

# PRIMARY INSPECTION 2014-15



Education and Training  
Inspectorate

Hezlett Primary School,  
Castlerock, Co Londonderry

Report of an Inspection in  
May 2015

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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.

Twenty-seven parents in total responded to the questionnaires with 15 providing additional written comments. Most of the responses indicated very high levels of satisfaction with the life and work of the school. In particular, the parents highlighted their appreciation of the pastoral care for the children, the welcoming ethos and the wide range of extra-curricular activities available for the children. All of the teaching staff who responded were very positive about almost all aspects of the life and work of the school. All of the support staff who responded were very positive in their evaluations. ETI reported to the principal and a representative of the board of governors the main points emerging from the questionnaires, including the concerns raised.

## **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 in literacy and numeracy in the school;;
3. the quality of leadership and management; and
4. the quality of the provision in the reception class.

## **3. Context**

Hezlett Primary School is situated in the village of Castlerock in County Londonderry. The children attending the school come from both the immediate and wider rural area. The enrolment has fluctuated in the primary school in recent years and now stands at 222 children with an additional 18 in the reception class. At the time of the inspection, approximately 25.4% of the children were entitled to free school meals and 15.4% of the children had been identified by the school as requiring additional support with aspects of their learning.

Hezlett Primary School	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Enrolment	240	223	225	240
% Attendance (NI Average)	95.0	95.4	95.4	95.8
FSME Percentage <sup>1</sup>	15.4	20.6	22.2	25.4
% (No) of children on SEN register	12.1	11.7	18.6	15.4
No. of children with statements of educational needs	6	8	6	6
No. of newcomers	*	*	*	*

**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

- The children engage enthusiastically in all aspects of their learning; almost all have high levels of independence and self-management and take pride in their work and achievements. They are friendly and courteous to each other, the staff and visitors to the school, and their behaviour is exemplary.
- The school's performance data shows that in the previous three years in English most of the children, achieve in line with their ability or above expectation. In mathematics, in two out of the three previous years, a majority of the children achieve in line with their ability or above expectation. The data available includes all of the children including those children who require additional support with their learning.
- The quality of the children's talking and listening, reading and writing is of a consistently high standard across the school. The children talk enthusiastically, confidently and articulately about their learning and work well in pairs and groups, competently taking on different roles. The children develop systematically their literacy skills as they progress through the school; they enjoy reading fiction and non-fiction and they show enthusiasm for, and knowledge of, a range of authors. There is evidence that most of the children who are identified as underachieving are benefiting from the specific provision to address their individual need. As a result, the children are growing in confidence and show an ability to apply their learning in a range of contexts.

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

- A majority of the children are making good progress in their understanding and application of mathematics across the curriculum. They are developing positive attitudes to this key curricular area and are secure in recognising how their mathematics is relevant to a broad range of real life contexts. They use increasingly accurate mathematical language to describe and explain their thinking and develop their own creative approaches to problem solving and investigations as they progress through the school. The staff have identified, through their own internal data, the need to raise further the standards in numeracy and there are early indications of a decrease in areas of underachievement.
- The reception children are well settled and almost all are developing well their social skills and listen well during group story sessions. They collaborate well during role play and, when provided with appropriate opportunities, most children can concentrate for a sustained period. The children need more extended opportunities for investigation, to be creative and to initiate and develop their own ideas, language and learning.
- The children enjoy and make effective use of a range of information and communication technology (ICT) devices and software to extend and express their learning across the curriculum. Across the school, the children can confidently use ICT to record and present their work to a high standard and use the internet safely and effectively to research information for topics.

## **6. Provision**

- The teachers' planning is used to guide the work in classes and is evaluated regularly to take account of individual and group responses and to inform future learning and teaching. There is a need for the teachers' planning to identify clearly the approaches used to differentiate the learning in order to reflect the full range of abilities in the class and, in particular, to provide greater challenge for the more able children. The planning for play-based learning needs to be developed to identify the learning to be promoted in all areas of play and to outline the challenge and progression in the activities provided for the children.
- The quality of the teaching is generally of a very high standard. In a majority of the lessons observed, the teachers used a wide range of strategies to promote high levels of interest and engagement. The lessons were well paced and the children have opportunities to work in pairs and groups. The teachers used questions and plenary sessions very well to extend the children's thinking and consolidate the learning. The children in the reception class engaged well with the adults and enjoyed the opportunities provided for energetic physical play, role play, exploring sand and water activities and participating in group songs and stories.
- There has been an appropriate focus on both reading and writing in recent years and this has led to a meaningful integration of literacy across all areas of the curriculum. The carefully considered literacy programme gives the children exposure to a wide variety of writing experiences. The children are provided with an appropriately broad range of opportunities to develop their understanding, skills and application of mathematics. Mental mathematics sessions are used regularly to consolidate learning, practice mental calculations and develop flexibility in the children's thinking. Key strengths of the mathematics provision

