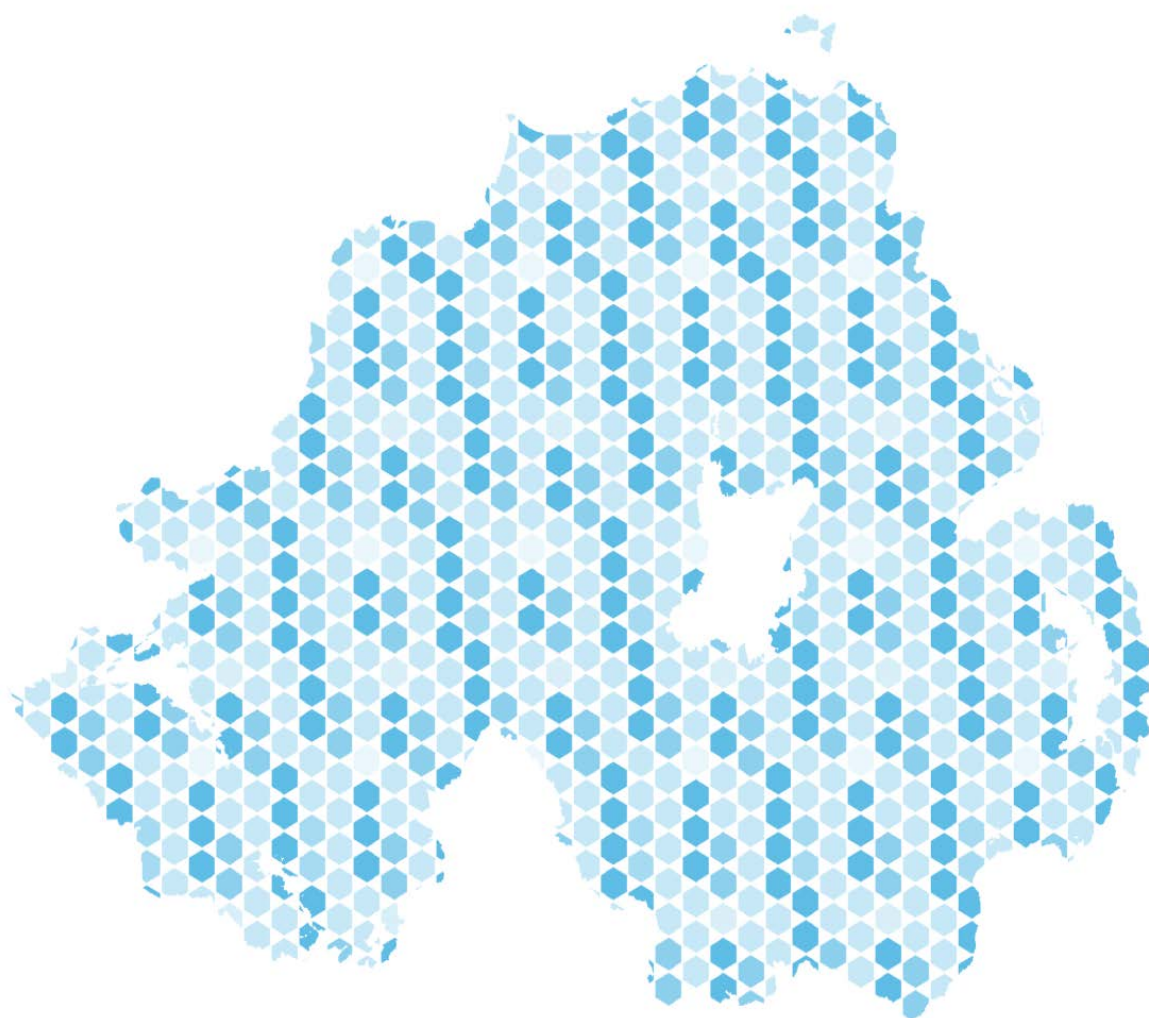


PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Holy Family Primary School,
Omagh, Co Tyrone

Report of an Inspection in
January 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
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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 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	282	71	25%	34
Teaching staff	16	13	81%	7
Support staff	20	*	*	*

* fewer than 5

Almost all of the responses to the parental questionnaires¹ and all of the responses from the teachers and support staff were highly affirmative about the work of the school. They emphasised, in particular, the happy and contented children and the care and professionalism shown by the principal and the staff, particularly during the amalgamation process. In addition to the questionnaire responses, a group of parents met with the inspectors; all of the views expressed were highly positive about the work of the school.

