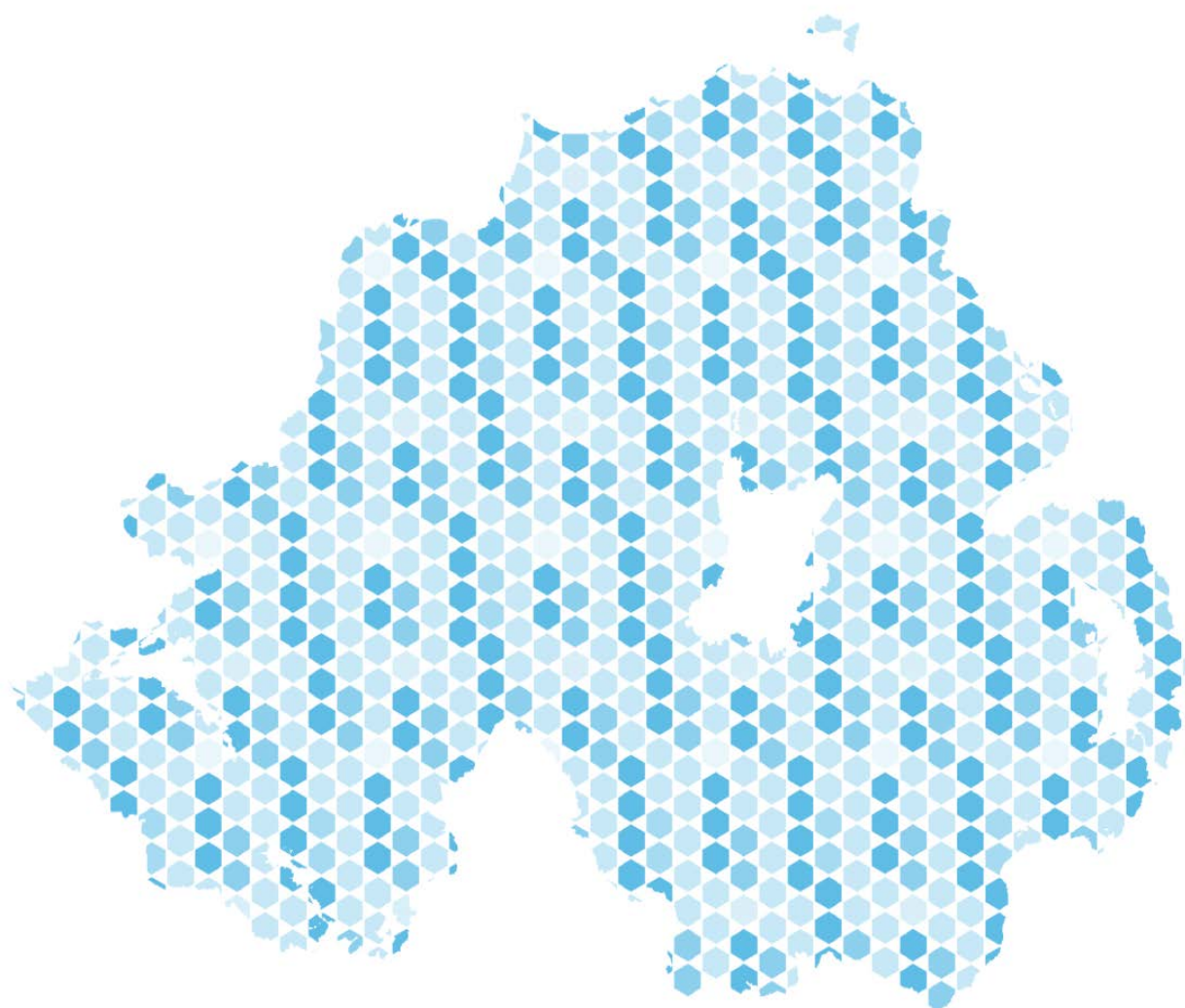


PRIMARY INSPECTION 2014-15



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Ballycarrickmaddy Primary
School, Lisburn, Co Antrim

Report of an Inspection in
May 2015

eti

*The Education and Training Inspectorate -
Promoting Improvement*

Providing Inspection Services for

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

CUSTOMER
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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 Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) use the following performance levels in reports:

DESCRIPTOR
Outstanding
Very Good
Good
Satisfactory
Inadequate
Unsatisfactory

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1. Inspection method and evidence base

The key questions and quality indicators which guide inspection and self-evaluation of primary schools, which were applied to this inspection, are available in the Education and Training Inspectorate's (ETI) publication *Together Towards Improvement: a process for self-evaluation* at: <http://www.etini.gov.uk/index/together-towards-improvement/together-towards-improvement-primary.htm>.

