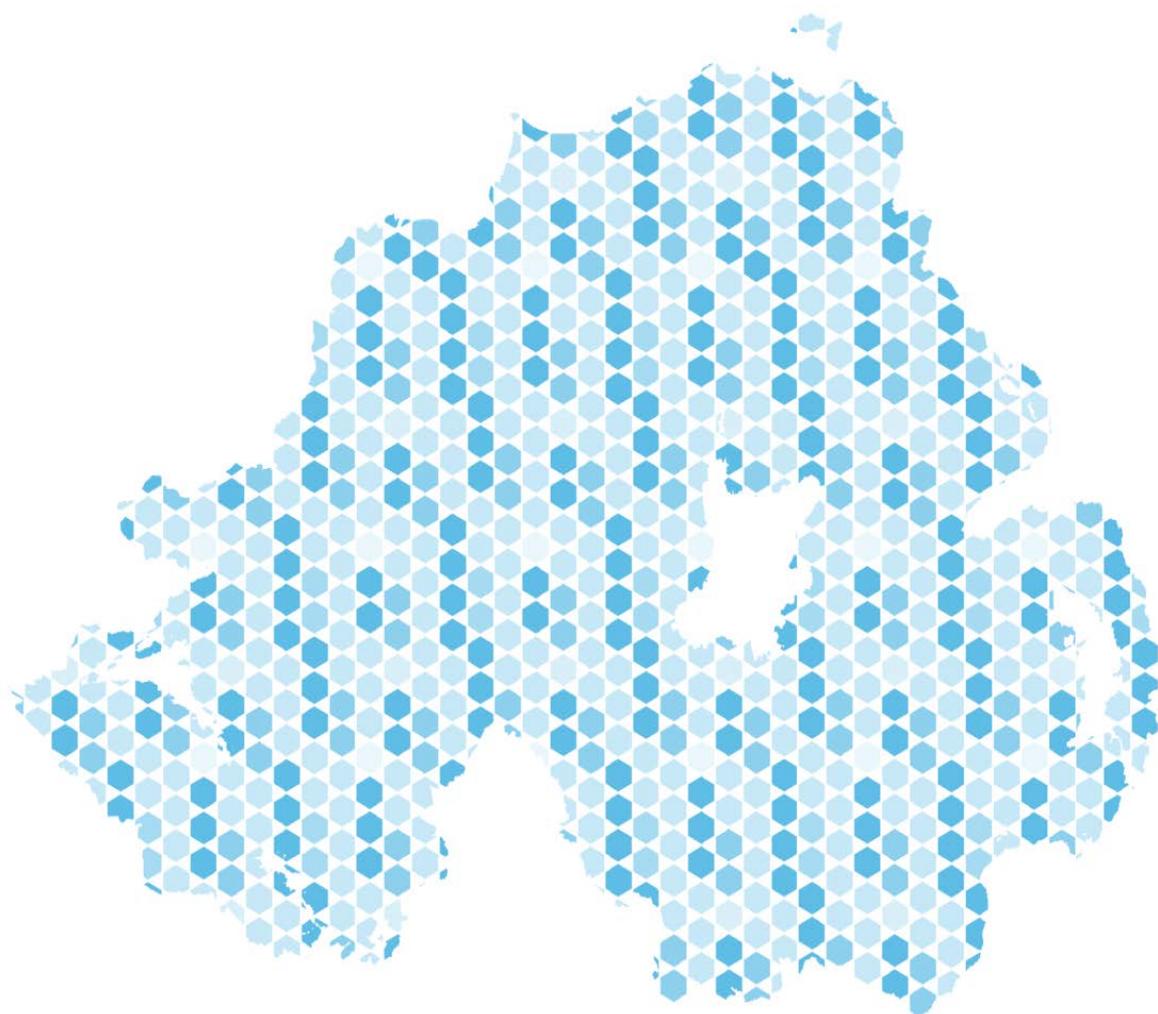


# PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training  
Inspectorate

McKinney Primary School and  
Nursery Unit, Dundrod,  
Co Antrim

Report of an Inspection in  
March 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  
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. Context	1
3. Focus of inspection	2
4. Overall finding	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.