2. Context

In September 2012, Loreto Convent Girls' and St Comcille's Boys' Primary Schools were amalgamated to form the new Holy Family co-educational Primary School in the parish of Drumragh, situated in the town of Omagh, County Tyrone. The new school is operated on a junior and senior split site arrangement and occupies the sites of the previous schools. The principal was appointed in January 2012 as part of the preparation for the amalgamation; there are 388 children enrolled in the school which includes 38 children, who have not reached the statutory school age and are enrolled in the reception class. At the time of the inspection, 32% of the children were entitled to free school meals and 25% of the children were identified as requiring help with aspects of their learning.

¹ The Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) is trialling a range of methods for collecting the views of parents about the life and work of the school. As a result, the response rate to the parental questionnaire may be low.

Holy Family Primary School	2012/13	2013/14
Enrolment	381	388
% Attendance (NI Average)	93.9% (94.7%)	N/A
FSME Percentage ²	28.49%	31.7%
% (No) of children on SEN register	21.36%	25.25%
No. of children with statements of educational needs	3	7
No. of newcomers	42	27

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
- the quality of leadership and management.

4. Overall finding

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

Key findings of the inspection

5. Achievements and standards

- The children are very welcoming, well motivated and their behaviour is exemplary. They engage very effectively with one another in small groups and when working in pairs. The children enjoy engaging in discussions and in challenging class activities during which they demonstrate very well their ability to think flexibly and complete investigations. They listen attentively to one another and re-organise their thinking and ideas in response to the contributions from their peers.

² The term 'FSME Percentage' refers to the percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals.

- The school's internal performance data³ shows that most of the children, including those children with special educational needs make very good progress in English and mathematics in line with their ability or above expectation.
- In literacy, the children enjoy reading a wide range of fiction and non-fiction books; they read with fluency, expression and understanding. Most of the children are confident in sharing their ideas, can justify their opinions and can communicate well, particularly when reviewing collaboratively their learning with one another. By the end of key stage (KS) 2, most of the children's written work reflects a breadth of writing styles and they are able to express their feelings and appropriate responses to a variety of audiences.
- In numeracy, the children respond enthusiastically and are developing a positive attitude to their mathematics activities. By the end of key stage (KS) 2, the most able children show a very good knowledge and understanding of key concepts across the mathematics curriculum. They can apply a range of strategies, explain their thinking using appropriate mathematics vocabulary and self-correct confidently. A particular strength of the children's attainment is their quick recall, accuracy of calculations and flexible thinking during the daily mental mathematics sessions.
- The children with special educational needs achieve very well. The close monitoring of progress and very good early intervention enables the children to become more independent and confident as they progress through KS1. By the end of KS2, they demonstrate very good levels of progress in literacy and numeracy, show increasing self-confidence and are secure and happy in their classes. The overall progress of the children with special educational needs is carefully monitored alongside their peers with a sound reference to their individual challenges and needs.
- The children in the reception provision are developing appropriately friendships and good social skills; they are settled and beginning to develop concentration and purposeful play.
- The children achieve very good standards in their use of information and communication technology (ICT). By the end of KS2, all of the children entered, achieve the expected level in the Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA), accreditation and enjoy using ICT in their learning.

6. Provision

- The school places a high priority on the development of numeracy and literacy. The teachers plan in detail for the children's work, including identifying appropriately well connected opportunities to apply their knowledge and skills to relevant real-life contexts. There are well planned opportunities for the children to make use of the extensive range of resources including ICT to support their learning. In mathematics, the foci on mental mathematics and on developing the children's understanding of processes through problem solving and investigative activities are having a positive impact on the learning and teaching throughout the school. In literacy, the key strengths of the provision are the emphasis on

³ Due to the current transition period in the arrangements for statutory assessment and the recent amalgamation of the school, this analysis includes only internal data.

oral language development and the teaching of phonics to support effective reading and writing skills. The children's very good communication skills were evident during a public performance at the time of the inspection, wherein the children demonstrated their talent and ability to perform, play a range of musical instruments and sing with a high level of confidence, competence and skill.

