

PRIMARY INSPECTION 2014-15



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Kilmaine Primary School,
Bangor, Co Down

Report of an Inspection in
April 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
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 a representative from the governors;
- a meeting with a group of children; and
- the opportunity for the parents, teaching and support staff to complete a confidential questionnaire.

Thirty-seven of the parents and a majority of the staff, teaching and non-teaching, responded to the questionnaires. The responses to the parental questionnaires indicated very high levels of satisfaction with the life and work of the school and nursery unit. In particular, the parents highlighted their appreciation of the welcoming atmosphere of the school, the support offered to parents and the range of after-school activities. The staff responses were very positive; they emphasised the dedicated and conscientious staff, and the well-resourced school. The ETI has reported the results of the questionnaire, including any comments, to the acting principal and the representative of the governors.

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

Kilmaine Primary School is situated on Lyndale Drive, in Bangor, and has a wide catchment area. The enrolment is currently 613 with an additional 55 children attending the nursery unit. There is currently an acting principal and an acting vice-principal managing the school. The school has an extensive network of outdoor play areas and equipment to accommodate all the key stages. The nursery unit is located in the grounds of the primary school; it operates two part-time sessions. The morning session has a temporary increased enrolment for the current academic year and there are an increasing number of children with a wide range of additional needs.

Kilmaine Primary School and Nursery Unit	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Enrolment	615	618	615	613
Enrolment in the nursery unit	52	52	53	55
% Attendance (NI Average)	96.9%	96.5%	96.8%	96.9%
FSME Percentage ¹	9%	13%	11%	12%
% (No) of children on SEN register	12%	13%	13%	13%
No. of children with statements of educational needs	*	*	9	16
No. of newcomers	*	*	*	*

Source: data as held by the school.

* fewer than 5

4. Overall findings of the inspection

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

5. Achievements and standards

- The behaviour of the children around the school is exemplary; they are courteous, kind and mature in their engagement with each other and with adults. In lessons, they demonstrate positive dispositions for learning; they are highly-motivated, work well independently or in collaboration with their peers and take pride in their work.
- The school's performance data shows that most of the children, including those who require additional support with aspects of their learning, make very good progress in mathematics and English in line with their ability or above expectation.
- Throughout the school, the children talk confidently about their learning and share willingly their views with their teachers and peers. In discussion with the children, they expressed an enjoyment of reading and spoke knowledgeably about a wide range of books. Across the key stages, the children are able to write in different forms and for a variety of purposes; in key stage (KS) 2 the children have very good opportunities to write in a range of contexts, however, they would benefit from more opportunities for extended creative writing. A notable strength of the school is the quality of the children's handwriting and the presentation of their work.

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

- In mathematics, the children apply their thinking skills maturely to enable them to make choices and decisions in their mathematical learning and to explain the calculation strategies they are using. By year 7, the most able children are secure in their knowledge of number facts and place value, and demonstrate a very good working knowledge of key concepts across the areas of mathematics.
- In the nursery unit, most of the children are making good to very good progress in most areas of the pre-school curriculum. In particular, the children are developing well their oral language, listening skills and their understanding of early mathematical concepts and the use of associated language. They are also developing very well their social skills and display positive attitudes and dispositions to learning. Their imaginative, exploratory and creative play is less well developed for the time of year.
- The children demonstrate high levels of competence in information and communication technology (ICT) and there are many displays of their skilful work throughout the school.

