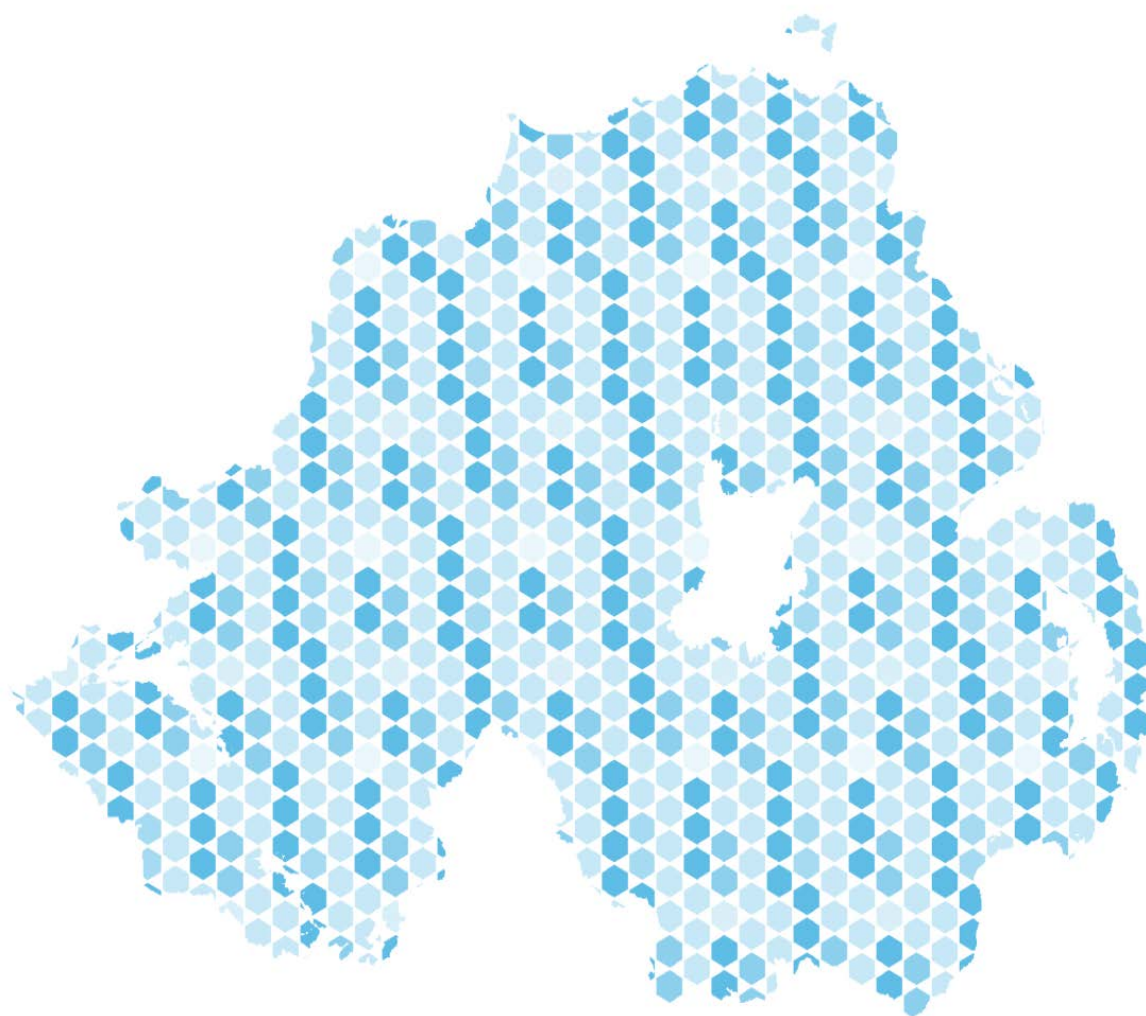


PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Fane Street Primary School
and Nursery Unit, Belfast

Report of an Inspection in
February 2014

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
SERVICE
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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.

Questionnaire	Number issued (total number in the school per category)	Number returned	Percentage returned	Number with comments
Parents	140	67	48%	9
Teaching staff	16	12	75%	6
Support staff	13	11	85%	*

* fewer than 5

The responses to the questionnaires indicated that almost all of the parents are happy with the experiences which their children have in school; the parents commented in particular about the friendly and professional staff and about the good progress their children are making in school. The responses from the staff questionnaires were very positive; most of the staff emphasised the excellent working relationships they enjoy, the many challenges they face due to the wide diversity of the school's enrolment, and the realistically high expectations they have for all of the children.

