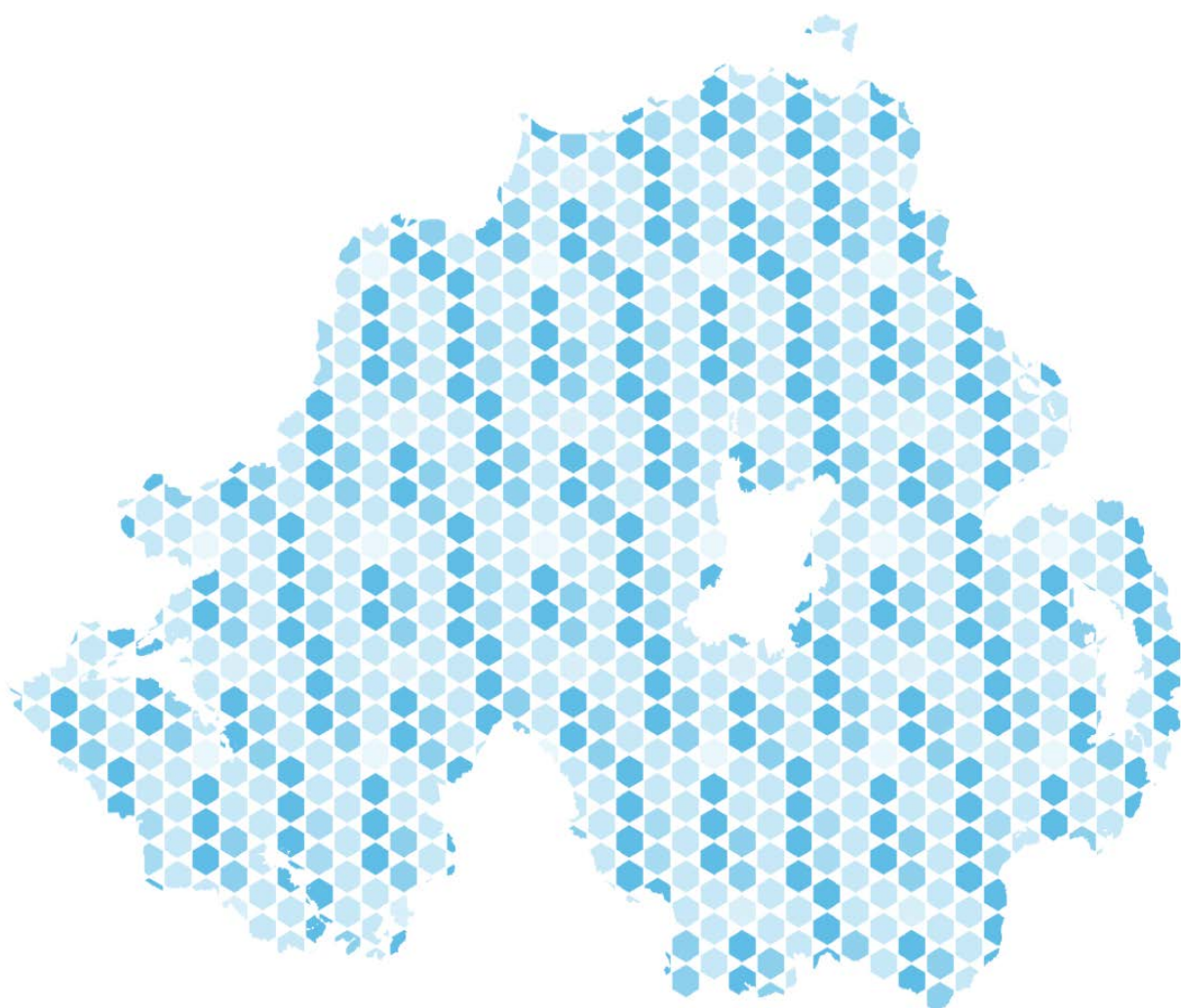


# PRIMARY INSPECTION 2014-15



Education and Training  
Inspectorate

Donemana Primary School,  
Strabane, Co Tyrone

Report of an Inspection in  
June 2015



*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  
SERVICE  
EXCELLENCE



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

A minority of the parents responded to the questionnaires and their responses indicated very high levels of satisfaction with the life and work of the school. In particular, the parents highlighted the kind and helpful staff, the high quality learning experiences provided for their children in a supportive and caring environment and the very good levels of communication. All of the teaching and non-teaching staff completed questionnaires and their responses were wholly positive. In particular, the staff emphasised the welcoming atmosphere, the strong collegiality of the staff and the caring ethos within the school. The ETI has reported to the principal and four representatives of the board of governors the responses 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 numeracy in the school; and
3. the quality of leadership and management.

## **3. Context**

Donemana Primary School is situated on the outskirts of the village of Donemana in County Tyrone. The children come from the village and the surrounding rural area. The percentage of children entitled to receive free school meals and those identified as requiring additional support with aspects of their learning have remained broadly stable over the past four years.

