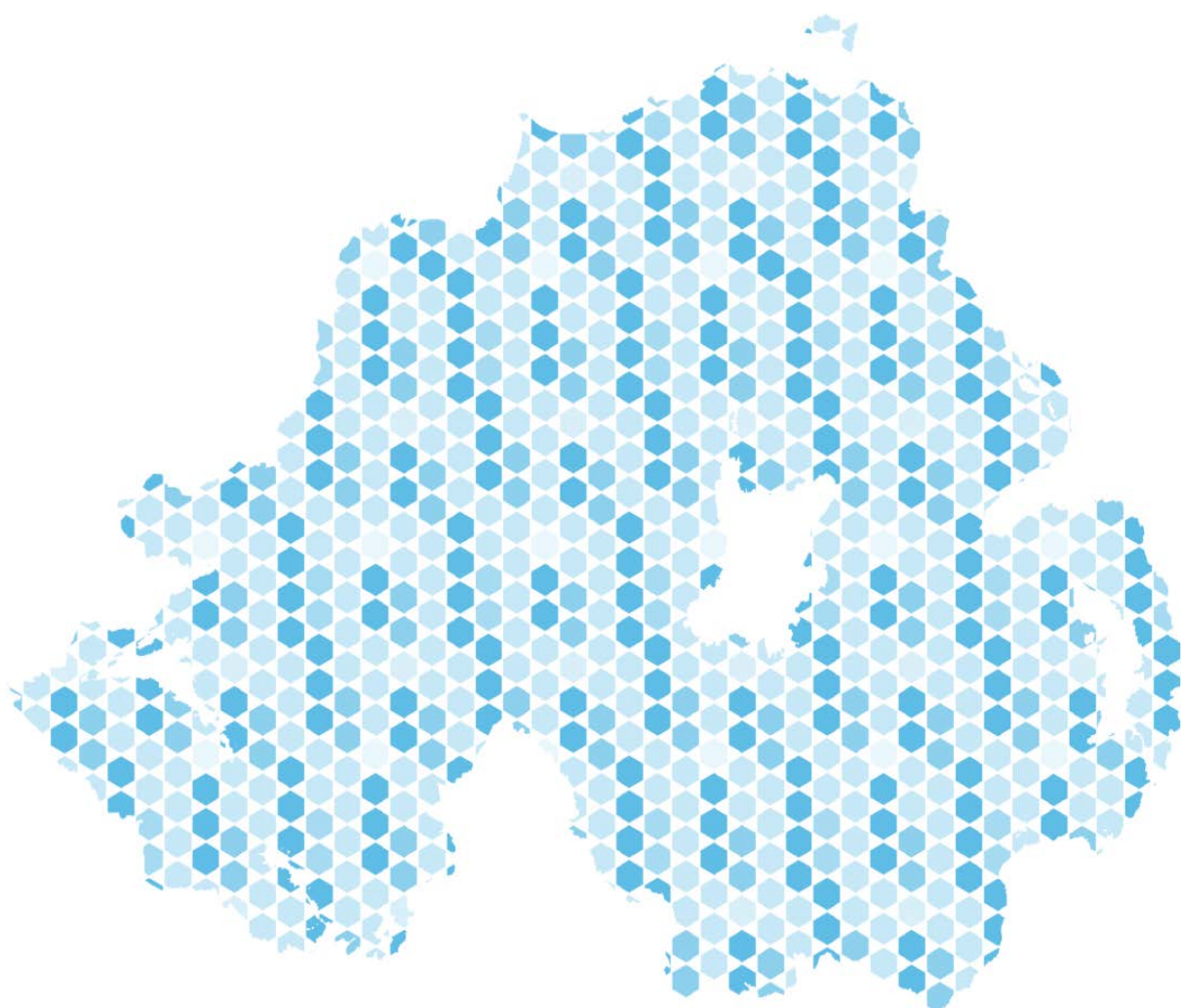


PRIMARY INSPECTION 2014-15



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Garvagh Primary School,
Coleraine, Co Londonderry

Report of an Inspection in
March 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.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 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.

Twenty-five percent of parents responded to the questionnaires and they indicated high levels of satisfaction with the life and work of the school. In particular, the parents highlighted the approachable, supportive and hardworking principal and staff. Almost all of the staff completed questionnaires and their responses were very positive. ETI has reported to the principal and a representative of the board of governors the outcomes of 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 and numeracy in the school; and
3. the quality of leadership and management.

3. Context

Garvagh Primary School is situated in the town of Garvagh, County Londonderry. Almost all of the children attending the school come from the immediate area. Over the past four years, the enrolment has steadily fallen and currently stands at 89 children. Approximately 26% of the children are entitled to free school meals and 19% of the children have been identified as requiring additional support with aspects of their learning.