Inspectors observed teaching and learning, scrutinised documentation and the children's written work and held formal and informal discussions with children, teachers and staff with specific responsibilities.

The arrangements for this inspection included:

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

Almost all of the staff completed questionnaires and their responses were very positive; they emphasised that they had participated in staff training and are aware of the school's procedures relating to safeguarding. They also reported that they appreciate greatly the work and commitment of the principal. Just over one-third of parents completed the questionnaire and almost all of the responses indicated high levels of satisfaction with the life and work of the school. The ETI has reported to the principal and representatives of the board of governors the main findings and comments emerging from the questionnaires. The governors also expressed their appreciation for the hard work and dedication of the principal, vice-principal and staff.

2. Focus of inspection

The inspection focused on:

1. the children's achievements and standards in literacy and numeracy, in particular, how the school is addressing low attainment and underachievement where applicable;
2. the quality of provision for numeracy in the school; and
3. the quality of leadership and management.

3. Context

Ballycarrickmaddy Primary School is situated on the Killultagh Road, just off the Lisburn to Glenavy road, about six miles from the centre of Lisburn. Almost all of the children who attend the school come from the surrounding rural area and travel to school by bus or car. In recent years the enrolment has fluctuated but has increased significantly in the current year. In the last four-year period, the percentage of children entitled to free school meals has risen steadily, while the percentage of children on the Special Educational Needs register has remained approximately the same.

Ballycarrickmaddy Primary School	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Enrolment	149	144	137	175
% Attendance	96%	95%	97%	-
FSME Percentage ¹	5%	10%	13%	16%
% of children on SEN register	21%	18%	18%	22%
No. of children with statements of educational needs	6	5	6	7
No. of newcomers	0	0	0	*

Source: data as held by the school.

* fewer than 5

4. Overall findings of the inspection

Overall Performance Level	Very Good
Achievements and Standards	Very Good
Provision	Very Good
Leadership and Management	Outstanding

5. Achievements and standards

- The children are happy, well-settled and respectful towards their peers, the staff and visitors to the school. All of them are well-motivated and engage enthusiastically with their learning. They participate effectively in group and paired work and also display appropriate levels of independence. When given the opportunity to extend their learning, they respond positively to the expectations of the staff and to the experiences that enable them to be creative.
- The school's internal assessment data shows that almost all children, including those requiring additional support with aspects of their learning, make very good progress in English and mathematics in line with their ability or above expectation.
- Overall the standards achieved by the children in numeracy are very good. They show a positive attitude to, and enthusiasm for, engaging with and solving mathematical questions and are successful in applying their mathematical skills across the curriculum. By year 7, the more able children are secure in their knowledge of important mathematical ideas and concepts, such as place value, standard measures and two- and three-dimensional shapes. Their knowledge and quick recall of number facts and sequences are very good, although their readiness to use the full range of mental mathematics strategies needs to be developed further.
- During the inspection, children used their information and communication technology skills confidently to enhance their learning; for example, they engage in meaningful research and present their findings and ideas in a variety of forms.

¹ The term 'FSME Percentage' refers to the percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals.

