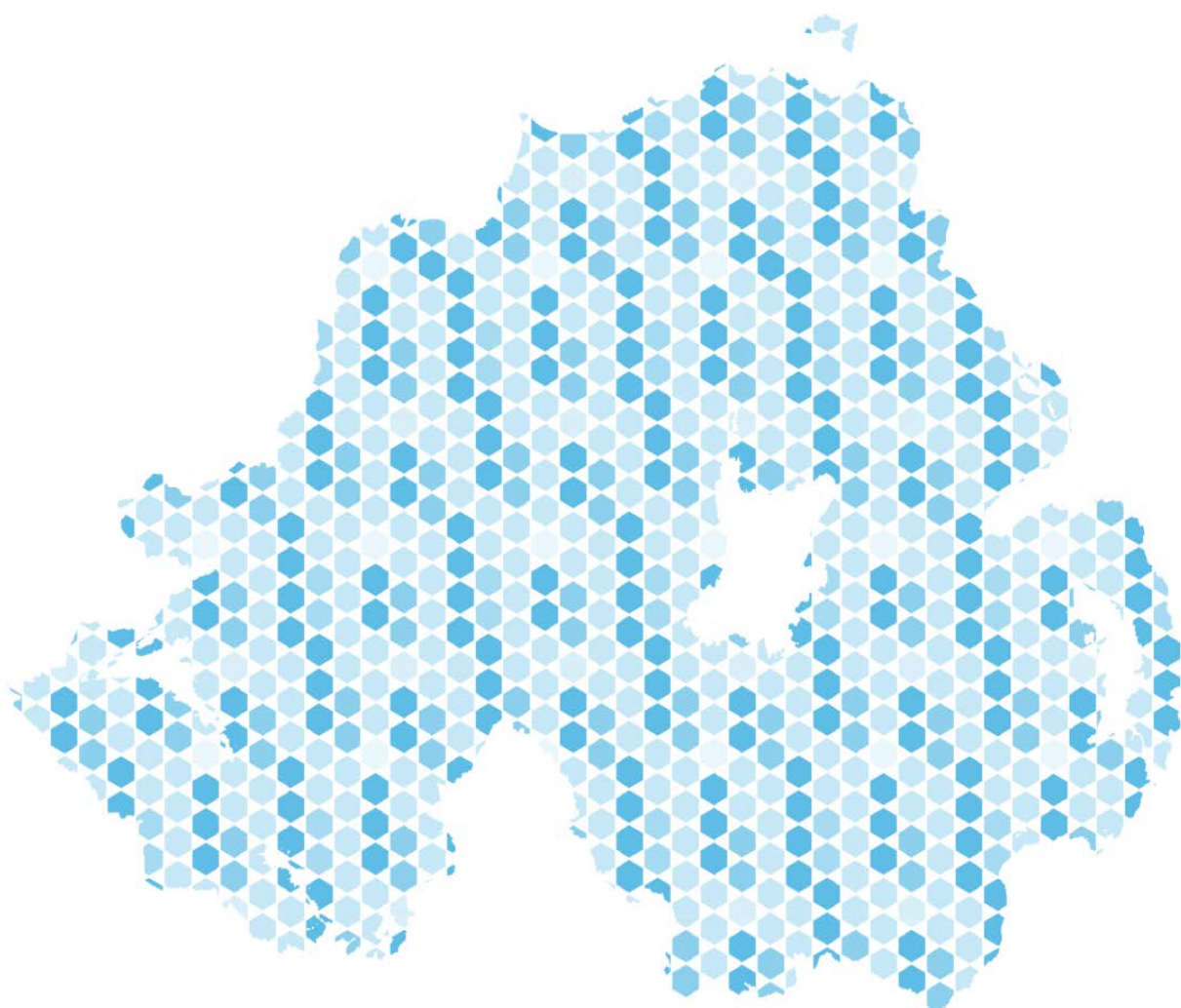


# PRIMARY INSPECTION 2014-15



Education and Training  
Inspectorate

Lack Primary School,  
Enniskillen, Co Fermanagh

Report of an Inspection in  
February 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  
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