The small number of issues highlighted in the questionnaire returns were shared with the principal and the governors.

In discussions with the governors, they expressed their appreciation for the hard work and dedication of the principal and staff, and highlighted their confidence in the commitment and the ability of all of the staff to meet successfully the complex challenges presented by the very diverse school enrolment.

2. Context

Fane Street Primary School is situated in South Belfast. The school's enrolment has increased in the last three years, largely due to the number of newcomer families moving into the local area. Currently, over half of the school population is made up of newcomer children with 18 different native languages, almost all of whom arrive with no understanding

of the English language and about half of whom have no experience of any prior schooling in their home country. This trend in the school's enrolment looks set to continue. The nursery unit provides one full class for 26 children in their immediate pre-school year; approximately one third of the nursery children are learning English as a second language and 15% have been identified as requiring additional support with their learning.

FANE STREET Primary School and Nursery Unit	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
Enrolment	180	193	212	224
% Attendance (NI Average)	90.4%	91.8%	92.5%	93.9%
FSME Percentage ¹	38%	56%	65%	70.5%
% (No) of children on SEN register	52.2%	51.2%	42.1%	34.4%
No. of children with statements of educational needs	*	*	*	*
No. of newcomers	72	68	104	117

Source: data as held by the school.

*fewer than 5

3. 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 in the school and nursery unit; and
- the quality of leadership and management.

4. Overall finding

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

Key findings of the inspection

5. Achievements and standards

- Almost all of the children make very good progress in their learning and are motivated and enthusiastic about their work. When the tasks provided for them by their teachers are interesting and engaging, the children respond positively and demonstrate high levels of curiosity and perseverance. They work well independently and collaborate very well working in small groups and during playtime. The children are keen to learn, and are creative in their work.

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

- An analysis of the end of key stage (KS) 2 performance data in the past four years shows that in English and mathematics, the school's performance is consistently below the Northern Ireland (NI) average. Compared with the few schools in the same free school meals (FSM) category, the performance in English is consistently in the lower quartile; in mathematics, the performance is just below the median in two of the four years and in the lower quartile in the other two years. The school's internal performance data, however, indicates that the children, including those who require additional support with aspects of their learning, are making very good progress in line with their ability or above expectation; for a minority of the newcomer children, this progress has been outstanding.
- Most of the children in the nursery unit are making very good progress in developing their independence, self-management and social skills. They co-operate well with the daily routines and their behaviour is generally very good. Most are making very good progress in developing their levels of attention and concentration at their play activities.
- By year 7, most of the children, including the newcomer children, demonstrate good oral communication skills. They write well in the different styles and for a variety of purposes and enjoy reading. The most able year 7 children are able to discuss confidently the ideas in their reading materials, and use appropriate evidence to explain their opinions and conclusions. In mathematics, by the end of key stage (KS) 2, the most able children have a very good understanding of key concepts and demonstrate flexibility in their mathematical thinking.
- The children's achievements and standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are good.

6. Provision

- The teachers' long term planning ensures a broad and balanced programme of learning for the children. There are variations in the quality of the teachers' medium and short term planning. The very effective 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 evaluations of the children's learning inform effectively the next steps in the planning.
- The quality of the learning and teaching ranged from outstanding to inadequate; almost a half was of a very good or outstanding quality. In almost 40 % of the lessons observed, however, there were significant areas for improvement. The most effective practice was characterised by the skilful use of questioning by the staff to develop the children's thinking and to encourage more extended responses, and well-planned plenary sessions to consolidate the learning. The less effective teaching provided insufficient challenge to develop the learning for all of the children, and resulted in the disengagement of the children and disruptive behaviour. The principal has recognised the need to disseminate the outstanding teaching practice across all classes in the school.

