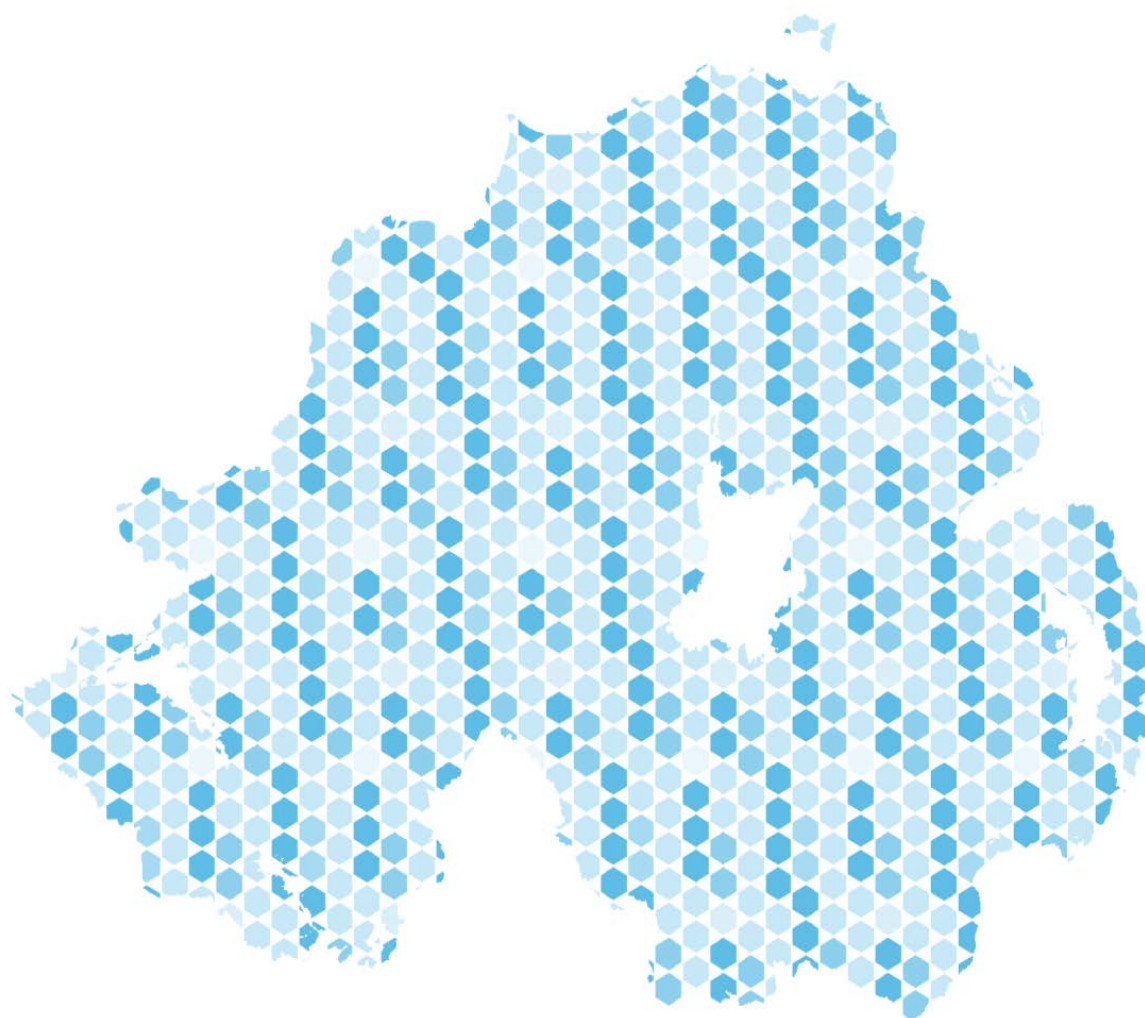


PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

King's Park Primary School and
Nursery Unit, Lurgan,
Co Armagh

Report of an Inspection
in October 2013

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.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 | Number returned | Percentage returned | Number with comments |
|----------------|---------------|-----------------|---------------------|----------------------|
| Parents | 472 | 48 | 10% | 22 |
| Teaching staff | 31 | 27 | 87% | 10 |
| Support staff | 40 | 10 | 25% | * |

* fewer than 5

ETI is trialling a range of methods for collecting the views of parents/carers about the life and work of the school. As a result, the response rate to the parent/carer questionnaires may be low.

