

The Inspection Process for Primary Schools

(including Primary Schools with Nursery Units, Learning Support Units and Irish Medium Units)

Information for Parents, Carers and Guardians

This leaflet outlines the nature of the inspection process and the ways in which parents, carers and guardians can be involved

WHY IS MY CHILD'S SCHOOL BEING INSPECTED?

All schools are inspected and visited regularly by Inspectors from the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI). The inspection in your child's school will tell you and others about how well: the children are progressing in their learning; the school is helping them to learn and develop; the school is attending to the children's care, welfare and safety.

Inspections tell **all** those who need to know, such as the parents, DE and the Government, how good the schools in Northern Ireland are and what needs to be changed to improve matters.

WHO INSPECTS?

An inspection team has inspectors from ETI who have experience and qualifications in education. In some inspections an associate assessor may join the team. This person is a practising principal from another primary school in Northern Ireland who has been recruited and trained by the ETI to work as a member of an inspection team. The inspection team is led by the reporting inspector (RI) who is in charge of the inspection and the report of the findings.

WHAT HAPPENS DURING AN INSPECTION?

During the inspection, the inspection team:

- observe the children in all classes at work and play;
- talk and listen to the children about what they are doing and the children's account of their experiences;
- discuss aspects of the school's work with teachers, co-ordinators and the principal and governors;
- look carefully at samples of the children's work; and
- observe how effectively staff develop the children's learning.

The inspection team assesses:

- the quality of the working relationships throughout the school;
- the way in which the school looks after the children's needs, including the school's arrangements for child protection/safeguarding;
- how well the children are learning, and are being taught;
- the standards being attained by the children;
- how well the children's individual needs are being met;
- the quality of the leadership and management of the school; and
- how well the school relates to the parents and the wider community, including how parents are kept informed of their children's progress.

Two members of the inspection team will talk informally to groups of children about: the things they enjoy at school; how the school deals with good or bad behaviour; how they are supervised outside the classroom; and how the principal and staff address any concerns the children may have.

HOW CAN I CONTRIBUTE TO THE INSPECTION PROCESS?

You are encouraged to give your views and opinions of the school by completing the on-line questionnaire. If you have any difficulties in accessing or completing the questionnaire please contact Inspection Services Branch. It is important to remember that ETI does not pursue/investigate individual complaints on the part of parents. Your child's school will have a procedure for handling complaints/enquiries and it is important that any concerns are brought, in the first instance, to the attention of the principal. Following that, additional lines of communication open to you are the board of governors of your child's school and the employing authority.

Contact with the reporting inspector may be arranged through a telephone call or email to Mrs Wells in Inspection Services Branch (see the telephone number and email address below).

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER AN INSPECTION?

When the report on the school is published, a copy of the report will be available on the Education and Training Inspectorate website at www.etini.gov.uk.

If the report on the school finds that there are important weaknesses to be addressed, a follow-up inspection will take place within the timescale outlined in 'What Happens After Inspection?' available on the ETI website.

If you wish to comment on any aspect of the inspection or the report, or to receive any further information about the inspection process you should write to The Chief Inspector at the address below.

The Chief Inspector
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