professional development opportunities afforded them. The responses to the year 7 online children's questionnaire indicated their enjoyment of the learning activities in school amid a sense of fun and within a safe, welcoming environment.

---

<sup>1</sup> 'Sustrans': sustainable transport is a charity which encourages children and adults to walk, cycle and use public transport rather than private cars in order to reduce motor traffic.

The ETI has communicated to the principal and the chair of the board of governors the main findings, and any individual issues arising, from the questionnaires.

### 3. Focus of the inspection

The ETI was unable to evaluate:

- outcomes for children with a particular focus on numeracy and literacy;
- quality of provision with a particular focus on numeracy and literacy including across the curriculum and
- quality of leadership and management.

### 4. Overall findings of the inspection

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Unable to assure the quality of education
<b>Outcomes for learners</b>	No performance level available
<b>Quality of provision</b>	No performance level available
<b>Leadership and management</b>	No performance level available

## KEY FINDINGS

### 5. Outcomes for learners

- The school's internal qualitative and quantitative data indicates that most of the children, including those who require additional support with aspects of their learning, make expected or better progress in literacy, mathematics and information and communication technology. In the lessons observed, the children used high-order thinking skills, relevant and specific vocabulary in context and were very clear on roles and responsibilities within their learning and the class environment.
- The year 7 children who met with the inspectors have an excellent disposition for reading. They enjoy reading a wide range of more complex texts, are knowledgeable about different genres and authors, and use confidently a wide range of effective reading strategies.
- In discussion with the inspectors, a group of year 7 children expressed their enjoyment of mathematics, including the opportunity they have to develop their mathematics through their outdoor learning. They have a very good understanding of key concepts and mental mathematics strategies and are able to articulate and explain accurately their thinking and mathematical processes.
- The inspectors met with a group of year 6 children who reported enthusiastically that they enjoy participating in the wide range of after-school clubs. The children articulated well the role they play in decision-making through the school- and eco-councils. They conveyed their enjoyment and understanding of the impact of their role as 'playground buddies.' The children's respect for, and genuine interest in, their peers' contributions were evident throughout the lessons and discussions with small groups of children.

The ETI was unable to evaluate fully:

- the learning outcomes for the children, including those who require additional support with aspects of their learning;
- progression in the children's learning; and
- the children's wider skills and dispositions.

## **6. Quality of provision**

- In the lessons observed, the learning and teaching were characterised by: interactive, investigative learning experiences; open-ended questions; and appropriately challenging learning opportunities that matched the individual needs of the children.
- The children experience a well-balanced and progressive curriculum across literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology. They are given the opportunity to develop their understanding of coding and use interactive software and drones to extend their learning. The school tracks methodically the wide range of qualitative and quantitative data and identifies the children who may require additional support with aspects of their learning and provides tailored programmes to meet their individual needs.
- Based on the wide range of evidence provided by the school, the staff present the World Around Us through well-connected and progressive active learning experiences which develop systematically the children's knowledge and enquiry skills and prepare them well for the opportunities and challenges of a rapidly changing world. The highly effective links between the school and the natural and man-made environment connect, enrich and extend the children's learning. As a result, the high quality and impact of the school's work has been recognised externally, receiving a range of accolades, including, the Primary Science Teaching Trust Fellow Award, Northern Ireland Forest Schools Association Ranger School Status and the Eco-Schools Ambassador Award.

The ETI was unable to evaluate fully:

- the quality of the curriculum;
- the effectiveness of the guidance and support in bringing about high quality individual learning experiences;
- the effectiveness and impact of planning, teaching, learning and assessment in promoting successful learning; and
- care and welfare.

## **7. Leadership and management**

- The school development plan is well-informed by extensive consultation with all stakeholders and includes structured self-evaluation. There exist very good, collaborative processes in place to monitor and evaluate the outworking of the well-focused action plans. The senior leadership team work in a cohesive and collegial manner and are empowered to develop further their respective leadership roles and responsibilities.

- The board of governors use effectively their range of skills to support and challenge constructively the management of the school. There is regular and purposeful communication between the senior leaders and the governors who have a clear understanding of school priorities and the impact of actions undertaken leading to improvement. The governors are involved actively in the life and work of the school through, for example, engaging weekly in the after school eco- and book-clubs.
- The school has a well-established link with the local nursery school through which year five and six children have the opportunity to develop their leadership skills as part of the 'buddy scheme'. Links with local post primary schools have afforded key stage 2 children the opportunity to participate in sporting and science events and has supported a smooth transition to year 8. Parents are informed regularly about their child's progress and encouraged to become actively involved in the school through curriculum workshops, the parent teacher association and, in addition, deliver a number of the wide selection of after-school activities offered.