6. Provision

- The teachers' planning is comprehensive and detailed; it is well-informed by the evaluation of the children's previous learning and the teachers' knowledge of the children's needs. In the most effective lessons, in about one-half of the lessons observed, the teachers used well-chosen activities and effective questioning that enabled the children to discuss and explain their thinking. The lessons were well-managed leaving sufficient time for suitable plenaries that consolidated the children's learning.
- In the less effective lessons, the teachers' supplementary questioning was ineffective, resulting in missed opportunities to extend the children's language and thinking skills. The quality of teachers' formative assessment is varied; in the best practice it was integral to, and augmented well, the learning and teaching.
- There is detailed long-term planning in numeracy which provides effective guidance for the teachers to ensure a broad and balanced coverage of key concepts and suitable progression in the children's learning. The teachers' short-term planning is effective and, appropriately, includes activities which specifically aid the development of the children's thinking skills and personal capabilities. The teachers use effectively examples from other curriculum areas and real-world contexts to enable the children apply and consolidate their numeracy. The inspection has identified the need to maintain the current priority on developing the children's mental mathematics skills to ensure that they can apply these strategies readily and with confidence.
- The provision for meeting the needs of the children who require additional support with aspects of their learning is highly effective. Early identification is prioritised well through links with the local pre-school providers, baseline assessments, staff observations and the careful analysis of internal data. The children's individual education plans (IEPs) have recently been revised and now very effectively have a child-centred approach to specifying the learning and behaviour targets. The IEPs are drawn up appropriately in consultation with the class teacher, the classroom assistant and the special educational needs co-ordinator. In addition to the well-targeted withdrawal sessions, a wide range of 'Booster' groups have been created to support effectively further the children's development of literacy and numeracy skills.
- The very good pastoral care is evident in the welcoming and inclusive ethos of the school and in the positive working relationships at every level; all the staff are committed to the holistic development of each child. The children demonstrate good levels of respect, sensitivity and empathy to the needs of others. Appropriately, priority is given to the development of their emotional, social and mental well-being through access to an effective range of workshops delivered by external agencies. It will be important that the recently reviewed personal development and mutual understanding programme is implemented fully to enhance further this provision. The school fosters good links with the parents and the wider community and provides an extensive range of extra-curricular opportunities in creative and expressive, and sporting areas. The school council and the eco committee are effective platforms for the children to be involved in making decisions and to develop their leadership and negotiation skills.

- The school places an appropriate emphasis on the children developing the full range of information and communication technology skills in areas, such as, presenting, managing data and online communication. There are appropriate plans to develop further the children's use of digital tablets; for example, the school has been successful in securing funding for the purchase of 32 more iPads in addition to the 24 purchased through the fundraising of the Parents-Teachers-Friends Association.
- The school promotes healthy eating and physical activity through, for example, the healthy eating policy and the range of sports available to the children, thereby encouraging them to adopt healthy lifestyles.

7. Leadership and management

- The leadership and management of the school are highly effective. Over the last two years, the senior leaders have worked conscientiously and have led very effectively the whole staff, teaching and non-teaching, with the common purpose of promoting the school's vision statement, 'Learning for Life', and improving the standards achieved by all children.
- A strength of the leadership is the development of comprehensive monitoring and evaluation strategies in order to promote continuous improvement. A high priority is placed on continuous staff development, including the further development of the role of the co-ordinators. The inspection has confirmed that this commitment is having a positive impact on the educational and pastoral provision across the school.
- The current school development plan (SDP) is comprehensive and has appropriate action plans addressing suitable priorities, including the key areas of literacy and numeracy. The thorough evaluation of the school's progress in meeting the action plan targets is summarised at regular intervals through an effective 'red/amber/green' system. This summary is shared appropriately with governors, staff and the parents and promotes a strong collective commitment to further improvement.
- The self-evaluation process is enhanced effectively by audits of the views of the children, parents, teachers and support staff. The school uses performance data very effectively across the school to monitor and track the progress of the children.
- There are suitable arrangements in place for consulting with, and reporting to, the parents that are designed to involve them in their child's education. The parents are well informed of the life and work of the school through whole-school and class newsletters and a well-developed and helpful website. The annual governor's report to the parents has very detailed information about the SDP, including an assessment of the school's progress in meeting its targets.
- The governors are well informed of the work and life of the school, they are actively involved in the school development planning process and provide an appropriate challenge function for the work of the principal and vice-principal. Based on the evidence presented at the time of the inspection, there can be a high degree of confidence in the aspects of governance inspected.

- 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. In discussions with the inspectors, the children reported that they feel secure in school and knew what to do if they have any concerns about their well-being.
- The school environment is used well to extend the learning opportunities and celebrate the children's achievements. The classroom assistants and ancillary staff make a valuable contribution to the life and work of the school.

8. Conclusion

In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by this school is very good. The school is meeting very effectively the educational and pastoral needs of the children, and has demonstrated its capacity for sustained self-improvement.

Accommodation

1. The school environment would be enhanced further by being re-painted.

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