The responses to the parental questionnaires indicated very high levels of satisfaction with the life and work of the school. In particular, the parents highlighted their appreciation of the dedicated staff and the approachable and supportive leadership of the principal. Almost all of the teachers and the support staff completed questionnaires and their responses were very positive.

2. Context

King's Park Primary School is situated in the town of Lurgan, County Armagh. Almost all of the children attending the school come from Lurgan and the surrounding rural area. The enrolment has increased significantly over the last four years and currently stands at 598 children in the primary school and 80 children in the nursery unit. At the time of the inspection, approximately 25% of the children were entitled to free school meals (FSM) and approximately 21% of the children had been identified by the school as requiring additional support with aspects of their learning.

| King's Park Primary School and Nursery Unit | 2010/11 | 2011/12 | 2012/13 | 2013/14 |
|--|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Enrolment | 605 | 627 | 653 | 678 |
| % Attendance | 94.7% | 95.8% | 95.48% | - |
| FSME Percentage ¹ | 14.38% | 18.18% | 23.12% | 24.9% |
| % of children on SEN register | 14.5% | 21% | 17% | 21% |
| No. of children with statements of educational needs | 12 | 15 | 14 | 20 |
| No. of newcomers | 28 | 35 | 47 | 59 |

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 | Very Good |
| Nursery Unit | Very Good |

Key findings of the inspection

5. Achievements and standards

- The children in the school are well-motivated learners; they display high levels of independence and maturity and their behaviour is very good. They respond positively to the learning opportunities provided by their teachers and they demonstrate very good personal and social skills. The children work collaboratively in pairs and groups; they are able to make decisions, think creatively and manage their own learning.

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 three of the last four years* shows that in English and mathematics the school's performance is above the Northern Ireland (NI) average. Compared with schools in the same free school meals category (FSM), the levels of attainment are above or in line with the average. The school's internal performance data shows that by the end of key stage (KS) 2, almost all of the children make very good progress in English and achieve in line with their ability, or above expectation. In mathematics, the majority of the children make very good progress and achieve in line with their ability, or above expectation. The children who require additional support with their learning make very good progress.
- The standards achieved in literacy, by almost all of the children, are outstanding. Across the curriculum, the children's talking and listening skills are very well developed and most of the children display high levels of confidence when sharing their ideas and opinions. Throughout the school, the children's ability to express their creativity in a wide variety of extended written forms is well developed; the most able children produce writing of a very high standard. By the end of year 7, the children read with fluency, understanding, and display high levels of interest in reading for enjoyment.
- The standards achieved in numeracy, by the majority of the children, are very good. Across the key stages, the children show a high level of engagement and enthusiasm during practical mathematical activities. By the end of year 7, they demonstrate very good understanding and recall of number facts and operations and of important concepts across the mathematics curriculum.
- At this early stage in the year, the children in the nursery unit are making very good progress in all areas of the pre-school programme. The particular strengths are the children's ability to engage in settled and productive play and their adaptability to the various routines of the nursery. Most of the children show good levels of independence, they readily join in play with others and can talk to the staff about their work and learning experiences.
- The children use information and communication technology (ICT) confidently and appropriately and their standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are good.

6. Provision

- The teachers' planning is comprehensive and rigorous; it is well informed by thorough evaluation of the children's previous learning and the teachers' knowledge of their individual needs. The quality of the teaching observed ranged from satisfactory to outstanding; a majority was very good or better. In the best practice, learning and teaching is well planned, meets effectively the range of individual needs within the classroom and has good pace, challenge and progression. The teachers make skilful use of questioning to develop the children's thinking and oral responses and ICT are an integral part of the learning.

