

PRIMARY INSPECTION 2014-15



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Donaghadee Primary School,
Co Down

Report of an Inspection in
October 2014

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*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 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.

Twelve percent of the parents responded to the questionnaires; their responses indicated very high levels of support for and satisfaction with the work of the school. In particular, the parents praised the leadership of the principal, the very caring, dedicated staff and the importance of the school in the local community. Sixty-seven percent of the staff completed questionnaires and their responses were wholly positive; in particular, they highlighted the strong sense of community and teamwork within the school. ETI has reported to the principal and the chair person of the board of governors, and discussed with them the main issues arising from the questionnaires.

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 literacy in the school, including the nursery unit and;
3. the quality of leadership and management.

3. Context

Donaghadee Primary School and Nursery Unit is situated in the centre of Donaghadee. The majority of the children attending live in the town. The school's enrolment has risen slightly over the past four years and is presently 447 with 51 children in the nursery unit. At the time of the inspection, a programme of minor building works was nearing completion resulting in three classrooms operating in temporary accommodation.

Donaghadee Primary School and Nursery Unit	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Enrolment	418	429	431	447
% Attendance (NI Average)	94.8 (95)	95.2 (94)	95.6 (94)	
FSME Percentage ¹	19	23	23	21
% (No) of children on SEN register	17 (62)	11 (42)	17 (64)	19 (75)
No. of children with statements of educational needs	7	6	9	6
No. of newcomers	0	0	4	1

Source: data as held by the school.

* fewer than 5

4. Overall findings of the inspection

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

5. Achievements and standards

- The children are highly motivated, enthusiastic and demonstrate very good levels of engagement and enjoyment in their learning; they interact confidently with each other during the well-planned paired and group work activities and are able to apply their learning in a variety of contexts. They are very welcoming, engage easily with visitors and their behaviour is exemplary. The children are very proud of their school.
- The school's internal assessment data shows that nearly all of the children make very good progress in English and most children make very good progress in mathematics in line with their ability or above expectation.
- The children have very good talking and listening skills and engage competently in class and group discussions. By year 7, almost all children attain very good standards in English; the most able children read fluently and with high interest across a wide range of authors. The children use their developing writing skills very well to write in a variety of forms across the curriculum and most produce writing of a very good standard.
- The children who require additional support with aspects of their learning are making very good progress, the majority are working in line with their ability and reach the standards of which they are capable.

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

- The children in the nursery unit are making very good progress across all areas of the pre-school curriculum
- The children use information and communication technology (ICT) confidently to enhance their learning. The school have achieved the National Association of Advisors for Computers in Education (NAACE) award for excellence in information and communication technology.

6. Provision

- There is a coherent, highly effective whole school approach to the arrangements for planning learning and assessment throughout the school and nursery unit. The teachers' planning is very comprehensive and rigorous; it is well informed by thorough evaluation of the children's previous learning and the teachers' knowledge of their individual needs. Nearly all of the lessons observed were effective in promoting learning and approximately two-thirds of these were very effective. In the best practice, the teachers build very well on the children's interests and experiences; they make very skilful use of open-ended questions to develop the children's understanding, extend their learning and challenge their thinking. The classroom assistants play a valuable role in supporting well the children's learning.
- The children who require additional support with aspects of their learning are identified early and benefit from very effective intervention strategies. Additional provision either through in-class or withdrawal support is matched very well to the children's needs. The support is of a very high quality and has a positive impact on the children's learning, self-esteem and the standards they achieve.
- The teachers provide a stimulating learning environment for literacy which promotes the children's interest in reading and writing and develops their thinking skills. They integrate literacy very well within the World Around Us and across other areas of learning to ensure meaningful and engaging contexts for learning. The school has adopted a systematic and progressive approach to the development of the children's reading and writing and has implemented successfully a wide variety of highly effective teaching and learning strategies.
- The children in the nursery unit are very well settled. The staff provide an interesting, varied and progressive programme that takes account of the children's differing needs and interests.
- The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care in the school and the nursery unit is outstanding. The caring, inclusive ethos is underpinned by mutual respect and pride in the school. There are outstanding working relationships at all levels and all of the staff are clearly focussed on the holistic development of the children. A strong sense of community pervades the life and work of the school.
- The school and nursery unit give very good attention to promoting healthy eating and physical activity thereby encouraging the children to adopt healthy lifestyles.

7. Leadership and management

- The leadership and management of the school is highly effective, there is a shared vision for school improvement and clear strategic direction for future developments in the school and nursery unit. The principal is an outstanding role model who leads by example and empowers staff to lead their respective areas of responsibility. There is an embedded culture of self-evaluation in the school and nursery unit; all of the staff work very effectively as a team and have a clear focus on improving further the provision for the children and the standards they attain.
- School improvement planning is underpinned by rigorous self-evaluation and informed through extensive consultation with key stake-holders. The key priorities identified guide the development work explicitly in all areas, and at all levels throughout the school.
- There are very effective arrangements in place for communicating and consulting with parents to involve them appropriately in their children's education and the ongoing developments of the school and nursery unit. The meaningful links with other schools, external agencies and the community broaden the curriculum and enhance the children's learning.
- Based on the evidence presented at the time of inspection, ETI's evaluation is that there can be a high degree of confidence in the aspects of governance evaluated. It is clear that the governors have a well-developed strategic overview of the school and knowledge of the school's place within the community; they provide high levels of challenge and support to the work of the senior leadership team.
- 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 felt very secure in school and knew what to do if they had any concerns about their well-being.

8. Conclusion

In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by this school is outstanding; the quality of pastoral care is also outstanding. The school has demonstrated its capacity for sustained self-improvement.

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