Questionnaire	Number issued (total number in the school per category)	Number returned	Percentage returned	Number with comments
Parents	89	5	5.6%	*
Nursery	18	*	5.5%	*
Teaching staff	8	7	87.5%	*
Support staff	15	*	26.6%	*

\* fewer than 5

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.

The responses to the parental questionnaires indicated high levels of satisfaction with the life and work of the school. In particular, the parents' written responses emphasised the quality of the teaching and pastoral care within the school, the leadership of the principal and the strong family ethos.

The responses from the teachers emphasised the involvement of the children in the decision making process and the support received by colleagues but would appreciate more opportunities to extend further their professional development and their respective areas of responsibility. The support staff appreciate the professionalism and commitment of the teaching staff. A small number of concerns raised in the questionnaires were discussed with the principal and the board of governors.

## 2. Context

McKinney Primary School and nursery unit is situated in Dundrod village in County Antrim. It is a rural school that draws its children from the village and a surrounding radius of ten miles. The enrolment has increased in recent years and now stands at 147 in addition to 26 nursery children. Just over 16% of the children are entitled to free school meals.

<b>McKinney Primary School</b>	<b>2010/11</b>	<b>2011/12</b>	<b>2012/13</b>	<b>2013/14</b>
Enrolment	116	111	121	131
% Attendance (NI Average)	95.4%	95.9%	95.9%	94.9%
%Attendance for those children on the SEN Register	96.04%	93.26%	95.62%	95.2%
FSME Percentage <sup>1</sup>	4.31%	6.31%	11.57%	16.79%
% (No) of children on SEN register	36.2%	34.23%	33.88%	27.48%
No. of children with statements of educational needs	4	2	4	3
No. of newcomers	0	0	0	0

**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 nursery unit; and
- the quality of leadership and management.

### 4. Overall finding

<b>Overall Performance Level</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>Achievements and Standards</b>	<b>Very good</b>
<b>Provision</b>	<b>Very good</b>
<b>Leadership and Management</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>Nursery Unit</b>	<b>Satisfactory</b>

### Key findings of the inspection

#### 5. Achievements and standards

- The children are proud of their school, their standards of behaviour are excellent and they are respectful and confident. They are well motivated and almost all of them display a positive disposition to their learning. The children enjoy engaging in discussions and reflect well on their learning at the end of their lessons. They work well independently and collaboratively; the paired and small group work is a developing strength of the school.

<sup>1</sup> 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 shows that, in three of the past four years<sup>2</sup> the school's performance in English and mathematics is consistently above the Northern Ireland (NI) average. Compared with schools in the same free school meals (FSM) category, the performance in English and mathematics is above or in line with the average. The school's internal performance data shows that most children, including those who require additional support with aspects of their learning, make very good progress in English and mathematics in line with their ability or above expectation.
- The children who display difficulties with aspects of their learning achieve well and reach standards of which they are capable. The school, through the analysis of its own assessment data, is able to demonstrate the good progress being made by the children.
- The children achieve very good standards in mathematics and numeracy. By year 7, most of the children can use a range of strategies to answer questions. They have a good knowledge and understanding of key concepts which they apply, in meaningful contexts and across the mathematical curriculum. Most of the children are articulate and speak confidently about aspects of their learning. The children's ability to express their creativity in a wide variety of extended written forms is well-developed as they progress into year 7. By the end of KS2, the children read fluently and while they enjoy reading they would benefit from a wider range of more challenging texts.
- The children in the nursery unit are all well-settled and engage enthusiastically in their learning. The majority of the children play well collaboratively and have good language and communication skills. They enjoy listening to stories and join enthusiastically in songs and rhymes. The children have good levels of independence; however the routines of the nursery could be developed further to ensure that there are greater opportunities for the children to make choices and develop their own ideas.
- The children confidently employ a wide range of information and communication technology (ICT) skills to research, present and enhance their learning.