# Contents

<b>Section</b>	<b>Page</b>
1. Inspection method and evidence base	1
2. Focus of inspection	1
3. Context	1
4. Overall findings of the inspection	2
5. Achievements and standards	2
6. Provision	3
7. Leadership and management	4
8. Conclusion	5
Appendix	

## **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.

Forty-one percent of parents and eighty percent of staff (teaching and non-teaching) responded to the questionnaires. The responses to the parental questionnaires indicated high levels of satisfaction with the life and work of the school. In particular, the parents commented on the supportive and encouraging staff and the positive working relationships throughout the school. Most of the staff completed questionnaires and their responses were wholly positive; they highlighted the recent curriculum developments and reported that every member of the school community feels valued. In discussions with the governors, they expressed their full appreciation for the hard work and dedication of the staff and principal. ETI has reported to the principal and two representatives of the board of governors the main findings emerging from the questionnaires and the discussions.

## **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 in the school including the reception class; and
3. the quality of leadership and management.

## **3. Context**

Lack Primary School is situated in a small rural village in County Fermanagh. The enrolment of the school has increased slightly over the past four years and, at the time of the inspection, was sixty-two children, including a significant increase to seven children in a reception class. All of the children come from the local surrounding rural area. At present, two staff share the role of teaching-principal; one for one day per week and the other, appointed in June 2014, for the remaining four days per week. There is currently one temporary teacher employed on a long-term basis. The school participates actively in a shared education programme with two local primary schools.

Lack Primary School	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Enrolment	50	49	56	62
% Attendance (NI Average)	94.6	96.0	95.6	96.8
FSME Percentage <sup>1</sup>	28	36.73	41.07	38.71
% (No) of children on SEN register	24	28.57	33.9	29
No. of children with statements of educational needs	*	*	*	7
No. of newcomers	0	0	0	0

**Source:** data as held by the school.

\* fewer than 5

#### 4. Overall findings of the inspection

<b>Overall Performance Level</b>	<b>Satisfactory</b>
<b>Achievements and Standards</b>	<b>Satisfactory</b>
<b>Provision</b>	<b>Satisfactory</b>
<b>Leadership and Management</b>	<b>Satisfactory</b>

#### 5. Achievements and standards

- A majority of the children are enthusiastic and motivated to learn; they engage purposefully in their learning, are independent and collaborate well in paired and group work activities. Across the school, there are too few opportunities for the children to develop their thinking and problem solving skills.
- The school's performance data shows that a majority 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. Over the last three years, a minority of the children have underachieved in English and mathematics. The children who attend the withdrawal sessions in literacy and numeracy make steady improvement in their learning.
- By year 7, most of the children read proficiently and are benefiting from the school's recent review of reading materials. They have good talking and listening skills and listen attentively to their teachers and their peers. The school has identified, in line with the inspection findings, the need to improve the writing standards of a minority of the children.
- The children use a range of information and communication technology (ICT) devices and software competently to support their learning across the curriculum.
- In the reception class, the majority of the children engage in purposeful play. To meet the requirements of the pre-school curriculum, the teacher needs to employ strategies which enable the children to sustain their play for longer periods and provide additional resources to encourage the children to extend their concentration and independence.

