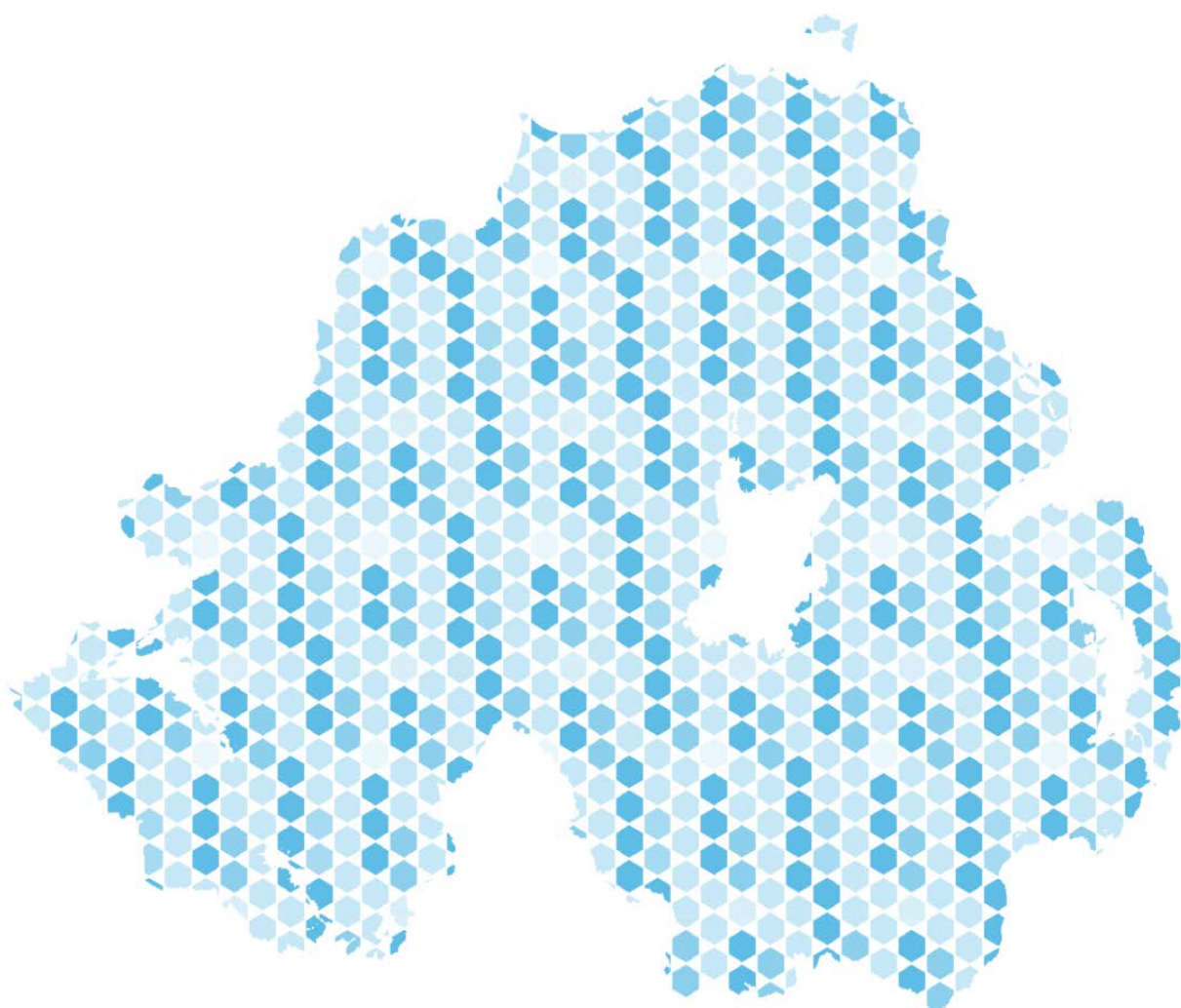


PRIMARY INSPECTION 2014-15



Education and Training
Inspectorate

St Aidan's Primary School,
Magilligan, Co Londonderry

Report of an Inspection in
November 2014



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

Sixty-nine percent of parents responded to the questionnaires. The responses indicated high levels of satisfaction with the life and work of the school. In particular, the parents highlighted the progress made by their children, the wide range of after school activities, and the importance of the school in the local community. All of the staff completed questionnaires and their responses were wholly positive. They emphasised the high quality of the working relationships at all levels, the regular staff development opportunities and their valued links with the parents and wider community. The ETI has reported to the principal and representatives of the board of governors the main issues emerging from the questionnaires. No significant 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 for literacy in the school; and
3. the quality of leadership and management.

3. Context

St Aidan's Primary School is situated in a rural setting in the parish of St Aidan's, Magilligan, approximately nine miles from Limavady. The children who attend the school travel from the surrounding rural area. The school's enrolment has slightly increased over the past four years to its present figure of 46; approximately 20% of the children have been identified as requiring additional help with their learning and almost 33% are entitled to free school meals.

