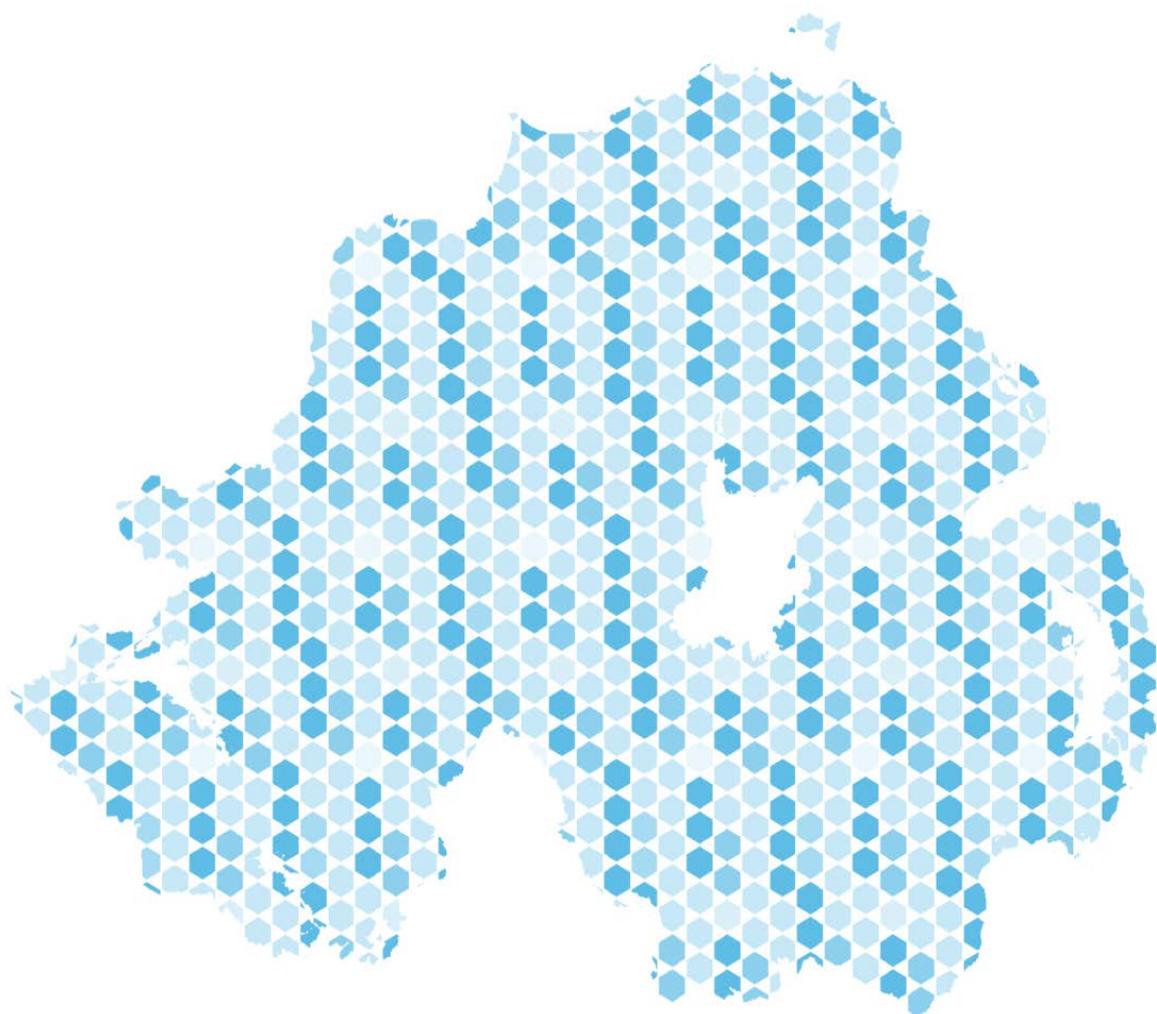


PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Limavady Central Primary
School, Co Londonderry

Report of an Inspection
in October 2012



Providing Inspection Services for

Department of Education
Department for Employment and Learning
Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure

CUSTOMER
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Inspection methods and evidence base

The inspection evaluations are based on evidence gained from lesson observations, from scrutiny of the children's completed written work and from a range of documentation including the school's internal performance data. In addition, the inspection team held discussions with groups of the children, with teaching and non-teaching staff and with representatives from the Board of Governors.

The views of the parents, teaching and non-teaching staff were sought through a confidential questionnaire prior to the inspection. The reporting inspector discussed any issues raised through the questionnaires with the principal and the governors. A summary of the outcomes from the questionnaires is included in section 6 of the report.