* Due to the current transition period in the arrangements for statutory assessment, this analysis of the end of KS2 performance data is based on the outcomes up to but not including the 2012/13 school year.

- The teachers employ a wide range of assessment approaches to evaluate the children's learning. They use the performance data discerningly, together with classroom observations to inform the teaching and challenge further the children's learning. Marking is regular and consistent and, in the best practice, the teachers provide effective feedback to the children both orally and written in their books. This feedback, together with the children's self and peer assessment, enables them to reflect on, and manage, their own learning.
- The school has developed a rigorous and coherent approach to the development of literacy skills which facilitates progression and ensures that all aspects of literacy are taught in a connected way, using an appropriate range of strategies. The teachers use very well a blend of interactive approaches, including drama and role-play strategies, both to stimulate the children's interest and to broaden their thinking and vocabulary. Play-based learning provides valuable opportunities to develop the children's early literacy skills.
- The comprehensive programme for mathematics provides clear guidance for the class teachers to plan effectively for a balanced coverage of the curriculum. In the best practice, the teachers build on the children's prior knowledge and understanding and make very good use of the connected learning topics to give the children opportunities to use and apply their mathematics across the curriculum and in real life-situations.
- The quality of the provision for the children who require additional support with their learning is outstanding. The children's needs are identified early through classroom observation and the analysis of appropriate performance data. The children benefit from a well-planned, collaborative programme which is provided through in-class support and the excellent withdrawal sessions for literacy and numeracy. The classroom assistants make a good contribution to the children's learning.
- The nursery unit staff plan and provide an interesting and progressively challenging pre-school programme that meets effectively the needs of all of the children. They are caring and supportive in their approach and the quality of their interaction with the children is consistently of a high standard.
- The quality of the provision for pastoral care is outstanding. Throughout the school and nursery unit, the quality of the working relationships is excellent. The holistic development of each child is central to the work of the school; it is a nurturing, inclusive, safe and secure environment. The children have very good opportunities to contribute to decision-making in the school, for example, through the school council.
- The school gives very good attention to promoting healthy eating and physical activity, through an excellent range of extra-curricular sporting activities and programmes to encourage the children to adopt healthy lifestyles.

7. Leadership and management

- The leadership and management of the school has a clear vision which focuses sharply on improving learning and teaching, on raising standards and on the pastoral development of the whole-school community. The principal has been in post for fourteen years; he leads very effectively by example and inspires confidence and respect among staff, pupils, governors and the wider school community. He has established a collaborative approach to decision making. The co-ordinators provide very good curricular leadership; they monitor and evaluate the quality of work and provide appropriate guidance to their colleagues.
- The teacher-in-charge of the nursery unit has adopted a collaborative approach to the work in the unit and she is developing a self-evaluative approach to the review of the provision.
- The school has a well-developed culture of self-evaluation. There is a comprehensive school development plan (SDP) which is informed by the school's monitoring and evaluation processes, including an efficient use of performance data and teacher observation. A particular strength of the school development plan (SDP) is the consideration given to the views of all stakeholders. The associated action plans have an appropriate focus on improving further the provision for the children and raising the standards they attain.
- 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, monthly newsletters and the informative school website. To enhance further the learning opportunities for the children, the school has established very good links with a range of other schools, with people in the community and with various external 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; the governors are very well informed about the school and carry out effectively their support and challenge functions.
- 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 feel secure 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 is very good; the quality of pastoral care is outstanding. The school has demonstrated its capacity for sustained self-improvement.

Health and safety

- At the start and end of the school day, there is traffic congestion outside the rear entrance to the school.
- The mobile classroom isolated from the main school building does not have controlled access.
- There is no entrance buzzer on the external front door of the nursery unit.
- The internal electronic exit switch to the nursery unit is at an inappropriate level.

Accommodation

- The flat roof of the assembly hall leaks during periods of heavy rain.
- The school library is currently being used as a classroom.

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