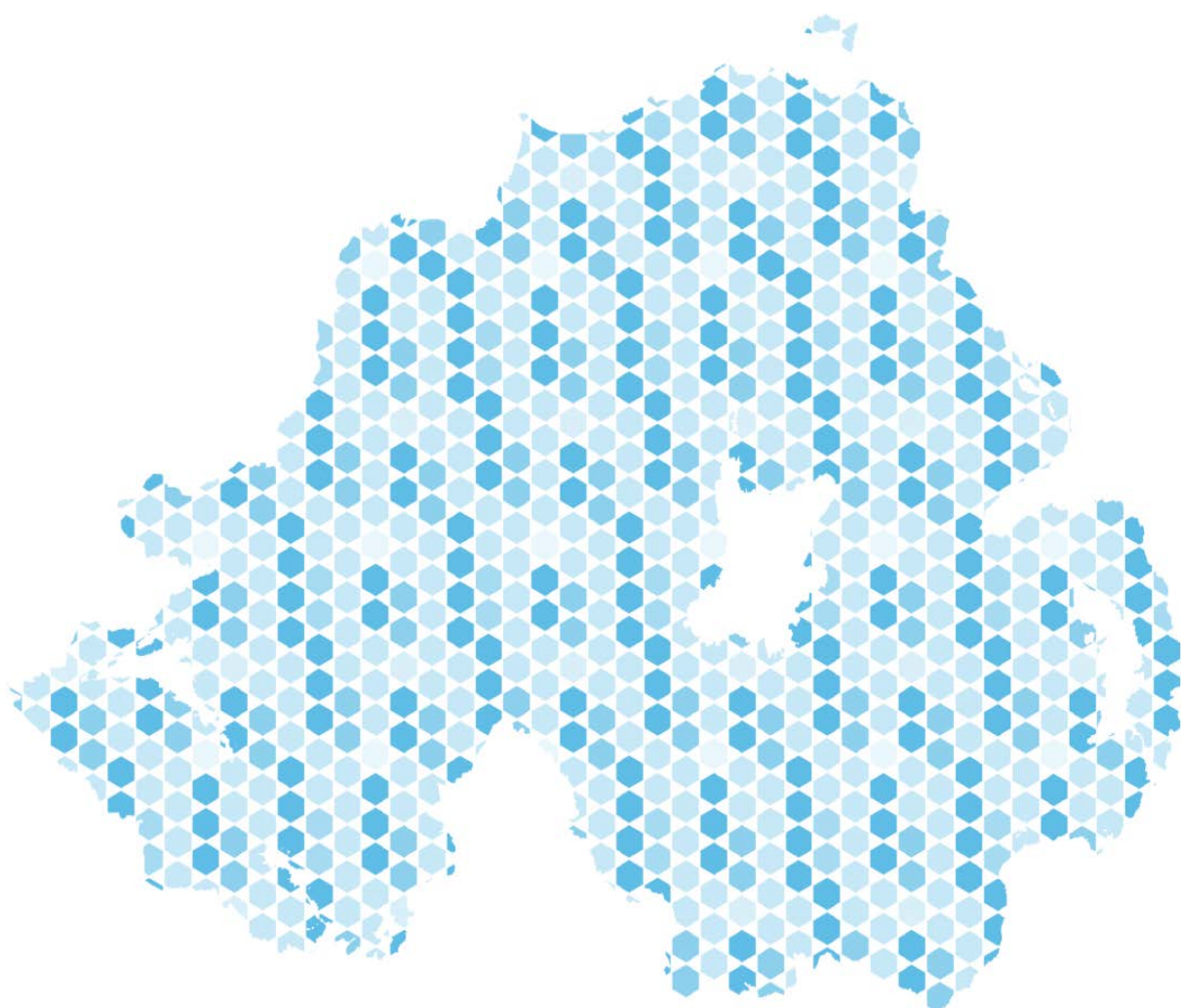


# PRIMARY INSPECTION 2014-15



Education and Training  
Inspectorate

Omagh County Primary School  
and Nursery Unit, Omagh,  
Co Tyrone

Report of an Inspection in  
September 2014



*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 a representative(s) from the governors;
- meetings with groups of children; and
- the opportunity for the parents, teaching and support staff to complete a confidential questionnaire.