includes the effective integration of mathematics across the curriculum, the teachers' use of key language and effective questioning and the children's developing ability to work in groups to investigate problems. In order to raise standards further, the younger children would benefit from more planned opportunities to use mathematical language in their play based learning and daily routines.

- The teachers have a growing confidence to identify opportunities for the use of ICT and regularly build this into their planning. As a result, ICT is integrated well into classroom and play activities to support and extend the children's learning.
- While the teachers use annual assessments to evaluate the children's learning there is a need to make use of all available assessment tools and to analyse the data more thoroughly to provide clearer direction for teaching and learning across the school. The teachers mark the children's work regularly and, in the best practice, give the children precise guidance on how to develop their work further. There is a need for this best practice to be embedded further and monitored across the school.
- The children who require additional help with their learning benefit from the highly inclusive ethos of the school, working confidently alongside their peers. The children who have barriers to learning are identified at an early stage, and tailored support is put in place to address their individual needs. Throughout the school, a team of teachers and classroom assistants make a valuable contribution to the children's learning through an appropriate blend of in-class and withdrawal sessions. While the recent changes to the individual education plans encourage greater involvement of the children in contributing to and evaluating their targets, more specific, time-limited and measureable targets are needed to provide clearer direction for future learning and teaching. In addition, further assessment and tracking are required that take greater account of the responses of children to specific interventions.
- The learning environments in the school are presented attractively; across the school, the children's work is celebrated and features prominently in classroom and corridor displays. The school makes good use of the available resources and have appropriately identified where resources need to be developed further.
- The quality of the provision for pastoral care in the primary school is very good. This is evident in the inclusive, child and community-centred ethos which permeates all aspects of the school's provision. The children's social and emotional development is supported well, and their achievements recognised and celebrated by a positive behaviour policy and a comprehensive rewards system. In discussions with the inspectors, the children highlighted, very positively, many aspects of school life, including the activities of the recently established school council and the ECO-council.
- The school promotes actively healthy eating and physical activity, through the effective implementation of a healthy eating policy and a wide range of curricular and extra-curricular activities including the weekly 'walking school bus.'

## **7. Leadership and management**

- The pastoral leadership team promote a collegial approach to school improvement. The school development plan, which is used to guide aspects of the work of the school, has come to the end of the cycle. It will be important for the school to use the outcomes of the inspection to guide the new cycle of development planning. The new action plans need to be more specific than the previous ones in identifying the baseline position, setting measurable targets and outlining the appropriate actions to be taken in bringing about improvement. Staff meetings and staff development days are well planned and used effectively to build capacity throughout the school.
- The co-ordinators provide appropriate guidance to their colleagues in their specialist areas. They have identified appropriately the need to develop further their approach to monitoring and evaluating the quality of provision. The teachers use data from standardised tests and their own evaluations of the children's performance in literacy and numeracy to set whole school and class targets.
- The school values the role the parents play in the education of their children. Effective methods are in place for communicating with the parents, for example, regular newsletters, the school website, and planned opportunities are provided throughout the year, or may be arranged, for them to discuss their children's progress or other matters. The Parent Teacher Association plays an active role in the life and work of the school and has raised significant funds to enhance the educational provision and experiences for the children.
- 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 contribute to the life and work of the school and are supportive of the staff and the principal.
- 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 year 6 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 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 key areas for improvement identified are:**

- the need to develop further the planning and provision for play-based learning in the reception class and across the foundation stage; and
- the need to identify clearer approaches to differentiate the learning in order to reflect the full range of abilities in the classes.



**Health and safety/Accommodation**

The senior management, the board of governors and the employing authority need to carry out an internal and external health and safety risk assessment of the school and address the areas identified for improvement as discussed at the time of the inspection. They are:

- no close circuit television;
- inadequate perimeter fencing around the school;
- unsafe access to the playground from two roadsides;
- three classroom floor coverings need replaced;
- inappropriate handrails on stairwells;
- two external doors leading to the playgroup need replacing due to the physical condition and safety concerns; and
- acoustic adaptations required in two classrooms.

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