Garvagh Primary School	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Enrolment	122	118	109	89
% Attendance (NI Average)	95.8	95.2	96.9	97.3
FSME Percentage ¹	23.8	24.6	24.8	25.8
% (No) of children on SEN register	13.9	12.7	12.8	19.1
No. of children with statements of educational needs	*	*	*	6
No. of newcomers	0	0	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

- Throughout the school, the children are very well-behaved and are keen to learn. They are respectful of their teachers, listen well in class and settle quickly to their learning tasks. When provided with stimulating and appropriately differentiated learning activities, the children engage actively in their learning and demonstrate independence and flexibility in their learning and thinking.
- The school's performance data indicates 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 year 7, the children read with fluency, expression and enjoyment and discuss their favourite novels and authors. The children's standard of writing is good; they write in different forms and for a variety of purposes. In the most effective practice, the children plan and redraft their work to improve the quality of their writing.
- The children are able to work systematically and check their work in numeracy lessons. By year 7, the most able children are secure in their knowledge of number facts and place value; they demonstrate a good working knowledge of key concepts across the areas of mathematics. They can handle competently simple and more complex computation activities and are confident in their mathematical thinking.
- In the best practice, the children use information and communication technology (ICT) well to enhance their learning; they use ICT to engage in meaningful research and to present their ideas for a variety of audiences.

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

6. Provision

- All of the teaching observed was effective. In the best practice, the lessons observed were stimulating and well structured. The teachers used the planning and assessment processes well to ensure there was a clear focus on the learning and provided appropriate support to scaffold effectively the progress of all the children. The teachers provided very good opportunities for open-ended collaborative work and used meaningful plenary sessions to consolidate the children's learning. The teachers all mark the children's work regularly with positive comments and, in the best practice, they provide clear indications of how the children can improve further the quality of their work. In the most effective practice, the children are given structured opportunities to evaluate constructively their own work and that of their peers.
- The school's literacy programme ensures good progression in the children's learning throughout the three key stages. A key feature of the literacy provision is the appropriate focus on the development of the children's reading skills. The school's reading programme is systematic and rigorous; the teachers use effectively the well-planned guided reading sessions to develop the children's fluency and understanding of reading. The use of reading support programmes, such as the Accelerated Reading course, develops well the children's confidence and enjoyment of reading. The writing programme provides good opportunities for the children to write in a variety of styles and for a range of purposes. In the foundation stage, the play-based activities facilitate the children with appropriate opportunities to write independently. To extend further the children's writing experiences, the teachers need to enable the children to write in meaningful contexts across the curriculum. Furthermore, there is a need to implement consistently the school's handwriting policy across all key stages.
- The mathematics programme is comprehensive, ensuring the progressive development of key skills and concepts across the key stages. In the best practice, the teachers make effective use of a range of practical materials, games and strategies to stimulate the children's mathematical curiosity and to challenge and reinforce their mathematical thinking. The children benefit from appropriately differentiated group work which enables them to work collaboratively and develop mathematical language and skills. The school has appropriately identified the need to provide further opportunities for the children to develop their investigative and problem solving skills and to use mathematics more widely across the curriculum and in real-life contexts.
- The children who require additional support with their learning are integrated well into the life of the school. Their needs are met effectively through the focused objectives contained in the children's individual education plans, well-planned withdrawal sessions and good quality support from the classroom assistants.
- The provision for pastoral care in the school is very good. It is characterised by a caring atmosphere and an appropriate sense of community. The teachers welcome the children every morning during a reception period before school, providing a calm, gently-paced start to the children's day, as well as an opportunity to communicate with parents. The children's development is fostered and their achievements recognised and celebrated through the school's positive behaviour management policy and rewards system. The school's house and 'Playground Buddy' systems provide opportunities for the key stage (KS) 2 children to undertake leadership roles and contribute positively to the school community.

- The school gives very good attention to promoting healthy eating and physical activity through, for example, the healthy eating policy and the after school cookery club provided for the children. The varied physical education programme, which includes the provision of games equipment for the children's use at break and lunch times, addresses well their interests, thereby encouraging the children to adopt healthy lifestyles.

7. Leadership and management

- The senior leadership team is highly committed to the well-being of the children and staff and to the ongoing improvement of the provision within the school. The senior leadership is well supported by the co-ordinators who have identified low and underachievement and have begun to put strategies in place to improve further the children's achievements and standards. It will be important that the roles are developed further to enable the senior leadership, co-ordinators and teachers to monitor and evaluate more rigorously the quality of the children's learning experiences and attainments.
- There is a comprehensive school development plan which identifies key priorities for school improvement. The associated action plans need to be more closely connected to the school development planning process and more focused on outcomes and on the learning needs of the children, in order to guide better the process of monitoring and evaluation. The school development planning process would benefit from more structured consultation with parents and children.
- The school has effective links with the parents who are well informed about their children's progress and the life and work of the school through, for example, the school website, informative school newsletters, parent-teacher meetings and the active parent teacher association. There are regular opportunities for the children to participate in cultural and sporting activities in the local and wider community. Recently, one of the classes has developed an effective ICT link with a local maintained primary school.
- Based on the evidence presented at the time of inspection, ETI's evaluation is that there can be confidence in the aspects of governance evaluated. The governors provide a challenge function in relation to achievements and standards, finance and the curriculum. There is an aspect of governance to review, namely, to ensure that the school development planning processes are informed by rigorous self-evaluation and consultation which is monitored and reviewed.
- 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. It will be important that the leadership team ensures that the newly reconstituted board of governors receives safeguarding awareness training as soon as possible and that the programme for personal development and mutual understanding (PDMU) is reviewed and implemented consistently across the school. 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.

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

The areas for improvement are:

- to develop a more rigorous approach to action-planning which is more closely linked to the school development planning process and clearly focused on outcomes and the learning needs of all the children; and
- the senior leadership, co-ordinators and teachers need to monitor and evaluate more rigorously the quality of the children's learning experiences and attainments.

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