## 6. Provision

- The teachers plan a broad and balanced curriculum; a key strength of which is the well connected teaching of literacy and numeracy through a topic based approach. This is further enhanced through the innovative use of the eco schools award to maximise the learning opportunities and experiences for the children in a meaningful real-life context. In the best practice, the teachers plan effectively to meet the needs of all children including the most able; it will be important for this good practice to be disseminated across the school. The teachers mark the children's work regularly and include supportive comments; in the most effective practice, the children are given clear guidance on how to improve aspects of their work. The school has identified appropriately the need to develop a more consistent approach to assessment in order to inform future planning and classroom practice.

---

<sup>2</sup> 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.

- All of the teaching observed ranged from good to outstanding; a quarter of the teaching was outstanding. In the most effective practice, the learning and teaching is well structured, activities are matched to the needs of the children and the teachers use questions skilfully to develop their thinking and encourage more extended responses. The teachers make creative use of ICT to stimulate and motivate the children in their learning.
- The children who require additional support with aspects of their learning are identified early through both classroom observations and the analysis of the school's internal performance data. The individual education plans reflect an in-depth knowledge of each child and the strategies employed are appropriately matched to the needs of each child. The school has appropriately identified the need to provide additional withdrawal support for the children in literacy and numeracy, to ensure greater consistency throughout the school and to improve standards further.
- The nursery unit provides satisfactory opportunities for learning across most of the areas of the pre-school curriculum. In the most effective practice, the adult interactions with the children develop well the children's oral language, listening skills and their personal, social and emotional development. There is a need for the staff to ensure that the activities are not overly adult-directed and that they make more effective use of every opportunity to develop the children's early mathematical language and their thinking and problem solving skills.
- The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care in the school including the nursery unit is very good. This is evident in the very good working relationships at all levels, the whole school celebration of the children's learning and their achievements, the recent developments to enrich the quality of the learning experiences outdoors, and the very strong family and community ethos developed in the school. The support staff make a good contribution to the life and work of the school. The school is appropriately developing further the parental and community links to support the children's well-being, safety and learning.
- The school gives very good attention to promoting healthy eating and physical activity thereby encouraging the children to adopt healthy lifestyles.

## **7. Leadership and management**

- The principal and lead co-ordinators have a shared understanding of school improvement and are sharply focused on improving the learning and teaching in the school. They provide a clear direction for achieving high quality education for all of the children. The principal has high expectations of the staff and the children, and there is a growing sense of collegiality among the staff through the recently established curricular teams. The co-ordinators work diligently and provide effective leadership in their respective areas.
- There is a developing culture of self-evaluation amongst the curriculum teams within the primary school. The school development plan and associated action plans reflect the priorities identified through the self-evaluation process to review aspects of the provision.

- 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 the 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. During discussions with the inspectors, the year 6 and 7 children reported that they enjoy the opportunities provided by the eco programme to have a say in matters that affect them, they feel secure in school and know what to do if they have any concerns about their well-being. They enjoy the wide range of extra-curricular activities available and the good support provided by the teachers.

## **8. Conclusion**

In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by the 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.

### **Nursery unit conclusion**

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

The areas for improvement include the need to:

- improve the quality of the adult interactions in exploiting fully the learning opportunities for the children in all areas of the curriculum; and
- review and develop further the methods of planning, assessment and evaluation to meet more effectively the needs of the children.

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

## APPENDIX

### Health and safety/Accommodation

- The enrolment of the school has steadily increased over recent years, this trend is set to continue. As the maximum capacity is reached it will be important that the school monitors the situation and the potential impact on the existing accommodation.
- There is currently no office for the principal, suitable area for working with small groups of children or meeting with parents where confidential information is being discussed.

© CROWN COPYRIGHT 2014

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part, except for commercial purposes or in connection with a prospectus or advertisement, provided that the source and date thereof are stated.

Copies of this report are available on the ETI website: [www.etini.gov.uk](http://www.etini.gov.uk)

