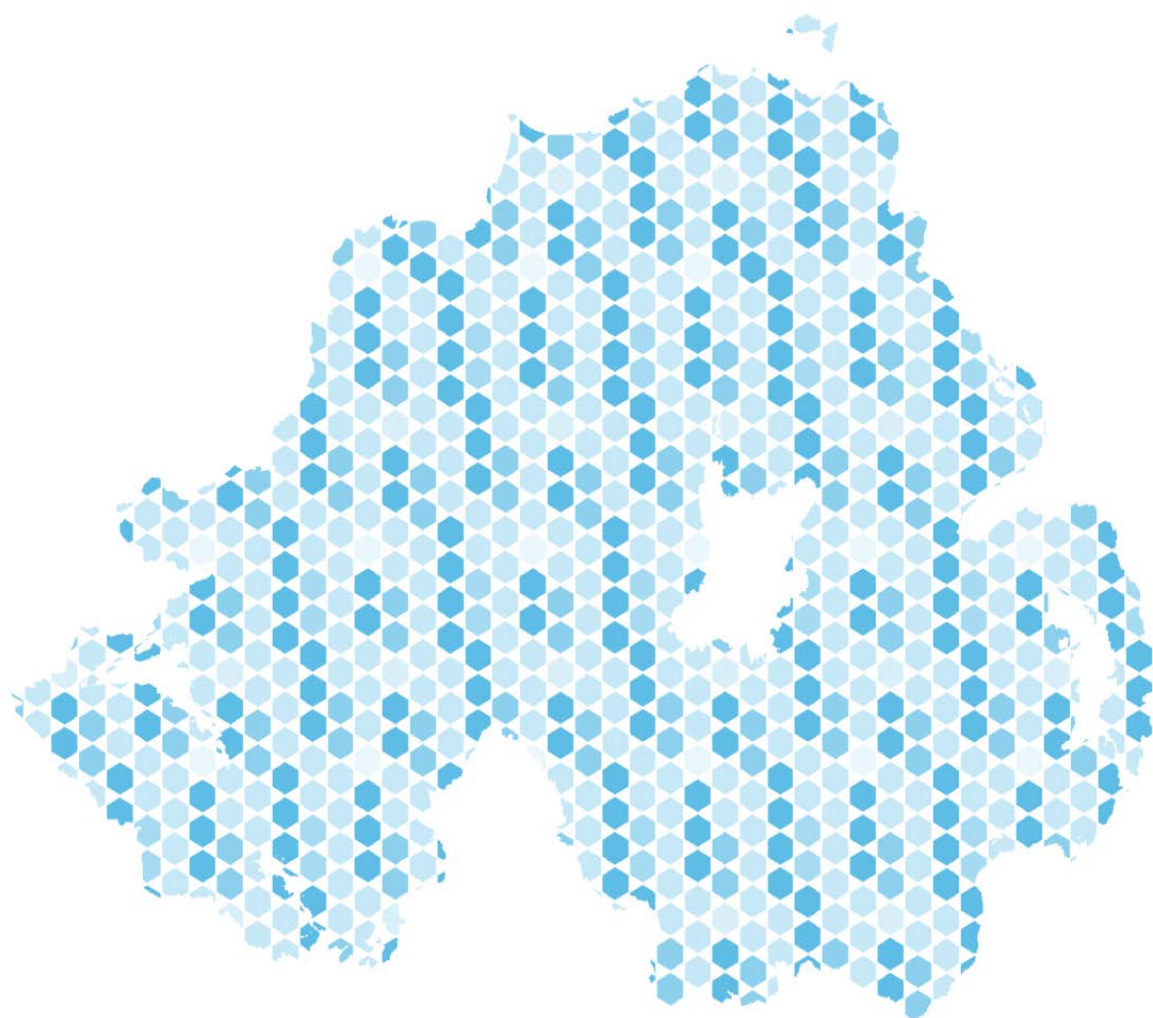


PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Newbuildings Primary School
and Ballyore Community
Nursery Unit, Londonderry

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

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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 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	120	11	9.2%	10
Teaching staff	9	8	89%	*
Support staff	6	6	100%	*

* 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 that most parents feel that the children enjoy their learning and that the staff support well the care, dignity and well-being of the children. The few concerns raised by parents have been reported to the principal and the representatives of the board of governors. All of the teachers and the support staff completed questionnaires and their responses were very positive; they commented on the caring ethos and their dedication to their work.