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%

In assessing the various features of the provision, Inspectors relate their evaluations to six descriptors as set out below:

DESCRIPTOR
Outstanding
Very Good
Good
Satisfactory
Inadequate
Unsatisfactory

Glossary of terms and abbreviations

DE	Department of Education
ETI	Education and Training Inspectorate
CCEA	Council for the Curriculum Examinations and Assessments
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
KS	Key stage
NI	Northern Ireland
SDP	School Development Plan
SEN	Special Educational Needs
FSM	Free School Meals
NU	Nursery Unit
IM	Irish Medium

1. School context

Limavady Central Primary School is situated in a residential area towards the southern edge of Limavady. The enrolment has decreased by about 10% over the past five years, falling from 537 in 2007 to the current enrolment of 474. The children come from the town and the wider surrounding area. At the time of the inspection 37% of the children were entitled to free school meals and 24% were identified as requiring help with aspects of their learning. The Principal was appointed within the past two years.

2. Focus of the inspection

The inspection focused on:

- the children's achievements and standards in literacy and numeracy, in particular, how the school is addressing low attainment and under-achievement where applicable;
- the quality of provision in the school; and
- the quality of leadership and management.

In addition, the use of information and communication technology (ICT) to support learning, and the school's arrangements for pastoral care, including child protection, were evaluated.

OVERALL FINDING OF THE INSPECTION

In most of the areas inspected the quality of education provided in this school is satisfactory; the strengths outweigh areas for improvement in the provision. The inspection has identified areas for improvement in standards, learning and teaching, and leadership and management which need to be addressed if the needs of all the children are to be met more effectively.

Summary of key findings

Achievements and standards Quality of provision Leadership and management	Good Satisfactory Satisfactory
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KEY FINDINGS OF THE INSPECTION

3. Achievements and Standards

The quality of the children's achievements and standards is good.

- The children are enthusiastic learners. They are well motivated and demonstrate care and concern for the school environment. Their achievement of the top Eco-Schools award has enabled them to make environmental awareness an intrinsic part of the life of the school. They have good social skills and engage readily and appropriately with adults and visitors. In class, they are well-behaved

and when given the opportunities, they are able to plan aspects of their own learning, work collaboratively, reflect on and evaluate what they have learnt. In a significant minority of instances, the children have limited opportunities to acquire and develop their thinking skills and personal capabilities, particularly in making choices and decisions, and taking more responsibility for their own learning.

- An analysis of the key stage (KS) 2 assessment data over the past four years shows that the school's performance in English and mathematics has fluctuated considerably from well above to below the Northern Ireland (NI) average. In English, in three of the last four years the outcomes were above the NI average and also above the average when compared to schools in the same free schools meals category. In mathematics, over the same four year period, the schools performance dropped below both the NI average, and the average for schools in the same free schools meals category, in the last two years*.
- By year 7, most of the children attain good standards in literacy and numeracy. The children listen well to adults and to one another. They are able to write well across the range of genres selected by the teachers and on occasions use effectively research and creative writing skills. They are confident in their mathematical thinking and are able to work flexibly with numbers and demonstrate a good understanding of data handling. They enjoy solving problems and can carry out investigative activities competently. There are, however, variations in the development of the children's communication skills and mathematical concepts within the foundation stage and KS1.
- Most of the children in the school who have been identified with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in their learning in line with their ability.
- Throughout the school the children develop good Information and Communication Technology (ICT) skills and they use a range of software and programmable devices with increasing confidence and independence to support their learning. By the end of KS2 most of the children achieve good standards in ICT and attain the expected level in the CCEA ICT Accreditation Scheme.

4. Provision for Learning

The quality of the provision for learning is satisfactory.

- The quality of the, planning, teaching and assessment is inconsistent across the school. The teaching in just over one- half of the lessons observed was good or very good; in the remaining proportion there were significant areas for improvement. In the most effective practice, there are well-planned learning opportunities which engage the children and challenge them appropriately. The teachers use effective questions and prompts and the children respond well with extended responses demonstrating rich and appropriate language development. In the less effective practice, the lessons are over-directed by the teacher, there is an over-emphasis on lower level and de-contextualised tasks, and there are missed opportunities to develop fully the children's thinking, oral language skills and independence. The assessment for learning is at a very early stage of development within the school and the strategies are not being used consistently

* the school's KS2 data for 2011/12 contains data which was not processed for verification by CCEA, as a result of industrial action by teaching unions at the end of the last school year.

to help the children improve the quality of their work. There is insufficient dissemination of the best practice in planning and teaching to ensure that the practice across the school is consistently good or better with a sharper focus on meeting the children's varying interests, stages of development and individual needs.

