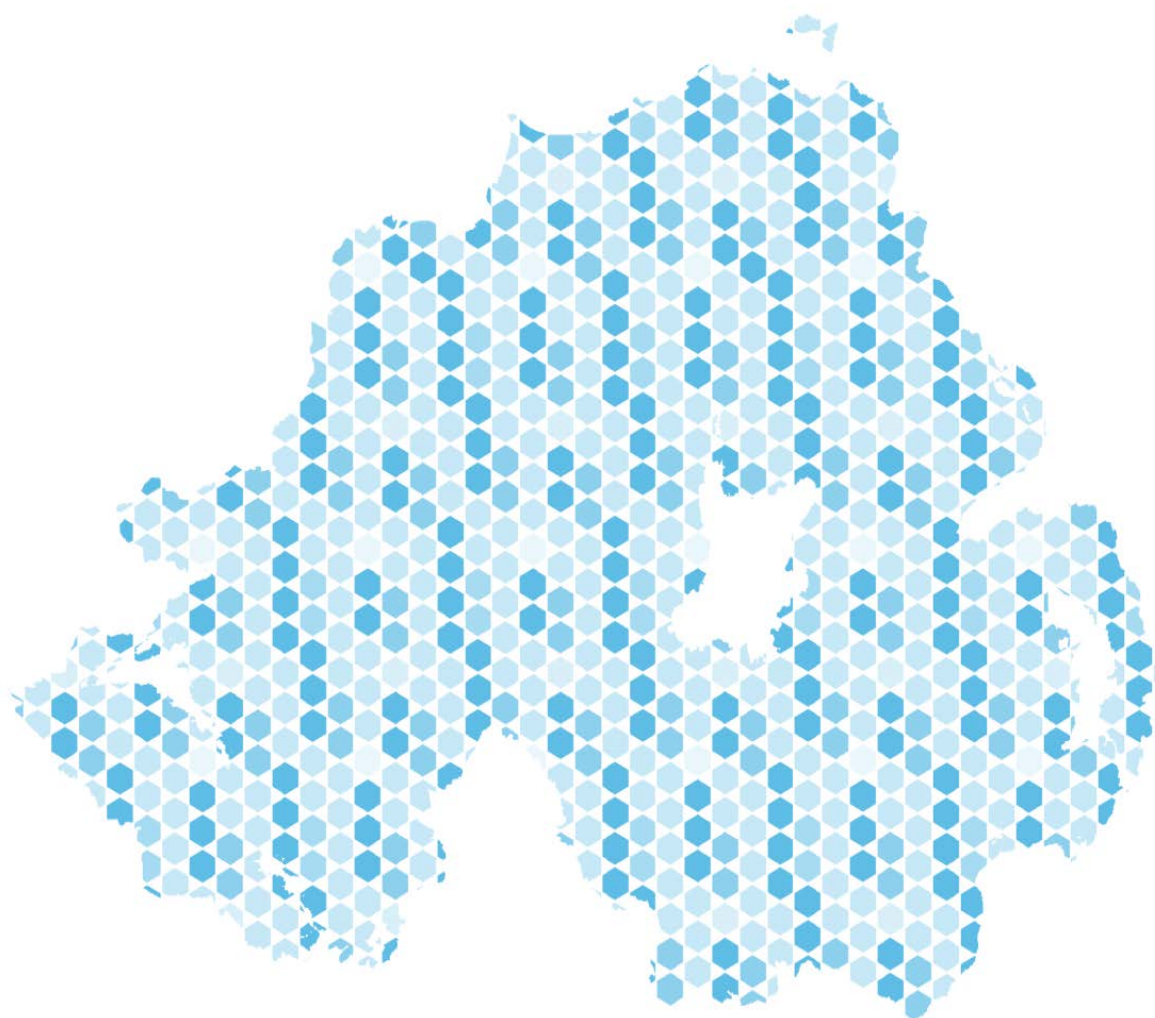


PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

St Brigid's Primary School,
Glassdrummond, Co Armagh

Report of an Inspection in
January 2014

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	124	12	10%	7
Teaching staff	7	7	100%	*
Support staff	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 from the parental and staff questionnaires were, in the main, positive. The ETI reported to the principal and representatives of the governors the few areas of concern emerging from the questionnaires.