- The children's work is marked regularly and positively and there are appropriate procedures for keeping the parents informed about their children's progress. In the best practice, the children are setting their own targets and evaluating their own learning, and the teachers are using peer and group assessment to track the children's progress and give effective feedback to the children to help improve their work.
- The provision for special educational needs in the school is good. The children identified as requiring additional help with their literacy and mathematics benefit from withdrawal sessions where they all make good progress; at times, this progress is very good. Individual education plans are written and evaluated effectively by the special education co-ordinator (SENCO) in collaboration with the teachers. The progress of the children is assessed well by the SENCO using an appropriate range of assessment materials. A recently established nurture group provides well-conceived support for a small group of children.
- The support for children who are newcomers is good and all of the children make good progress with their English, make friends and by the end of KS2 are able to participate well in class lessons. There is a well-planned induction programme for the children who have recently arrived in the school with little or no English spoken at home. In-class support in mathematics for the children in KS2 is very effective. The withdrawal sessions are effective for the majority; however, the KS2 withdrawal session groups need to have more effective differentiation, smaller groupings, and more clearly defined tasks linked well to year group work.
- The school has recently implemented a number of initiatives to improve further the standards in reading. The children were enthusiastic about reading and were able to discuss their preferences in relation to authors and characters. The teachers use an adapted linguistic phonics and spelling programme effectively to extend the children's spelling strategies and to enable them to write with greater independence and accuracy. In the best practice, the teachers take good account of the children's own experiences and cultural background and use these as opportunities for developing and widening the children's writing experiences across all areas of the curriculum. There is a need for the teachers to disseminate this good practice in order to develop the integration of literacy to support learning across the curriculum. Most of the children present their written work well.
- The quality of mathematics provision is very good. In most classes, the children's mental mathematics strategies are developing effectively and support well their learning in mathematics. The 'Maths Recovery' programme supports very well the children experiencing difficulties in developing their numeracy skills. The teachers need to develop further, in a progressive manner, opportunities for the children to use their mathematical skills through practical investigations and in everyday situations.
- The nursery unit staff provide a good range of interesting experiences for the children, laid out in distinct areas, for different types of play. All of the staff are skilful in developing settled and productive play; they engage at the child's level, listen to the children and encourage their language development. Overall, they exploit the learning very well as they engage with the children.

- The quality of the provision for pastoral care in the school is very good and creates an effective climate for learning. The school environment is nurturing and inclusive; all of the children are well settled and proud of the progress they make in their learning. The whole school community is highly committed to the welfare of the children and to achieving high standards. The children are almost all very well behaved and respectful of their teachers, each other and visitors to the school. The contribution of the support staff enhances further the development of each child. The children spoke of their enjoyment of learning, the opportunities they have to contribute to decision-making within the school through the school council and the wide range of extra-curricular activities available to them.
- The school gives very good attention to promoting healthy eating and physical activity thereby encouraging the children to adopt healthy lifestyles. During the year, the children have opportunities, for example, to use the school's garden areas to plant and grow fruit and vegetables.

7. Leadership and management

- The leadership of the principal is very good. He has a clear vision for the school, and provides very effective curricular and pastoral leadership. He is ably supported by the management team in the school with its focus on raising the children's attainment and continuing to develop the school in the community.
- The processes for self-evaluation in the school are good and are leading to improvement. A few of the current action plans, however, need to focus more sharply on the actions that will bring about improvement in the children's learning. The co-ordinators, in the best practice, provide effective leadership and make good use of internal data to inform individual planning; they monitor and evaluate effectively, and thus improve the quality of the provision, particularly for those children identified as underachieving.
- There are very good arrangements in place for communicating with parents and for involving them meaningfully in their children's education, through, for example, a very good choice of appropriate courses for parents. To enhance further the learning opportunities for the children, the school has established and continues to strengthen very good links with the local primary and post primary schools, with groups in the community and with a range of support agencies.
- Based on the evidence presented at the time of inspection, the parents, staff and school community can have a high degree of confidence in the aspects of governance evaluated; they use a range of skills to support the leadership of the school in relation to finance, standards and school improvement.
- On the basis of the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the school and nursery unit have comprehensive arrangements in place for safeguarding children. These arrangements reflect the guidance issued by the Department of Education. In discussions with the inspectors, the year 6 children reported that they feel secure in school and know what to do if they have any concerns about their safety and well-being.

8. Conclusion

In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by the school and nursery unit 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. These include the need: to disseminate the outstanding teaching practice across all classes in the school; for more effective differentiation in a minority of the withdrawal sessions; and for a sharper focus in a minority of the action plans. The Education and Training Inspectorate will monitor, through district inspection activity, the school's progress on the areas for improvement.

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