The ETI was unable to evaluate fully:

- the effectiveness of strategic leadership and governance;
- the effectiveness and impact of middle leadership; and
- the effectiveness of action to promote and sustain improvement.

## **8. Safeguarding**

- During the inspection, the school provided evidence that the arrangements for safeguarding children reflect broadly the guidance from the Department of Education. The safeguarding preventative curriculum includes a bespoke pastoral programme for the children and an extensive range of interventions and support mechanisms. The children spoke confidently and maturely about what to do if they have any concerns about their safety or well-being. They have a very good understanding of how to stay safe online and report that they feel very happy and safe in school.

## **9. Overall effectiveness**

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.

**Health and safety/Accommodation**

1. The school has been successful in the Department of Education's School Enhancement Programme aimed at refurbishing and extending the existing school provision.
2. The school has identified health and safety and accommodation matters, pertaining to the nine mobile classrooms, which are being progressed by the relevant stakeholder.

### Inspection methodology and evidence base

The ETI's Inspection and Self-Evaluation Framework is available on the ETI website: [The Inspection and Self-Evaluation Framework \(ISEF\): Effective Practice and Self-Evaluation Questions for Primary | Education Training Inspectorate](#)

Inspectors observe learning and teaching, scrutinise documentation and the children's written work and hold formal and informal discussions with children, teachers and staff with specific responsibilities.

The arrangements for inspection include:

- a meeting with representatives of the governors;
- meetings with groups of children; and
- the opportunity for the children, parents, teaching and support staff to complete a confidential, online questionnaire.

Where, owing to the action short of strike, this evidence base was not available, it has been referenced in the body of the inspection report.

The arrangements for this inspection included:

- meetings with representatives of the governors and senior leadership;
- meetings with groups of children from year six and year seven; and
- a review of the school's school development plan, associated action plans, safeguarding documentation and other documentation made available.



## Reporting terms used by the Education and Training Inspectorate

### Quantitative terms

In this report, proportions may be described as percentages, common fractions and in more general quantitative terms. Where more general terms are used, they should be interpreted as follows:

Almost/nearly all	-	more than 90%
Most	-	75% - 90%
A majority	-	50% - 74%
A significant minority	-	30% - 49%
A minority	-	10% - 29%
Very few/a small number	-	less than 10%

### Performance levels

The ETI use the following performance levels when reporting on outcomes for learners, quality of provision and leadership and management<sup>2</sup>:

Outstanding
Very good
Good
Important area(s) for improvement
Requires significant improvement
Requires urgent improvement

The ETI use the following levels when reporting on governance:

High degree of confidence
Confidence
Limited confidence

The ETI use the following levels when reporting on safeguarding:

Reflects the guidance
Reflects broadly the guidance
Unsatisfactory

The ETI use the following levels when reporting on care and welfare:

Impacts positively on learning, teaching and outcomes for learners.
Does not impacts positively enough on learning, teaching and outcomes for learners.

<sup>2</sup> And the overall provision in a unit, as applicable.

## Overall effectiveness

The ETI use one of the following inspection outcomes when evaluating the overall effectiveness of the school:

The school has a high level of capacity for sustained improvement in the interest of all the learners. The ETI will monitor how the school sustains improvement.
The school demonstrates the capacity to identify and bring about improvement in the interest of all the learners. The ETI will monitor how the school sustains improvement.
The school needs to address (an) important area(s) for improvement in the interest of all the learners. The ETI will monitor and report on the school's progress in addressing the area(s) for improvement. There will be a formal follow-up inspection in 12 to 18 months.
The school needs to address urgently the significant areas for improvement identified in the interest of all the learners. It requires external support to do so. The ETI will monitor and report on the school's progress in addressing the areas for improvement. There will be a formal follow-up inspection in 18 to 24 months.

© CROWN COPYRIGHT 2019

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part, except for commercial purposes or in connection with a prospectus or advertisement, provided that the source and date thereof are stated.

Copies of this report are available on the ETI website: [www.etini.gov.uk](http://www.etini.gov.uk)