Ten percent of parents and 19 staff responded to the questionnaires. All of the responses to the parental questionnaires indicated high levels of satisfaction with the life and work of the school. In particular, the parents highlighted their appreciation of the teachers' and support staff's work, in providing such positive learning experiences for the children, and the work of the principal in ensuring effective communication with parents and carers. All of the staff completed questionnaires and their responses were also very positive; they emphasised the quality of the working relationships across the school and the support of the leadership and management, including ample opportunities for staff development. ETI has reported to the Principal and a representative of the board of governors the responses from the questionnaires and the discussions and no issues were raised.

## **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 in the school including the nursery unit and learning support centre; and
3. the quality of leadership and management.

## **3. Context**

Omagh County Primary School, situated to the west of Omagh, has approximately three-quarters of the children coming from the town, with the remaining children travelling from rural areas within a radius of five miles. The enrolment fluctuates and currently is 286 with an increase in the number of newcomer children to 54; there are 52 children in the nursery unit, 15 of whom are in their immediate pre-school year. One-fifth of the children are identified as requiring additional support with their learning and one-quarter of the children are entitled to free school meals. The school links with local maintained primary schools to enable the children to experience shared assemblies and shared learning about different cultural and religious traditions.

| <b>Omagh County Primary School</b>                   | <b>2011/12</b> | <b>2012/13</b> | <b>2013/14</b> | <b>2014/15</b> |
|--|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Enrolment  | 293            | 270            | 281            | 286            |
| % Attendance<br>(NI Average)                         | 95.6           | 95             | 96             | -              |
| FSME Percentage <sup>1</sup>                         | 23.6           | 24.6           | 27.5           | 25.2           |
| % (No) of children on SEN register                   | 24.4           | 23.1           | 24.1           | 19             |
| No. of children with statements of educational needs | 7              | 8              | 10             | 9              |
| No. of newcomers                                     | 31             | 41             | 38             | 54             |

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

\* fewer than 5

#### **4. Overall findings of the inspection**

|   |                  |
|---|------------------|
| <b>Overall Performance Level</b>                | <b>Good</b>      |
| <b>Achievements and Standards</b>               | <b>Good</b>      |
| <b>Provision</b>                                | <b>Good</b>      |
| <b>Leadership and Management</b>                | <b>Good</b>      |
| <b>Nursery Unit and Learning Support Centre</b> | <b>Very Good</b> |

#### **5. Achievements and standards**

- The children are mannerly and their behaviour is exemplary. They are well-organised and settle quickly to work. They have good personal and social skills and work well independently, in pairs and in groups, listening attentively and contributing to whole-class and group discussion. In the foundation stage, they are highly independent and respond very well to the learning activities which promote effectively thinking skills and self-management.
- The school's 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.
- Across the key stages, the children write to a good standard and present work neatly. The children enjoy reading and discuss their preferred authors and genres. The most able children read fluently, with good comprehension and use a range of strategies to read unfamiliar words. The children apply a good range of mathematical strategies, explain their thinking using the appropriate mathematical language and can self-correct when appropriate. They explain their methods and demonstrate flexible thinking in problem-solving tasks.
- The well-settled children in the nursery unit are making very good progress in all aspects of their learning and development. They concentrate on tasks with confidence and independence; participate fully in well-managed song, rhyme and story sessions and show imagination and creativity during play.

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

- The children in the learning support centre interact well with each other and respond eagerly to the skilful questioning and interaction with staff. They are making very good progress in their levels of independence, language development, confidence with numeracy and in their personal, social and physical skills.
- The children develop good ICT skills progressively across the curriculum, including skills in desk top publishing, animation and online learning.