6. Provision

- In the most effective practice, the lessons are informed by clear evaluation of the children's previous learning, the teachers incorporate active learning strategies and differentiate appropriately. The teachers use a range of qualitative and quantitative data and in-class support by the special educational needs co-ordinator, (SENCO), to set targets, and celebrate the children's attainments.
- The provision for the children who require additional support with aspects of their learning is very good. The school prioritises the early identification of need and liaises effectively with the parents and a wide range of education and health professionals to agree on, and facilitate appropriate support. Effective individual education plans outline measurable targets and they are thoroughly monitored and evaluated to plan for progression. The children, who have wide-ranging barriers to their learning, are supported skilfully both in class and in withdrawal sessions by the teachers, SENCO and classroom assistants.
- The school's programme for language and literacy, in the foundation stage and KS1, is of a very high quality and outlines progression in talking and listening, reading and writing. A key strength of the school's provision is the well-planned guided reading programme where children develop effectively their fluency and enjoyment of reading using a wide range of banded reading books, class novels, guided reading activities and visits to the local library. In a significant minority of the upper KS2 classes, the children spend too much time on de-contextualised grammar and comprehension exercises; the staff need to provide the children with more opportunities for independent, creative writing across the curriculum.
- The whole school programme for mathematics is comprehensive, provides broad and balanced coverage across the areas of mathematics, and outlines clear progression in the mathematical concepts. A key feature of the numeracy provision is the portfolio of applied tasks that extends the children's thinking, and creates opportunities for them to apply their mathematical learning in everyday contexts. Across the key stages, well-focused mental mathematical activities are used as an introduction to lessons to consolidate the children's previous learning and to promote their use of the associated mathematical language. In the most effective practice, the teachers use a range of practical resources, including the use of ICT, to engage the children's mathematical curiosity and to deepen their mathematical understanding.

- The nursery unit's staff plan conscientiously to provide a wide range of interesting experiences for the children with a particular focus on the development of the children's language, fine motor skills and early mathematical experiences. The children's use of the outdoor area for a broader range of learning is a particular strength of the provision. The staff are caring and supportive and, in the best practice, they listen to the children and build effectively on their ideas to extend their thinking and learning naturally through the play activities. The staff's observations of the children's responses to the play activities are well used to identify and inform the excellent support provided for individual children with additional needs and to keep the parents informed of their children's progress. The staff have identified appropriately the need to take further account of individual children's needs when planning the play programme. The quality of the provision for pastoral care in the school is outstanding. It is characterised by an inclusive and respectful ethos and there is a consistent promotion of positive behaviour throughout the school. The children's learning is enriched by the use of well-conceived creative and sporting events and their involvement in raising funds for children less fortunate than themselves. The extended curriculum broadens the children's experiences and development, and regular opportunities are used to celebrate their success in a wide range of extra-curricular events. The highly effective school council allows the children to develop their understanding of democracy through debate and decision-making roles.
- The school and nursery unit give very good attention to promoting healthy eating and physical activity which encourages the children to adopt healthy lifestyles.

7. Leadership and management

- The acting principal and acting vice-principal manage an effective leadership team with an appropriate focus on the development of key curriculum areas, and understanding and using data to improve the children's learning and attainments. A comprehensive and appropriate school development plan has been produced from wide ranging consultation. There is a need for the leadership team, working with middle management, to evaluate a greater range of first-hand evidence to assess the provision and disseminate the best practice for learning and teaching.
- Curricular responsibilities have been re-organised recently for key co-ordinators. The co-ordinators are knowledgeable about their areas of responsibility and there is a newly established emphasis on a team-approach for each of the key curriculum areas, with members of the teams monitoring and evaluating practice from the year groups in which they teach. The leadership team has identified appropriately the need to build further the capacity of the co-ordinators to lead and develop their areas of responsibility including the nursery unit.
- Based on the evidence presented at the time of inspection, the ETI's evaluation is that there can be a high degree of confidence in the aspects of governance evaluated. The governors provide rigorous scrutiny of the school development plan, policies and school finance, and provide an appropriate challenge function for the senior management team.

- 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 safe in school and know what to do if they have any concerns about their well-being.

8. Conclusion

In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by this school and nursery unit is very good. The school and nursery unit are meeting very effectively the educational and pastoral needs of the children; and has demonstrated its capacity for sustained self-improvement.

Health and safety

- There is a need to repair the water ingress from the school roof into the ICT suite and the assembly hall where the wooden floor has been damaged.

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