2. Context

Newbuildings Primary School and Ballyore Community Nursery Unit are situated in the townland of Ballyore, on the outskirts of Londonderry. Enrolment in the primary school has remained steady over the last three years and currently stands at 154. The part-time nursery provision caters for an additional enrolment of 26. At the time of the inspection, the literacy co-ordinator, the special educational needs co-ordinator and the foundation stage co-ordinator were absent.

Newbuildings Primary School	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
Enrolment	172	155	155	154
% Attendance (NI Average)	94.3	95.0	93.4	95.6
FSME Percentage ¹	21	22	32	38
% (No) of children on SEN register	34 (58)	29 (45)	22 (34)	30 (46)
No. of children with statements of educational needs	*	*	*	5
No. of newcomers	*	*	*	*

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

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

Key findings of the inspection

5. Achievements and standards

- From the earliest stage, the children are well-settled, work well independently and with each other and are interested in their learning. Across all key stages, the children's behaviour is very good and the children are encouraged to have respect for all members of the school community. The children have good opportunities to acquire, develop and transfer their knowledge and skills across most areas of learning. The teachers in key stage (KS) 2 need to provide the children with more opportunities to develop their skills further, to think more creatively and critically about their work and to 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 three² of the past four years shows that in English and mathematics, the school's performance is consistently below the Northern Ireland (NI) average. Compared with schools in the same free school meals (FSM) category, the performance in English and mathematics is also consistently below the Northern Ireland (NI) average.
- The school's internal performance data shows that most children, including those who require additional support with aspects of their learning, make good progress in English and mathematics in line with their ability or above expectation.
- During the inspection, the highest attaining children in year 4 demonstrate well their ability to think mathematically across most of the numeracy programme and talk enthusiastically about their experiences. In year 7, the highest attaining children have a good knowledge of important ideas and concepts and use a range of mental mathematics and problem solving strategies with confidence. In literacy, by year 7, the more able children can express themselves confidently, read with fluency and write for a variety of audiences. To raise further the children's talking and listening and writing skills, the teachers need to provide the children with more opportunities for more creative writing, to give extended oral responses and to present their learning to their peers.
- The children in the nursery unit are well behaved and engage well in sustained and purposeful play. They produce representational work and model making of a high standard. Almost all of the children show very good levels of confidence and independence in their work and play. They co-operate well with the staff and their peers, can listen attentively to stories, join in rhymes and songs and follow simple instructions. The children are making very good progress in all areas of the pre-school curriculum; a significant minority demonstrate good pre-writing skills and early number recognition.
- The children achieve very good standards in information and communication technology. The children are able to use information and communication technology with confidence to develop and enhance their learning; they are competent in using programmable devices and a range of interactive software.

6. Provision

- The quality of the learning and teaching ranged from satisfactory to outstanding; with most being good or very good in equal measure. In the most effective practice, the teachers used good questioning techniques which encouraged the children to give extended oral responses, the work was set in a meaningful, engaging and contemporary context and the activities were differentiated appropriately to meet the range of ability within the class. In a minority of the lessons, the children's prior learning was not built on appropriately and the pace of the learning was too slow.