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

## 6. Provision

- The teachers have recently adopted a two- weekly planning cycle and initial evaluations are positive. Going forward, the planning needs to focus more sharply on progression in the children's learning determined by the children's ability within a composite class.
- In the effective lessons observed, the teachers' planning reflected the abilities and interests of the children within their classes and there were very good working relationships. The learning activities were varied and challenging and the children had opportunities to articulate their thinking, propose solutions and assess the work of their peers. In the less effective lessons, a minority of the children were not sufficiently motivated and completed minimal amounts of work. The differentiated learning activities in the composite classes were too often influenced by age and not by ability. The teachers need to improve the level of challenge for the more able children across the curriculum.
- The special educational needs provision is being reviewed by the recently appointed special educational needs co-ordinator. The targets in the individual educational plans are personalised and the associated learning and teaching strategies are appropriate. It is timely that the teachers have begun to monitor the impact of the intervention strategies in place for literacy and numeracy.
- The school is reviewing the literacy programme to develop a greater breadth of learning experiences through thematic units of work which engage the children actively in their learning. The school's self-evaluation process has identified the need to monitor and evaluate the impact of these approaches in order to track the individual progress of the children to improve further the standards in English.
- The reception class provides satisfactory opportunities for learning across the pre-school curriculum. To improve the provision, the learning activities and resources need to engage the children more, particularly the boys. It will be important for the teacher to identify the learning inherent in all of the activities and routines, and to review aspects of how the sessions are organised to ensure that all of the time is used more effectively for learning.
- The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care is good. The school has a welcoming and child-centred ethos. The staff work well together in the interests of the children and the governors and the parents are becoming increasingly involved in the life and work of the school. The children's achievements and contributions are celebrated through a range of rewards which they understand and value. The links with other schools are used well to develop the children's mutual understanding of other backgrounds and faiths.
- The school gives good attention to promoting healthy eating at break- and lunch-times and through their thematic units of work. The children have access to good opportunities for physical activity that includes the regular timetabled sessions during the school day, the use of 'Active Communities Coaching' and the after-school sport clubs.

## **7. Leadership and management**

- The recently appointed principal has been effective in establishing an inclusive ethos where the governors, the parents and the staff are working together to improve the children's learning experiences and the standards that they attain.
- The self-evaluation process to promote improvement, including the analysis and use of performance data, is satisfactory. While the school development plan and associated action plans focus appropriately on improving learning and teaching, they do not focus sufficiently on raising the children's levels of attainment. It is timely that the school has identified a need to improve strategic leadership at all levels. This will be a key area in effecting whole school continuous improvement.
- There are effective procedures in place to inform parents of their children's progress and how they might support their children's learning. The school liaises suitably with a range of educational, health and statutory agencies in order to support individual children. An active parents' association contributes positively to school life through a range of social and fundraising events. The children have benefitted from the additional learning resources which have been purchased from the significant funds raised by the parents.
- The school participates in a cluster of local primary schools as part of the 'North Fermanagh Learning Together' group. The principals meet regularly to discuss relevant educational developments including shared education programmes relating to science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). In addition, the teachers come together to moderate samples of work and share staff development days.
- Based on the evidence presented at the time of inspection, the ETI's evaluation is that there can be confidence in the aspects of governance evaluated. The governors are very supportive of the work of the school. They carry out their role supportively, based on the information provided to them. To develop further the governance of the school, the co-ordinators need to provide them with more specific information and evaluation in relation to key curriculum developments that includes the procedures for monitoring and evaluating the quality of learning and teaching, the outcomes from the analysis and use of the school's performance data and the standards the children attain in English and mathematics.
- The years 6 and 7 children spoke confidently and happily about their experiences in school. In particular, they value the caring and approachable principal and teachers, the 'Golden Time' each week and the rewards for good effort, progress and behaviour. The children reported that they know who to speak to if they have any concerns about their safety or well-being. 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 but the school needs to carry out an appropriate risk assessment of the visits by members of the local community during the school day.

- 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, including the arrangements for the reception children in order to address the current and future needs of the children and the staff.

## **8. Conclusion**

In most of the areas inspected, the quality of education provided in this school is satisfactory; the strengths outweigh areas for improvement in the provision. The inspection has identified areas for improvement in standards, learning and teaching and leadership and management which need to be addressed if the needs of all the children are to be met more effectively.

The key areas for improvement identified are:

- the need for the co-ordinators to analyse more rigorously the available performance data to inform the school development plan, to track the children's progress more effectively and to ensure that all of the children are achieving in line with their ability;
- the need for the leadership and management to develop a more systematic approach to self-evaluation and planning for improvement in which targets are more sharply focused on improving standards and ensure that all lessons provide the appropriate breadth of learning and challenge; and
- the need to develop further the provision for play-based learning in the reception class.

The Education and Training Inspectorate will monitor and report on the school's progress in addressing the areas for improvement over a 12-24 month period.



**Health and safety**

1. The playground is not secure; the school governors, staff and the Western Education and Library Board (WELB) need to carry out an urgent risk assessment of access arrangements to the school building and grounds.

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