- Almost all of the teaching observed ranged from good to outstanding; two-thirds of which was very good or outstanding. The teachers set appropriately high expectations and use well-focused and effective questions to engage the children fully in their learning and ensure they become increasingly confident and independent learners. The lessons are paced well with good opportunities provided for active learning through well differentiated group and paired work. Nearly all of the teachers use assessment for learning strategies very effectively in daily class teaching which helps the children to reflect on and improve their work. The classroom assistants provide valuable support to the teachers and children.
- The planning for special educational needs is integrated well across the school and the teachers use the detailed information provided by the special educational needs co-ordinators (SENCOs) to guide their classroom practice. The individual education plans are relevant and provide effective guidance for classroom practice. Those children receiving withdrawal support in literacy and numeracy benefit from the lively, imaginative and well-paced teaching which is targeted skilfully at areas requiring help. The SENCOs ensure that close contact is kept with the Western Education and Library Board services including, for example, the educational psychology and autism spectrum disorders (ASD) support, which can extend and develop provision in the school.
- In the reception provision, there are instances of effective interaction between the adults and the children that sustain concentrated play. The planning and assessment methods need to focus more clearly on the individual ages and stages of development and how the children's experiences progress and develop throughout the year.
- The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care in the school is outstanding. The provision is characterised by the wholly inclusive ethos in both school sites, where the education and welfare of each individual child is paramount, and by the strong sense of mutual respect which helps to develop each child spiritually, emotionally, socially and academically. The children's work and achievements are celebrated regularly across the sites, in the classrooms, in the corridors and in the assemblies.
- The school gives very good attention to promoting healthy lifestyles through the curriculum topics and the good emphasis placed on healthy eating and the importance of physical exercise.

7. Leadership and management

- In a relatively short period, the members of the newly formed school leadership team, under the highly effective strategic leadership of the principal, have worked with great energy and commitment to facilitate, in a well-paced and pragmatic way, the amalgamation process. A particular feature of the new school has been the development of a distinct nurturing and child-centred ethos which is evident in the children's learning experiences, on a daily basis.

- The co-ordinators, under the leadership of the two vice-principals, have worked collegially and diligently to review and merge the policy and practice of learning and teaching following the amalgamation. They have well-established roles and develop effectively their areas of responsibility throughout the school.
- There is culture of open communication and professional respect amongst staff, which provides a firm foundation for the rigorous self-evaluation of the school's work. The self-evaluation process, which is underpinned by the effective analysis of relevant quantitative and qualitative information, informs reliably the development planning process and is used well to monitor and improve the school's provision. The school development plan⁴ which is central to the work of the school is supported by a systematic process of high quality action planning which ensures the continuous monitoring of the progress made towards the implementation of the school's strategic objectives. A key feature of the plan is the high quality consultation processes used to audit the views of the parents, children, governors, staff and the local community and inform further the school's priorities for development. Furthermore, the school has identified appropriately the need to establish good quality pre-school education and are taking forward a development proposal to transform the reception setting to a nursery unit.
- There are highly effective procedures in place to keep parents informed about their children's progress. The parents receive regular newsletters and information about school events and there are regular opportunities for parents to meet both formally and informally with the teachers to discuss their child's progress. There is a very active and supportive parent teacher association, which raises funds to provide additional learning resources. The wide range of extra-curricular experiences provided by the school enhance the quality of the overall learning experiences and contribute significantly to the children's personal and all-round development.
- The governors carry out their associated challenge function very well, adopt a strategic and proactive role in the school development planning process, and support the principal and teachers effectively in raising further the educational performance for all of the children. Based on the evidence presented at the time of the inspection, the parents, staff and school community can have a high degree of confidence in the aspects of governance evaluated.
- 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 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 very good. The school is meeting very effectively the educational and pastoral needs of the learners; and has demonstrated its capacity for sustained self-improvement.

⁴ The school development plan meets the requirements of the School Development Planning Regulations (NI) 2010.

APPENDIX

Health and safety/Accommodation

- There are no lifts provided on either site to support wheelchair access.

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