St Aidan's Primary School	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Enrolment	43	38	44	46
% Attendance (NI Average)	95%	96.2%	96.2%	98.5%
FSME Percentage ¹	30.2%	39.5%	18%	32.6%
% (No) of children on SEN register	11.6%	21.0%	18.18%	19.5%
No. of children with statements of educational needs	0	0	0	0
No. of newcomers	0	0	0	0

Source: data as held by the school.

* fewer than 5

4. Overall findings of the inspection

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

5. Achievements and standards

- The children are highly motivated, curious and enthusiastic, engaging well in all aspects of their learning. They display high levels of self-management and work effectively in pairs and small groups. Their behaviour is exemplary; they are well mannered and courteous to their peers, staff and visitors.
- The school's performance data shows that almost all of the children, including those who require additional support with aspects of their learning, make very good progress in English and most of the children make very good progress in mathematics in line with their ability or above expectation.
- Throughout the school the children are articulate and engage in discussions and debates, offering and justifying opinions, and presenting their ideas and arguments confidently. By Year 7 the children read fluently and with expression. They empathise with characters and discuss, with great insight, underlying themes in novels. They enjoy reading, have a wide knowledge of authors and justify their preferences for certain types of books. Most of the children use punctuation and grammar accurately and write using a wide range of forms and for a variety of purposes.
- The children make very good use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT). They are competent in using programmable devices and a range of digital software to support their learning.

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

6. Provision

- The teachers review and update regularly long-term planning to ensure continuity and progression across the key stages. The teachers' medium-term planning is of a very good quality and guides effectively the practice. It is underpinned by reflective evaluations which are focused sharply on the children's learning. The planning connects creatively the children's learning across the curriculum. A key feature, throughout the school, is the extent to which the children contribute meaningfully to the planning process.
- The teaching observed was always highly effective. The teachers set the activities in relevant and meaningful contexts which motivate and enthuse the children. The activities are matched well to the wide range of ages and abilities within the composite classes. The teachers use questions skilfully to extend the children's thinking and understanding. The teachers mark the children's work regularly; in the best practice, the written comments provide clear direction on how the children can make further improvements to their work. There are well-organised opportunities for the children to evaluate constructively their own work and that of their peers.
- The provision for children who have difficulty with aspects of their learning is of a very high quality; they are identified at an early stage and benefit from an extensive range of personalised programmes and effective intervention strategies. Individual education plans are focused accurately on the needs of the children and the teachers take account of the children's individual targets and incorporate these into lesson planning. The children review regularly their targets and are wholly involved in the evaluation process.
- The school's language and literacy programme ensures very good progression across the key stages. The teachers place a high priority on developing the children's talking and listening skills and there are very good opportunities for the children to present their ideas and demonstrate their understanding across the curriculum. They show a growing awareness of audience and purpose when engaging in writing, for example, through the design and publication of a monthly newsletter for parents. The teachers use ICT skilfully to promote the development of the children's reading skills. The children's vocabulary is extended well through role play and shared reading sessions.
- The outstanding pastoral provision permeates all aspects of school life. The children's personal and social development is nurtured well through the inclusive ethos of the school. The children's achievements are valued and celebrated. They take part in a wide range of activities and events beyond the classroom which develops well their self-esteem and sense of place and understanding of their local area. Their ideas and opinions are valued and they contribute actively to decisions about aspects of school life through the school and Eco councils.
- The school gives very good attention to promoting healthy eating and physical activity thereby encouraging the children to adopt healthy lifestyles. The children grow their own produce and use it to plan and cook healthy meals.

7. Leadership and management

- The staff team is focused clearly on meeting the individual needs of the children and enhancing the provision for their learning. They inspire high degrees of confidence and respect amongst the school community.
- There are systematic processes in place for monitoring and evaluating all aspects of the provision to inform the school development planning process, including the rigorous analysis of assessment outcomes. The strategic actions taken by the leadership and management to promote improvement, including the development of mental mathematics strategies throughout the school, the focus on specific aspects of literacy, and the creation of appropriate intervention strategies have been successful in raising standards.
- The children's learning experiences are extended and enriched as a result of the links and partnerships which the school has developed with the local community and other stakeholders, including local businesses, schools and other agencies. Very good links have been established with the parents; they are kept well informed about their child's progress and how they can support their child's learning. The active Parent Teachers' Association has raised considerable funds and purchased resources which have enhanced the quality of the children's learning experiences.
- 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. It is timely that the recently reconstituted board of governors has identified appropriately the need to broaden the consultation arrangements for the forthcoming cycle of school development planning.
- 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 following area needs to be addressed: more formalised reporting arrangements with the board of governors in matters relating to child protection and safeguarding.

In discussions with the inspectors, the children reported that they felt very secure in school and knew what to do if they had any concerns about their well-being. The children highlighted the high levels of pastoral and learning support.

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, in order to address the current and future needs of the children and the staff.

8. Conclusion

In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by this school is very good. The school is meeting very effectively the educational and pastoral needs of the children; and has demonstrated its capacity for sustained self-improvement.

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