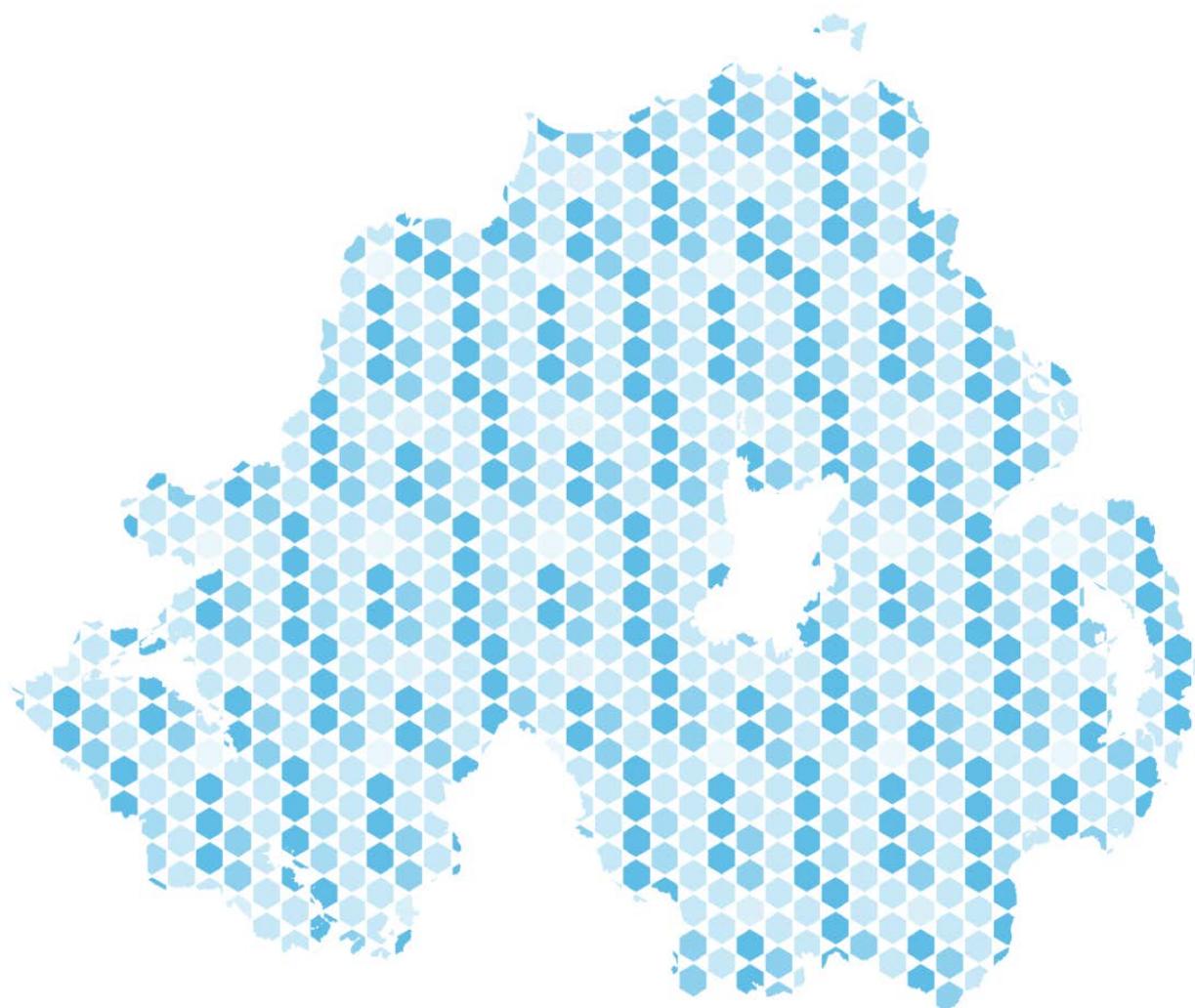


PRIMARY INSPECTION 2014-15



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Desertmartin Primary School,
Magherafelt, Co Londonderry

Report of an Inspection in
April 2015

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*The Education and Training Inspectorate -
Promoting Improvement*

Providing Inspection Services for

Department of Education
Department for Employment and Learning
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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 a representative from the governors;
- meetings with groups of children; and
- the opportunity for the parents, teaching and support staff to complete a confidential questionnaire.

Fifty-eight per cent of the parents responded to the questionnaire. The responses indicated high levels of satisfaction with the life and work of the school. In particular, the parents highlighted the important focus the teachers have on meeting the needs of individual children. The staff who completed questionnaires were wholly positive in their views of the school. In the inspectors' discussions with the chair of governors, the chair emphasised the effective family connections to the school, the focus on supporting the school's cross-community links and on improving the provision for the children.

2. Focus of 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 underachievement where applicable;
- the quality of provision for literacy in the school; and
- the quality of leadership and management.

3. Context

Desertmartin Primary School is situated in the village of Desertmartin, County Londonderry. Most of the children attending the school come from the village and surrounding rural area. The enrolment has declined over the last four years.

The school has been a leader in shared education, having been involved in the Primary Integrating/Enriching Education Project (PIEE) with a nearby primary school. As part of the project the schools appointed a 'shared' teacher to teach joint classes in both schools which has enhanced the learning experiences and social opportunities for staff, children and parents. An opportunity to continue this important work has been secured through an alternative funding source.