## **6. Provision**

- The quality of the planning, teaching and assessment for learning is good. The effective practice across the school is characterised by the supportive learning environment in all classes, the intended learning made clear for the children, the range of practical learning strategies to engage the children and develop their learning and the use of feedback to consolidate the learning. In the most effective practice, the teachers use skilful questioning to challenge and extend the children's creative and critical thinking.
- The teachers' planning is comprehensive and importantly makes connections across the curriculum. The effectiveness of planning for, and evaluation of, differentiated learning strategies to meet the needs of the children is inconsistent. There is a need for staff to review planning to ensure evaluations inform clearly differentiated learning activities, and to develop appropriately the children's thinking skills and personal capabilities alongside their talking and listening skills by the end of key stage 2.
- The children's work is marked regularly and there are good examples of feedback which give the children precise ways to develop their work further and provide opportunities for the children to identify their own targets for improvement. This good practice needs to be embedded consistently across the school.
- The whole-school programme and planning for literacy and numeracy is effective and provides for progression in the children's knowledge, skills and understanding. In all key stages, the children experience a balanced coverage of number, shape and space, measures and data-handling. The children have a good range of writing opportunities across the curriculum. The coherent reading and phonics programme helps to ensure that the children progress in their reading with appropriate resources. As the school has identified, the higher skills in comprehension, talking and listening need to be developed further strategically through, for example: guided reading sessions, use of drama and regular opportunities for presentations.
- The children who require additional support with their learning benefit from the in-class support by their teachers and proactive classroom assistants, from targeted withdrawal sessions and support from external agencies. Their needs are identified early and appropriately through ongoing assessment by staff. The dyslexia-friendly approach to learning is a key strength of the provision. The education plans do not identify precisely enough the specific needs of the children from which to set precise and measurable targets. It is appropriate that the school has prioritised the need to review the effectiveness of these plans.

- The quality of the provision in the nursery unit is very good. The attractive, stimulating and caring learning environment provided in the nursery unit promotes effectively the children's language development, decision-making and self-management skills. The very good staff interactions with the children ensure that opportunities for learning through play, daily routines and group story sessions are exploited fully.
- The quality of the provision in the learning support centre is very good. The staff create a learning environment that enables the children to feel confident, included and supported. Consequently, the children engage enthusiastically in the wide range of stimulating and creative learning strategies planned appropriately for the children. The staff respect the views of the children and build on these effectively to extend their learning and to celebrate well the success of each child. Communication with parents is detailed, regular and focused well on the individual needs of the children.
- The pastoral care within the school, nursery unit and learning support centre is very good, evidenced through the welcoming, inclusive ethos and positive working relationships at all levels. The staff provide a safe and caring learning environment in which the children feel valued, work well together and respect the views and opinions of others. The taught pastoral provision enables the children to develop their personal and social skills effectively, including how to manage their emotions and how to choose ways of learning linked to their own preferred style of learning.
- The school gives very good attention to promoting healthy eating and physical activity, through a wide range of appropriate extra-curricular activities that encourage the children to adopt healthy lifestyles while promoting academic development.

## **7. Leadership and management**

- Leadership and management at all levels is effective in raising standards attained by the children, using their knowledge of the needs of children in a changing context to target priorities for improvement. An important strength is the development of a wide leadership team to increase the collegial approach to school improvement and to build the capacity of staff further. The evaluative role of the co-ordinators is developing and now needs to focus more precisely on the impact of their learning strategies on the outcomes for the children.
- The school improvement process is based on the views of parents, staff and governors. It is supported by an action-planning process focused on literacy, numeracy, ICT and the broader development of the curriculum which are reviewed to inform future targets. These action plans need more precise and measurable targets based on rigorous evaluation of the children's learning to inform clearly the strategies to bring about improvement.
- The school has strong links with the local and wider community that benefit both the school and the community. A particular strength is the partnership with local post-primary schools whose post-16 pupils support the children's learning in French and physical education. The school has achieved the Action Cancer Health Gold Award, Eco-schools Green Flag and the children engage with Young Enterprise NI across the key stages.

- 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.
- 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. There are aspects of governance to review, namely to ensure that the school improvement process is informed through rigorous evaluation of the children's learning.

## **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 the following area for improvement which the school has demonstrated the capacity to address.

- To develop a more rigorous approach to the evaluation of the children's learning to inform more precisely the school improvement process.

The Education and Training Inspectorate will monitor, through district inspection activity, the school's progress on the area for improvement.



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