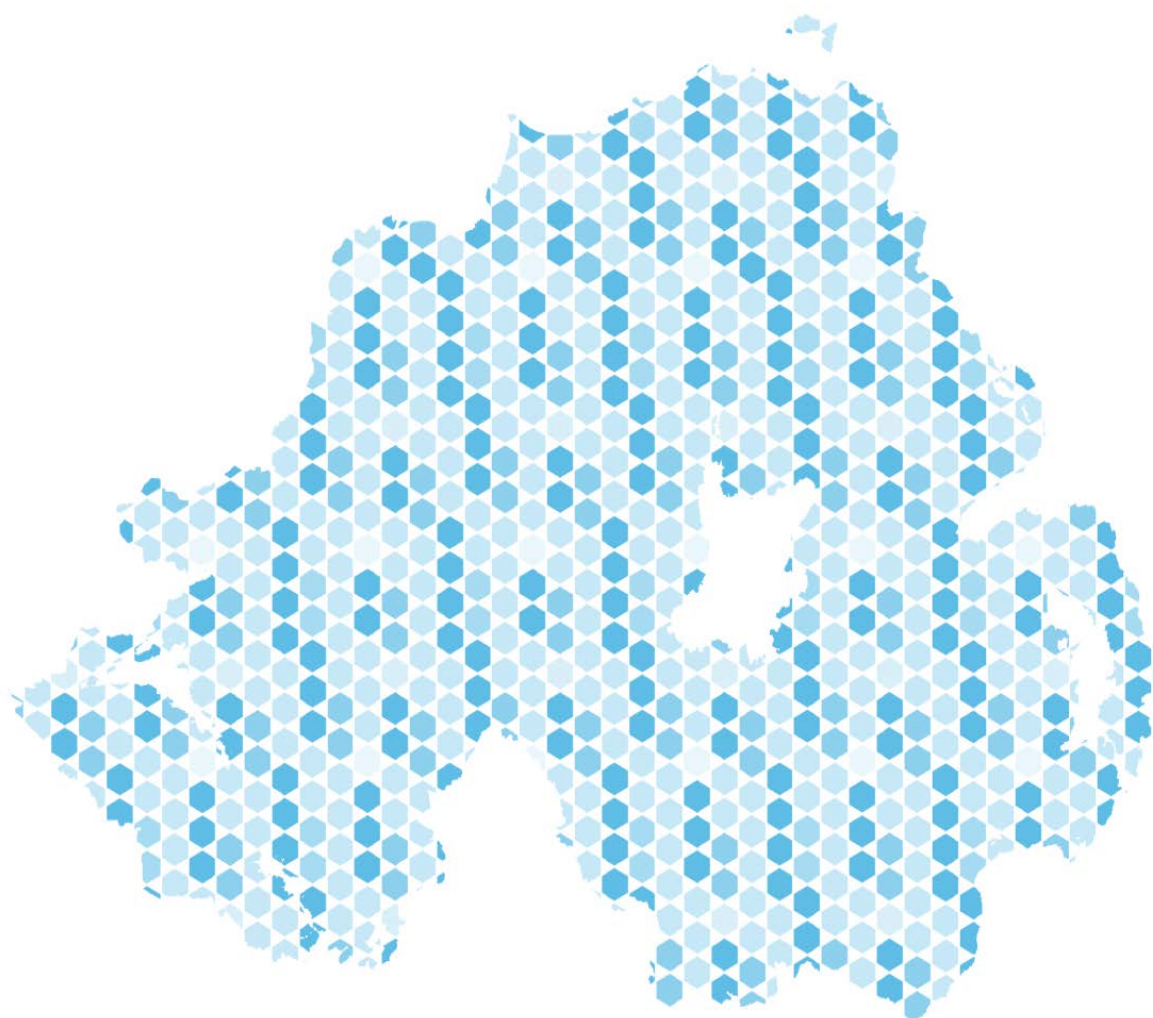


PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Gaelscoil Na Deirge,
Castlederg