² 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 quality of the planning is of a good standard. In the best practice, the teachers' evaluation of their planning, and the extent to which learning was successful, is used well to inform future practice. The teachers mark the children's work regularly and provide positive comments; in the best practice, the children receive effective guidance on how to improve their work further and are given the opportunity to modify their work, as appropriate.
- There are good opportunities provided for the children to make use of a range of resources including ICT to support their learning. In literacy, the school has focused recently on the development of the children's reading skills; this is supported well by the use of carefully selected reading resources, including digital resources, and through the provision of structured reading support. In mathematics, the teachers have focused recently on improving the teaching of mental mathematics. As a result, the children are developing well their skills in mental mathematics. They are encouraged to explain the mathematical reasoning and engage in a variety of problem-solving and investigative mathematics.
- The children who require additional support with aspects of their learning receive good support, particularly in literacy. The individual education plans are of a good quality and provide appropriate guidance for classroom practice. The school has invested significant time for staff development in this area, looking at both the identification of need and the effective intervention strategies. The teachers have very effective links with external agencies which provide support and guidance to them and informs their practice and assists the children in overcoming their specific barriers to learning. The classroom assistants work skilfully with the teachers to support the children's learning and development.
- The nursery unit is well presented and the indoor learning environment is enhanced further by attractive displays incorporating much of the children's own art work. The recent focus on developing the outdoor area has provided additional play areas for the children to enjoy, explore and investigate. The staff plan an interesting and varied programme that provides appropriate challenge and progression for the children throughout the year. They gather valuable information about the children's progress and development which is used to inform future learning and teaching. The staff are caring and supportive and the quality of the interaction between the staff and the children is consistently of a high standard. The children who require additional help with aspects of their learning are identified at an early stage and appropriate support is put in place to address their individual needs. The parents are kept well informed about their child's progress and how they can support their child's learning and the work of the nursery unit.
- The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care in the primary school is good and it is very good in the nursery unit. The principal and staff know the children well and show a strong commitment to the welfare of the children and each other. External agencies are used effectively to support children's specific pastoral needs and the taught pastoral programme is both well-planned and responsive to these needs. The children's efforts and achievements are celebrated regularly. The principal, staff and board of governors need to review the pastoral care policies to ensure they reflect more accurately the school's current practice.

- The school gives good attention to promoting healthy eating and physical activity thereby encouraging the children to adopt healthy lifestyles.

7. Leadership and management

- The school development plan identifies appropriate priorities for development and has been agreed and contributed to by all staff and the children. During this academic year, the implementation of the associated action plans has been delayed significantly by the limited arrangements for building the capacity of staff to co-ordinate key areas of the provision and the lack of robust procedures for the monitoring, evaluation and review of practice throughout the year. The leadership and management need to focus more rigorously on the consistent analysis of the range of the school's performance data and on improving the standards the children achieve in English and mathematics, especially in KS2. The principal and staff have worked hard to provide stability for all staff, including substitute teachers, and, importantly, for the children given the challenging context in which they are working. The nursery unit is led well by the teacher-in-charge; she is very committed to the children and the future development of the nursery unit.
- The school has good links with the local community. Through participation in a wide range of purposeful school programmes and events, the children foster positive attitudes and values in areas such as, environmental awareness and local community development initiatives. The school's newsletter provides the parents with regular information on the operation of the school. The parents would benefit from more information on their child's curriculum programme, particularly at KS2, and on how they can best support their child's learning.
- Based on the evidence presented at the time of inspection, the parents, staff and school community can have confidence in most aspects of governance evaluated. There are aspects of governance to review, namely to ensure that:
 - the role of the governors in school development planning and self-evaluation is developed further, including the regular and robust monitoring of action plans throughout the school year to ensure that the actions identified in the school development plan are carried out and effect improvement; and,
 - all policies relating to the work of the school are reviewed regularly and are ratified by the board of governors.
- 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. The following areas need to be addressed:
 - for the principal and board of governors to provide parents/carers with a copy of the child protection/ safeguarding policy every two years; and,
 - for all child protection / safeguarding activity to be reported on, at least annually, to the board of governors by the principal and the designated teacher for child protection.

In discussions with the inspectors, the year 6 children reported that they felt secure in school and knew what to do if they had any concerns about their well-being.

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 and leadership and management which need to be addressed if the needs of all the children are to be met more effectively.

The main areas for improvement include the need:

- for the leadership and management to develop more rigorous and robust arrangements for the monitoring, evaluation and review of all aspects of the work of the school in order to raise the standards the children attain;
- for the roles and responsibilities of staff to be reviewed to develop the capacity of all staff to effect improvement in the children's learning experiences and in the standards the children attain; and
- for the board of governors and the principal to implement fully the requirements of the child protection/safeguarding legislation with respect to administration.

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.

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