Desertmartin Primary School	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Enrolment	28	23	18	19
% Attendance	95	94	96	
FSME Percentage ¹	43	35	47	32
% of children on SEN register	22	12	21	38
No. of children with statements of educational needs	*	0	0	0
No. of newcomers	0	0	*	*

Source: data as held by the school.

* fewer than 5

4. Overall findings of the inspection

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

5. Achievements and standards

- The children respond positively and with enthusiasm to the learning opportunities provided by their teachers. The children apply their learning in literacy across the curriculum through a variety of interesting investigations set within meaningful contexts. Increasingly, the children reflect upon their learning and suggest ways in which they can improve the quality of their own work. The children's behaviour is excellent; they respond well to the positive ethos in both of the classrooms.
- The school's internal performance data indicates that almost all of the children, including those who require additional support with aspects of their learning, make good progress in mathematics in line with their ability or above expectations. The data also shows that in literacy a majority of children, including those who require additional support, make good progress in line with their ability or above expectation.
- During the inspection, the children from year 6 read fluently and discussed with enthusiasm their favourite authors and the texts they enjoy best. The children benefit from making connections between their own experiences and the topics they have recently investigated through their reading.
- The children identified with additional learning needs are making good progress in meeting the targets outlined in their individual education plans.
- The children lack sufficient opportunities to use a wider range of digital media to research information for their topic work. The teachers need to ensure that by the end of key stage (KS) 2, the children have developed a good range of information and communication skills, which better prepares them for the next stage of their learning.

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

6. Provision

- In all of the teaching observed, there was appropriate support and progression in the children's learning. The teachers employed effective questioning and made skilful use of the children's responses to develop the children's thinking skills and encourage extended answers. Importantly, the teachers recap key points and reinforce the children's learning. To improve the provision further, the teachers need to make clearer the learning intentions for the small number of the children not achieving their full potential.
- The teachers' individual planning does not have sufficient detailed evaluation of the children's progress and needs to be focused more sharply on the extent of the learning which has taken place. The teachers need this information to inform future planning and ensure progress in the children's learning across the ability range.
- The needs of children experiencing difficulties with aspects of their learning are identified early and the children are integrated very well into the life of the school. The staff are committed to ongoing professional development to develop their capacity to support these children. Those children receiving support in developing their reading skills make good progress from their starting points.
- A key feature of the literacy provision is the appropriate focus on the development of the children's reading skills. The teachers use effectively modelled reading sessions to develop the children's confidence, fluency, understanding and enjoyment of reading. There is an appropriate whole-school focus on spelling and on developing further the comprehension skills of all the children. The teachers have identified, appropriately, the need to focus on the children's creative writing skills and ensure progression in the quality of the writing being produced as they move through the key stages. There are good opportunities for the children to write about the topics they study within the 'world around us' area of learning. In literacy, the teachers make good connections across a range of curriculum areas, including, for example, art and design.
- In the foundation stage, the children enjoy activities which engage their interest and build their confidence; however, the play-based provision is under developed. It will be necessary for the staff to review and improve the provision, to ensure that the children benefit from a more challenging programme to enrich the learning and meet, more effectively, their needs.
- The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care in the school is good. There is a caring and supportive ethos in the school with very good working relationships at all levels, built upon mutual respect. The school has developed a close working relationship with three schools in the area.
- The school gives very good attention to promoting healthy eating and physical activity thereby encouraging the children to adopt and maintain healthy lifestyles.

7. Leadership and management

- The processes for self-evaluation are informed by a good level of consultation with children, parents, and governors. There is evidence of ongoing improvements in the areas identified in the most recent school development plan. However, the arrangements for self-evaluation are insufficiently rigorous. There is a need for the school to ensure that the process is underpinned by more effective analysis and interpretation of the available qualitative and quantitative data.
- The well-informed governors play an active role in the life and work of the school, including the development and implementation of the school development plan. They are fully committed to ensuring the school plays an important role in improving the quality of the pastoral and educational provision. Based on the evidence presented at the time of inspection, there can be a high degree of confidence in the aspects of governance evaluated.
- On the basis of the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the school has satisfactory arrangements in place for safeguarding children. These arrangements broadly reflect the guidance issued by the Department of Education. The following areas need to be addressed; the relevant governor training needs to be completed on the next available opportunity and the photographs of the designated and deputy designated teachers need to be displayed in a more age-appropriate manner across the school. In discussions with the inspectors, the children in year 6 reported that they very happy and secure in school and know what to do if they have any concerns about their well-being.

8. Conclusion

In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by this school is good. The school has important strengths in most of its educational and pastoral provision. The inspection has identified areas for improvement which the school has demonstrated the capacity to address, namely to:

- ensure that self-evaluation is sufficiently rigorous and is underpinned by the effective analysis and interpretation of the available qualitative and quantitative data;
- address the safeguarding issues identified; and
- improve the play-based learning programme to meet more effectively the needs of the youngest children.

It will be important that the employing authority, school governors and the staff plan for, and manage, issues related to the sustainability of the school provision and school budget, in order to address the current and future needs of the children and the staff.

The Education and Training Inspectorate will monitor, through district inspection activity, the school's progress on the areas for improvement.

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