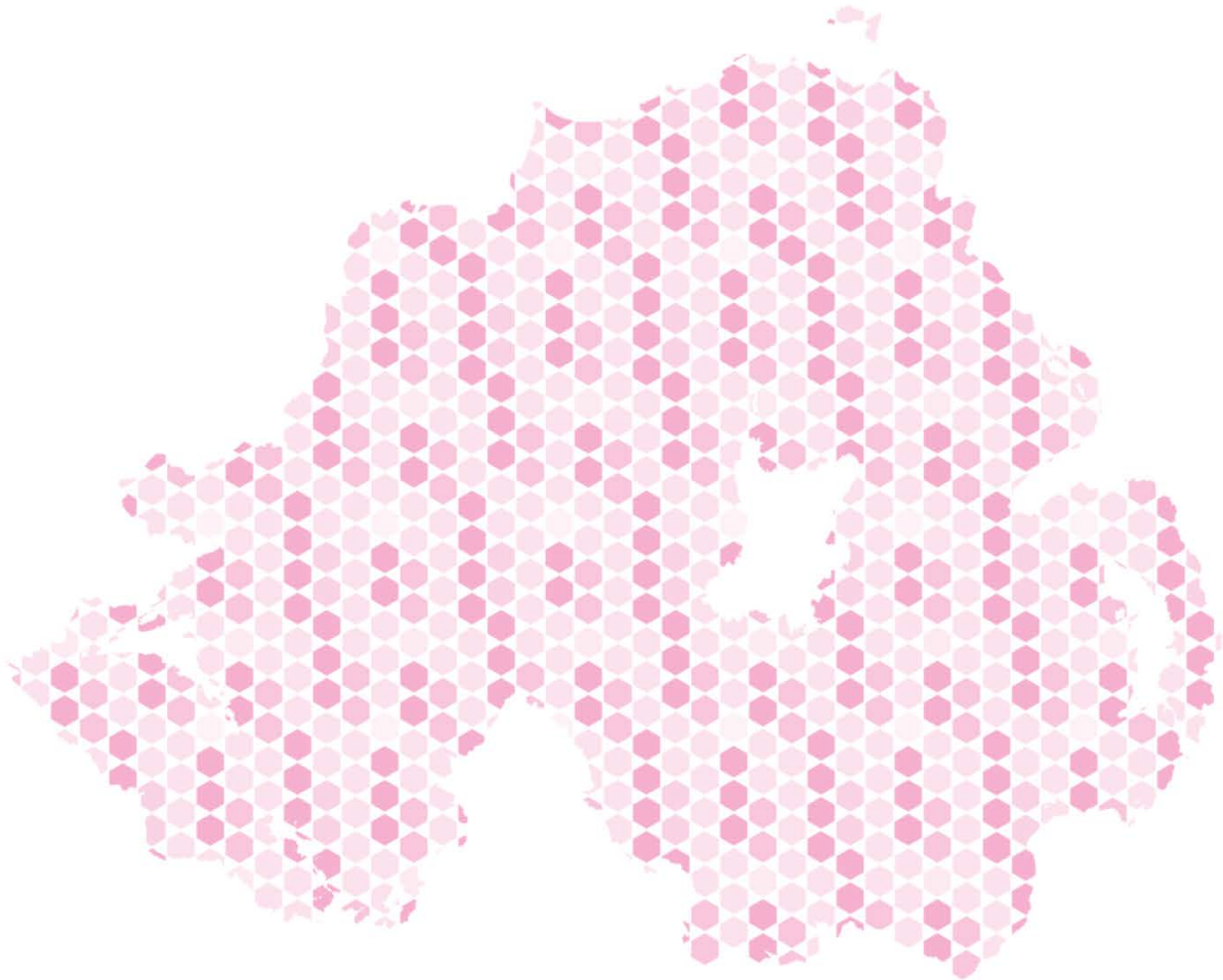


INDEPENDENT SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Clogher Valley Independent
Christian School, Fivemiletown,
County Tyrone

Report of an Inspection in
October 2018



The Education and Training Inspectorate
Promoting Improvement

Providing inspection services for:

Department of Education
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1. Context

Clogher Valley Independent Christian School is situated on the outskirts of Fivemiletown and has been providing Independent Christian education in the area for just over thirty years. The school is housed in the Clogher Valley Free Presbyterian Church complex and the accommodation meets health and safety standards. The school is one of seven Independent Christian schools in Northern Ireland and is administered by the Clogher Valley Free Presbyterian Church under the authority of the Presbytery Education Board of the Free Presbyterian Church.

Almost all the learners come from a wide rural catchment area; the enrolment has remained steady over the past three years. The learners are taught in composite groupings by key stage and at the time of the inspection year 12 pupils were absent as they were engaged in work-related learning. Clogher Valley Independent Christian School collaborates with two other Independent Christian Schools in order to offer a broader curriculum experience at key stage four.

