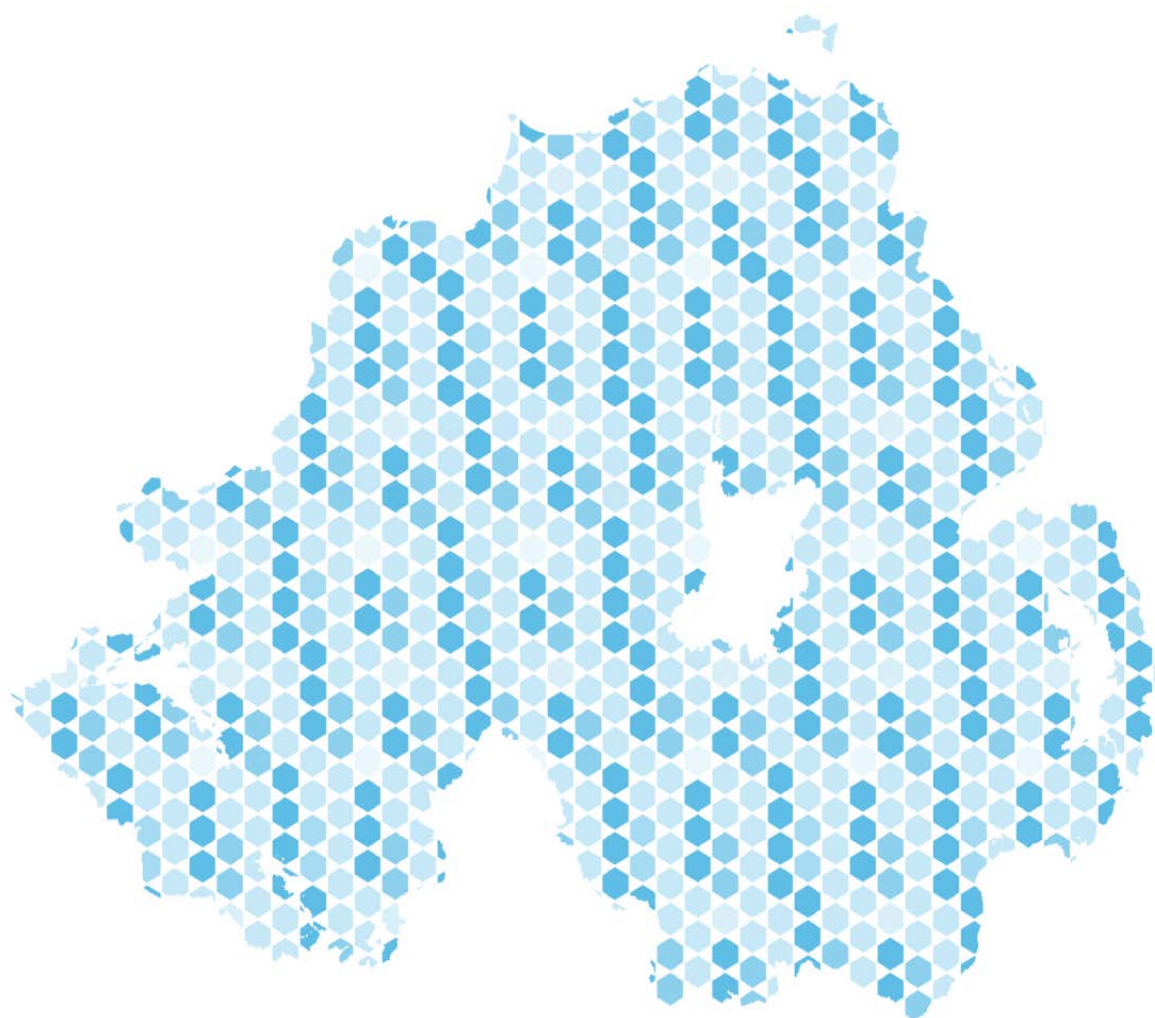


PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Moorfields Primary School,
Ballymena

Report of an Inspection
in September 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
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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 Inspectorate's 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, parents and staff with specific responsibilities.

The arrangements for this inspection included:

- meeting with representatives from the governors;
- meeting with a group of parents;
- 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	129	19	15%	13
Teachers	7	7	100%	0
Support staff	9	*	*	0

* fewer than 5

The ETI is trialling a range of methods to collect the views of parents/carers and, as a result, the response rate may be low.

The very positive responses from the parental questionnaires indicated a high level of satisfaction with the overall provision in the school. The responses from the teaching and support staff were highly affirmative about all aspects of school life and discussions with the governors indicated their confidence in the work of the principal and the staff. A group of year 6 children talked confidently about what they enjoyed in school and reported that they felt happy and safe in school.