- The children with special educational needs are mainly supported through in-class support from the teachers. A small number of children are withdrawn from their class for short periods to receive individual and small group tuition. In a significant minority of the classes, there was insufficient planning and support to meet the needs and interests of both the less able and the more able children. The school has identified appropriately the need to develop the individual education plans; currently there is limited involvement of the teachers, parents and children in setting the targets and some of the strategies are too general to guide the teachers and parents in supporting the children. Overall, the arrangements to support the children with special educational needs lack flexibility and need to be reviewed to meet more effectively the needs of the children identified with low and underachievement in both literacy and numeracy. The school has established and maintained effective links with appropriate agencies for the children who require additional learning, social and emotional support.
- There is very good support and teaching for the children with English as an additional language (EAL). The school is aware of the need to keep under review the assessment procedures to indicate when a child has achieved the satisfactory language skills to participate fully in the curriculum.
- The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care is good as characterised by development of the revised positive behaviour policy following significant consultation with the parents, the children and the teachers. The children are increasingly being given a greater voice in the life and work of the school through the Eco council and playground friends. The children contribute confidently to assemblies and are well-supported by the staff and by their peers.
- The school gives very good attention to promoting healthy eating and physical activity, for example, through the nutritional quality of the school meals and the involvement of the children in the vegetable garden, all of which encourages them to adopt healthy lifestyles. The breakfast club provides a healthy breakfast and fun activities for the children who attend.

5. Leadership and Management

The quality of leadership and management is satisfactory.

- The Principal has engaged in a broad range of consultation for the school development plan and has set a clear direction for school improvement. There is an effective start made to the collection of performance data and samples of the children's literacy and numeracy work which is a good basis to develop further the culture of self-evaluation at whole school level. The action-planning for improvement is underdeveloped at co-ordinator level. The current arrangements for monitoring and evaluation in literacy, numeracy and SEN are not yet rigorous enough to record systematically the children's progression in learning and development and to gather evidence for school development planning.

- The parents are well involved in the life and work of the school. The parent-teacher association provides effective support for the school and the parents and members of the local community are involved in providing some of the wide-range of extra-curricular activities that are meeting well the interests of the children. The links with the pre-school providers need to be strengthened to focus on curricular links to support effective progression and transition to foundation stage.
- The governors support effectively the Principal and are committed to the improvement of the school. They bring a wide range of expertise to the life and work of the school. In assisting the governors further in carrying out their challenge function, the staff needs to update them with the information they collate and analyse relating to the pattern of the achievements and standards of the children. The roles and responsibilities of the staff are appropriately under review to support the achievement of the school's key priorities for improvement.
- On the basis of the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the school has comprehensive arrangements in place for safeguarding children; these arrangements reflect the guidance issued by the Department of Education (DE). In discussions with some of the year 6 children, they talked enthusiastically about all aspects of school life. They indicated that they feel happy and safe in school and know what to do if they have any worries or concerns.

CONCLUSION

In most of the areas inspected the quality of education provided in this school is satisfactory; the strengths outweigh areas for improvement in the provision. The inspection has identified areas for improvement in standards, learning and teaching, and leadership and management which need to be addressed if the needs of all the children are to be met more effectively. The areas for improvement include the need to;

- disseminate the best practice in learning and teaching so that the teaching is focused more consistently on meeting the children's varying needs, interests and stages of development; and
- ensure that the monitoring and evaluation in literacy, numeracy and SEN is rigorous to support continuous improvement in the children's literacy and numeracy standards.

The Education and Training Inspectorate will monitor and report on the school's progress in addressing the areas for improvement over a 12-24 month period.

6. Summary of questionnaire responses

PARENTAL QUESTIONNAIRES	
Number of Questionnaires Issued	120
Number of Questionnaires Returned	58
Percentage of Returns	48%
Number of Comments	26

Almost all of the responses from the parental questionnaires indicated a high level of satisfaction with the provision in the school. Through their written comments the parents expressed appreciation for the helpful and approachable staff and they expressed strong support of the work of the Principal.

TEACHERS QUESTIONNAIRES	
Number of Questionnaires Returned	17
Number of Comments	*

SUPPORT STAFF QUESTIONNAIRES	
Number of Questionnaires Returned	16
Number of Comments	*

* Denotes fewer than five

Most of the teachers and almost all of the support staff completed the questionnaire and expressed their support for the work of the school. All of the staff indicated that they are very happy in their work in the school.

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