Clogher Valley Independent Christian School				
	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Enrolment	30	20	22	19
% Attendance – primary age pupils	99	99	91	99
% Attendance – post-primary age pupils	97	98	96	99
FSME Percentage ¹	17%	25%	23%	21%
Number of children on SEN register	*	*	*	*
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

2. Focus of the inspection

The inspection focused on:

- the learners' achievements and standards in literacy and numeracy, in particular, how the school is addressing low attainment and under-achievement where applicable;
- whether the accommodation is suitable and meets health and safety standards;
- the quality of provision in the school, with a particular focus on the implementation of the procedures for safeguarding and pastoral care; and
- the quality of leadership and management.

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

3. Outcomes for learners

- As they progress through the school, the learners write with increasing accuracy and are able to organise and present ideas clearly in a variety of forms. They read aloud with growing confidence and, by the end of key stage 2 (KS2), use a variety of strategies to help them understand the meaning of unfamiliar vocabulary. However, due to limited opportunities to work and discuss together, the learners' talking and listening skills are under-developed. In numeracy, by the end of KS2, the children have insufficient opportunities to use mathematical language and apply strategies flexibly in a range of contexts. In order to develop the appropriate skills and strategies, the children would benefit from regular, well-structured mental mathematics activities, problem-solving tasks and practical work requiring a combination of mathematical processes.
- Over the past three years, of the small number of pupils entered for public examinations, all attained five or more GCSEs, including GCSEs in English and mathematics, at grades A* to C. Although, for the purpose of comparison, the numbers are small, the proportion is significantly above the corresponding Northern Ireland average for all types of schools.
- The school tracks the destinations of leavers; all of the learners progress at post-16 to another school or to work-based learning, with a significant proportion going on to higher education.
- The learners are friendly and welcome visitors to their school. They engage readily and respectfully with their peers and with adults. They are positively disposed to and enjoy their learning, in particular when participating in practical activities.

4. Quality of provision

- The quality of the planning, teaching and assessment for learning observed during the inspection was good. A majority of the lessons observed were effective in progressing the learning. In the best practice the teachers: provide good levels of individual support; place the learning in meaningful contexts; and, engage well with the learners through a range of appropriate strategies.
- In the primary composite class, the planning for learning does not take enough account of the range of age, abilities and interests of the children and does not offer enough challenge. The children in the foundation stage do not have sufficient access to a structured programme of active indoor and outdoor play.
- The curriculum is generally broad and balanced and is similar in content to the Northern Ireland curriculum, with a good blend of learning opportunities inside and outside the classroom. There is an adequate range of subjects available at KS4 to enable the learners to progress to the next stage of their education.

- The arrangements for the care and welfare of learners are effective. The recent introduction of house points, as part of the school's positive behaviour policy, extends the rewards system appropriately and reflects the school's ethos of recognising each learners' uniqueness, whilst learning in an ordered environment.

5. Leadership and management

- The school administrator is well informed about the life and work of the school, works closely with the principal, supports developments in the curriculum and provides regular updates to the management board.
- The principal is committed to ensuring a safe, happy learning environment for the learners. The classrooms are attractive and well-resourced with information and communication technology. Recent curricular and timetabling changes have resulted in better access to a breadth of learning experiences including sporting and cultural events, complemented by an extensive range of educational visits.
- Community links are enhanced through for example, a carol service and a soup lunch for senior citizens. Four members of staff hold qualifications to at least third level, including one member who holds a recognised teaching qualification. The staff avail of relevant professional development and regularly attend training provided by Presbytery Board.

6. Safeguarding

- The school is reviewing and updating appropriately the policies and documentation which guide the safeguarding of the learners and staff and which ensure good quality educational provision, including the child protection policy, the anti-bullying policy and the drugs policy.
- At the time of the inspection, the school was advised by ETI that the Code of Discipline outlined in the Parental Agreement was inappropriate. Importantly, the school gave an assurance that the sanction set out in the Code has not been implemented. Subsequently, the Code of Discipline has been revised appropriately.
- A check of all fire-fighting equipment has recently been undertaken. While a practical fire escape plan is in place, a full fire-risk assessment has not been conducted. The administrator and principal have subsequently arranged for the assessment to be carried out and to act on any recommendations.
- Based on the evidence available, the arrangements for safeguarding the learners reflect the guidance from the Department of Education.

7. Conclusion

Clogher Valley Independent Christian School provides efficient and suitable instruction for the learners². The school should continue to be registered to provide education.

² Education and Libraries Order (NI) 1986 Part IV 39 (1) c

APPENDIX A

Health and safety/accommodation

The school needed to ensure that a fire risk assessment be carried out by an appropriate body: this has subsequently been completed.

Inspection guidance

The guide to inspection of independent schools is available at: [Independent Schools Inspection Guidance](#).

Reporting terms used by the Education and Training Inspectorate

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%

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