Report of an Inspection
in March 2013

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%

In assessing the various features of the provision, Inspectors relate their evaluations to six descriptors as set out below:

DESCRIPTOR
Outstanding
Very Good
Good
Satisfactory
Inadequate
Unsatisfactory

SCHOOL CONTEXT

Gaelscoil na Deirge is an independent, Irish-medium primary school. It is situated in the grounds of St Francis of Assisi Primary School, Drumnabey, not far from Castlederg. The school opened in September 2012 with an intake of six children, all of whom had attended Naiscoil na Deirge, the local Irish-medium nursery school in Castlederg, for up to two years. The children come from Castlederg and the surrounding areas. Although the school is housed in a temporary classroom, the children have access to many of the facilities of St Francis of Assisi, including use of the assembly hall for physical education sessions, school meals and for its after-school's programme.

FOCUS

The inspection focused on:

- the children's achievements and standards in literacy and numeracy;
- the quality of provision for learning; and
- the quality of leadership and management, including the school's processes for self-evaluation leading to improvement.

OVERALL FINDING OF THE INSPECTION

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.

KEY FINDINGS OF THE INSPECTION

Achievements and Standards

The quality of achievements and standards is **good**.

- The teacher has created a stimulating learning environment with interest areas that arouse the curiosity of the children. She has established excellent working relationships with the children. The children are well settled, confident and attentive; they respond enthusiastically and participate very well in the learning activities organised for them. The teacher makes good use of songs and puppets to complement the storytelling and Big Book sessions which the children enjoy.
- All of the children have developed a good understanding of spoken Irish and are able to follow basic instructions. They can answer simple questions posed by the teacher and other adults. The teacher acts as the language role model for the children and encourages extended responses from the children in Irish. The children's talking and listening skills are developing well across the curriculum. The children are beginning to write simple sentences and phrases in Irish, and they achieve good standards in early writing. Overall, the children make good progress in acquiring Irish language skills. Samples of the children's writing are retained to monitor improvement. There is a suitable focus on language development during mathematics.

Provision for Learning

The quality of provision for learning is **good**.

- The quality of the teaching was always good. The work was matched closely to the varying abilities of the children in the composite class. The teacher plans effectively to cater for the individual needs and interests of the children.
- The teacher has maintained a comprehensive record of observations and assessment notes on the children across a range of curriculum areas. This information is used well to inform the next stages of planning and teaching. The teacher has begun to record any concerns in writing and to develop special educational needs (SEN) provision. She reflects on her practice and evaluates effectively aspects of her planning.
- The children's behaviour is very good. They are attentive in lessons, wellsettled and motivated to learn. The teacher uses well-embedded routines easily understood and respected by the children.
- Although the school has appropriate, general policies in place for child protection and pastoral care, they need to become more bespoke for the school. The designated teacher for child protection has received appropriate training from the Southern Education and Library Board (SELB).

Leadership and Management

The quality of leadership and management is **good**.

- The school development plan (SDP) takes good account of the Department of Education's (DE) key policy, 'Every School a Good School' (ESaGS). It sets out important strategic goals and challenges for the school to meet in relation to increasing its enrolment, meeting its viability targets and securing future accommodation.
- The school is staffed by one teacher. She has a Bachelor of Arts (Hons) degree in Irish with Media Studies and a post-graduate certificate in education (PGCE) in Irish-medium education. She is in her second year of early professional development (EPD).
- The teacher has established close links with other Irish-medium schools in the area; she receives good assistance and regular support, in particular with regard to planning and SEN. In addition, she has maintains regular contact with the parents.
- The management committee comprises a chairperson and five members. Good working relationships and effective co-operation have been established, in particular, with the staff of the nearby St Francis of Assisi Primary School. The management committee will need to ensure that good support is given to the teacher in order to allow her to focus on the core business of learning and teaching. In addition, it will be important that a classroom assistant is appointed as soon as possible.

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 an area for improvement in relation to its procedures for pastoral care which the school has demonstrated the capacity to address. The Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) will monitor the school's progress on the area for improvement.

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