<b>Donemana Primary School</b>	<b>2011/12</b>	<b>2012/13</b>	<b>2013/14</b>	<b>2014/15</b>
Enrolment	90	88	86	97
% Attendance	96.8	96.5	97.3	96.7
FSME Percentage <sup>1</sup>	53	57	55	56
% of children on SEN register	21	34	26	32
No. of children with statements of educational needs	*	*	*	*

**Source:** data as held by the school.

\* fewer than 5

#### **4. Overall findings of the inspection**

<b>Overall Performance Level</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>Achievements and Standards</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>Provision</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>Leadership and Management</b>	<b>Good</b>

#### **5. Achievements and standards**

- Most of the children are confident and develop well a positive attitude to their learning. They interact respectfully with adults and visitors to the school and their behaviour during the inspection was very good. They work well independently and, when given the opportunity, can collaborate very effectively working in small groups.
- The school's performance data shows that most of the children, including those who require additional support with aspects of their learning, make good progress in English and mathematics in line with their ability or above expectation.
- By the end of the foundation stage, most of the children are able to count confidently, recognise basic shapes and talk about significant times on the clock. Across the school, the children are generally secure in their basic computation skills and can complete calculations with a good level of accuracy. By year 7, the more able children can use a range of mental mathematics strategies to solve problems but are less secure in the application of their mathematical knowledge to real-life contexts.
- Across the key stages, the children demonstrate confidence in using information and communication technology (ICT) for a range of purposes to support their learning; for example, the year 7 children have engaged recently in a project where they have built and programmed robotics models successfully.

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

## 6. Provision

- The teachers have reviewed recently the format for medium term planning; however, there is variation in the quality of the teachers' medium-term planning. In the best practice, the planning is detailed, the intended learning is identified clearly, tasks are appropriately differentiated to meet the needs of all of the children in the class and the assessment of the children's learning informs effectively the next steps in planning. The senior leadership team has identified, and is addressing, the need to review the long-term planning for numeracy to ensure that as the children make progress from foundation stage into key stage 1 and key stage 2 there is an appropriate balance of number and other areas of mathematics each term.
- The quality of the learning and teaching is good. In the most effective lessons, in less than one half of the lessons observed, the teachers use a range of well-chosen activities and resources to promote the children's enjoyment of and engagement in numeracy. Skilful questioning and well-planned plenary sessions, which use ICT effectively, extend the children's thinking. In the small number of less effective lessons observed, the work is not matched sufficiently well to cater for the wide range of abilities within the composite classes. All of the teachers mark the children's work regularly and supportively and, in the best practice, provide opportunities for the children to reflect on their learning and make improvements to their work.
- The children identified as having additional needs benefit from the good quality withdrawal sessions to support literacy and are supported well in class by the classroom assistants. The format of the children's education plans has been reviewed recently. It will be important that the staff include more sharply focused targets in order to monitor the effectiveness of the intervention strategies and track the children's progress.
- In the foundation stage, the children have the opportunity to develop their mathematical thinking across each of the areas within mathematics through the provision of stimulating activities in a well-resourced learning environment. This effective practice is not consistent and it will be important that it is disseminated further across each of the key stages. A recent whole-school focus on improving the children's mental skills is beginning to develop well the children's confidence when participating in class games. To develop further the children's competence in numeracy, the teachers need to provide more regular opportunities for the children to explain the mathematical reasoning behind their answers and to engage in practical problem-solving and investigations in authentic and relevant contexts.
- The quality of pastoral care is good. An inclusive and caring ethos in which the children's ideas and opinions are valued and acted upon permeates the school. The school council and Eco council are developing well the children's confidence and leadership skills. An important feature of the pastoral care is the very good work being done with children and their parents to promote the importance and value of education through, for example, the 'Family and Schools Together' programme and the Queen's University programme. Extensive after-school care and extra-curricular activities facilitate well the children and their families.

- The school gives good attention to promoting healthy eating and physical activity thereby encouraging the children to adopt healthy lifestyles. For example, the children have opportunities to use the school's garden areas to plant and grow vegetables.

## **7. Leadership and management**

- The leadership and management of the school is good. There is a well-established culture and ethos of collegiality within the school which is characterised by very good working relationships at all levels and effective team working across the school. The staff have a shared vision for providing a high quality education which values each child and ensures that the school motto, "*Be the best that you can be*" is central to the life and work of the school. The learning co-ordinators have been appointed in the last three years during which time they have accessed a range of appropriate training and professional development opportunities to develop their curriculum leadership.
- The school development plan sets out clearly a number of appropriate priorities for development. The teachers are beginning to use the school's internal data more effectively to identify strategic areas for improvement. They have identified appropriately the need to refine their action plans to focus more sharply on the learning and teaching strategies that may bring about improvement in the children's learning. It will be important for the learning co-ordinators to continue to monitor and evaluate robustly the impact of learning and teaching strategies on the standards the children attain.
- The staff place a high priority on promoting effective links with parents through very good channels of communication and by creating meaningful opportunities for the parents to be involved in their children's education, through, for example, the use of the 'Care Bear' and by commenting on work that has been sent home. The school has very good links with the local pre-school provider which supports well the children's transition into year 1.
- Based on the evidence presented at the time of the inspection there can be confidence in the aspects of governance evaluated. The board of governors were reconstituted at the beginning of the academic year and all of the school governors are newly appointed. In their short time in post they have been very proactive in accessing a wide range of relevant training on effective governance, recruitment and selection, child protection and finance. The governors have articulated clearly their intention to develop further their knowledge of and participation in the school development planning process.
- 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 reflect broadly the guidance issued by the Department of Education, although the following area needs to be addressed: the ratification and implementation of e-safety and health and safety policies. In discussions with the inspectors, the children reported that they felt very secure in school and know what to do if they have any concerns about their well-being.

- 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.

## **8. Conclusion**

In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by the 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.

The key areas for improvement are:

- to develop the role of the learning co-ordinators in monitoring and evaluating the quality of learning and teaching, and
- to develop a more strategic approach to raising further the children's standards across the ability range.

ETI will monitor, through district inspection activity, the school's progress on the areas for improvement.



## **APPENDIX**

### **Health and safety/accommodation**

1. There is a need to conduct a risk assessment of the school premises.

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