The governors highlighted the welcoming and inclusive ethos, and the strong sense of community and identity within the school. They expressed concern at the limited accommodation given the steady increase in the enrolment.

2. Context

St Brigid's Primary School is situated in the town land of Glassdrummond, County Armagh. Almost all of the children who attend the school come from the surrounding area. The school is regularly oversubscribed; the enrolment has increased steadily over the last four years and stands currently at 176. Approximately 13% of the children have been identified as requiring additional help with their learning and approximately 36% are entitled to free school meals.

St Brigid's Primary School	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
Enrolment	164	171	170	176
% Attendance	93.9%	96.1%	94.4%	
FSME Percentage ^[1]	23.17%	30.4%	31.17%	36.36%
% of children on SEN register	8.0%	11.7%	13.53%	13.06%
No. of children with statements of educational needs	*	*	6	5
No. of newcomers	*	*	*	5

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 finding

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

Key findings of the inspection

5. Achievements and standards

- The children are friendly, confident and engage enthusiastically with the learning. Throughout the school, their thinking skills and personal capabilities are evident in their independence, self-management and mature response to the high expectations set by the staff. They take pride in their work and achievements and are keen to talk about their learning with others.

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

- An analysis of the end of key stage 2 performance data, in three of the past four years, shows that in English and mathematics the school's performance is consistently well above both the Northern Ireland average and that of schools in the same free school meals category*. The school's internal performance data indicates that almost all of the children, including those who require additional support with aspects of their learning, make excellent progress in English and mathematics in line with their ability or above expectation.
- The children use information and communication technology (ICT) confidently and competently; the children in year 7 achieve high standards in the Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment ICT Accreditation.

6. Provision

- The staff make effective use of all the accommodation, including the outdoor areas, to provide a stimulating and positive learning environment for the children.
- The teachers' planning is comprehensive, takes considered account of the children's individual needs and ensures progression in their learning and skills development. As a result, the teachers develop effectively the children's literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum and in meaningful contexts. The teachers deploy a wide range of appropriate resources, including ICT, to support and extend the children's learning, and there is a clear sense of fun and enjoyment in the learning and teaching throughout the school. The quality of the teaching ranged from outstanding to good; in three-quarters of the lessons observed, it was very good.
- The children who require additional support with aspects of their learning benefit from well-targeted and focused in-class and withdrawal support. The intervention programme is flexible, sensitive and responsive to the children's individual needs. The support staff make a valuable and valued contribution to the children's learning experiences and their personal, social and emotional development.
- The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care is outstanding. The strong sense of community is evident in the welcoming, friendly and supportive ethos. The children's behaviour is exemplary; they show respect for others and interact confidently with their peers and adults.
- The school gives very good attention to promoting healthy lifestyles through the curriculum, healthy break and extracurricular learning activities

7. Leadership and management

- The principal provides effective leadership and is highly committed to the pastoral and academic needs of all the children, and to the community. All decisions on planning, resources, curriculum and pastoral care are informed by the child-centred approach at the core of the work of the school.

* Due to the current transition period in the arrangements for statutory assessment, this analysis of the end of key stage 2 performance data is based on the outcomes up to but not including the 2012/13 school year.

- School improvement is underpinned by appropriate procedures for monitoring and evaluation of the provision, including the effective use of performance data. The school development plan sets out clear and realistic targets for improvement linked to an appropriate programme of staff development.
- Based on the evidence presented at the time of inspection, the parents, staff and school community can have a high degree of confidence in the aspects of governance evaluated. The governors challenge and support appropriately the work of the principal and staff to effect school improvement.
- 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 year six children, they spoke positively of their learning and the extra-curricular activities. They indicated that they feel happy in school and that they know whom to speak to if they have any concerns about their safety and well-being.

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.

Health and safety/Accommodation

- The boundary fence is not secure.
- The access from the main building to the temporary classroom is not secure.
- There are deficiencies in the quality of the temporary classroom.

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