The small number of concerns raised in the questionnaires has been discussed with the governors and the Principal.

2. Context

Moorfields Primary School is situated in an attractive rural location approximately five miles from Ballymena. The school has had a complete rebuild on the original site. The children come from a wide catchment area with just over 40% using the school bus service.

Moorfields Primary School	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
Enrolment	214	204	205	207	198
% Attendance (NI Average)	96.1%	96.4%	96.7%	96.6%	
FSME Percentage ¹	4.6%	3.9%	7.8%	12.07%	10.6%
% of children on SEN register	5.6%	4.9%	5.8%	3.9%	8.08%
No. of children with statements of educational needs	*	*	*	*	*
No. of newcomers	0	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
- the quality of leadership and management.

4. Overall findings

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

Key findings of the inspection

5. Achievements and standards

- The children are well motivated and enjoy their learning. Most of the children are confident in talking about their work, attentive when listening, can read fluently and write to a good standard across the curriculum. The children are secure in their understanding of mathematical concepts, flexible in their thinking and can apply their learning into real life contexts. A small number of children would benefit from more frequent opportunities to learn in smaller groups rather than whole class activities to improve their confidence and skills in these areas. The children work independently and, when given the opportunity, engage collaboratively in paired or group work.

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

- The standards achieved by the children in literacy and numeracy are good. An analysis of the end of key stage (KS) 2 performance data shows that in English, the school's performance is in line with or above the Northern Ireland (NI) average.* When compared with schools in a similar free school meals band, it is below the average. In the corresponding period, the school's performance in mathematics is consistently above the Northern Ireland (NI) average. When compared with schools in a similar free school meals band, it is in line with or just above the average in mathematics.
- The school's internal performance data indicates that by the end of key stage (KS) 2 most children are working in line with or above their ability in literacy and numeracy. The children identified as requiring additional support make good progress in their learning and reach the standards of which they are capable.
- The children achieve very good standards in their use of information and communication technology (ICT). By the end of KS2, most children achieve level four in the Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA) Accreditation and use information and communication technology (ICT) effectively as an integral part of their learning.

6. Provision for learning

- The quality of the teaching is a key strength in the school. Almost all of the teaching observed was good or better with the majority evaluated as very good. The teachers set clear learning intentions, build effectively on the children's prior learning and connect the learning across the curriculum. In the best practice, the teachers make excellent use of incidental learning opportunities to develop the children's thinking and reasoning skills.
- There is a coherent, whole school approach to planning, teaching and assessment which takes account of the children's interests, abilities and stages of development. The school has identified the need to review the quality of the children's learning experiences in the foundation stage (FS) in order to build more progressively on their pre-school education.
- The class teachers and the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) identify, at an early stage, the children who require additional support with aspects of their learning. Additional provision, either through in class support or the recent introduction of withdrawal sessions is generally matched well to the children's needs. The leadership and management needs to prioritise plans to meet the increasing range of additional learning needs in the school.
- The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care in the school is very good. The school has a very caring and supportive ethos based on mutual respect and very good working relationships at all levels. The children participate in a wide range of additional learning experiences which enhance their personal development. They contribute their ideas and take responsibility both within the classroom and through, for example, the school council and the playground buddy system.

* 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 school gives very good attention to promoting healthy eating and physical activity through, for example, the relevant topics in the curriculum and access to a wide range of physical activity and sport.

7. Leadership and management

- There is a good collegial approach to decision making at all levels within the school. The senior leadership team has a clear direction for the school's development and it is fully committed to the well-being of the children and raising the standards they attain.
- The school development plan meets the Department of Education's (DE) School Development Plans Regulations (NI) 2010 and includes a good overview of the work of the school. In order to improve the school's self-evaluation processes further, the leadership and management need to set more measureable targets, focus on key priorities and embed more robust systems to monitor and evaluate the outcomes of any actions taken.
- There are very good links with the local and wider global community through, for example, the young enterprise scheme and the schools involvement in the Comenius project.
- Based on the evidence at the time of the inspection, the parents, staff and school community can have a high degree of confidence in the aspects of governance inspected. The governors bring a broad range of expertise to their role and are committed to supporting continuous improvement within the school.
- 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 (DE).

8. Conclusion

In the areas inspected the quality of education in this school is good. The school has important strengths in most of its educational and very good pastoral provision. The inspection has identified areas for improvement which the school has demonstrated the capacity to address. These include the need to

- develop a more robust system of monitoring and evaluating the provision throughout the school; and
- make more effective use of data to inform target setting at whole school level to raise further the standards achieved by the children in literacy and numeracy,

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