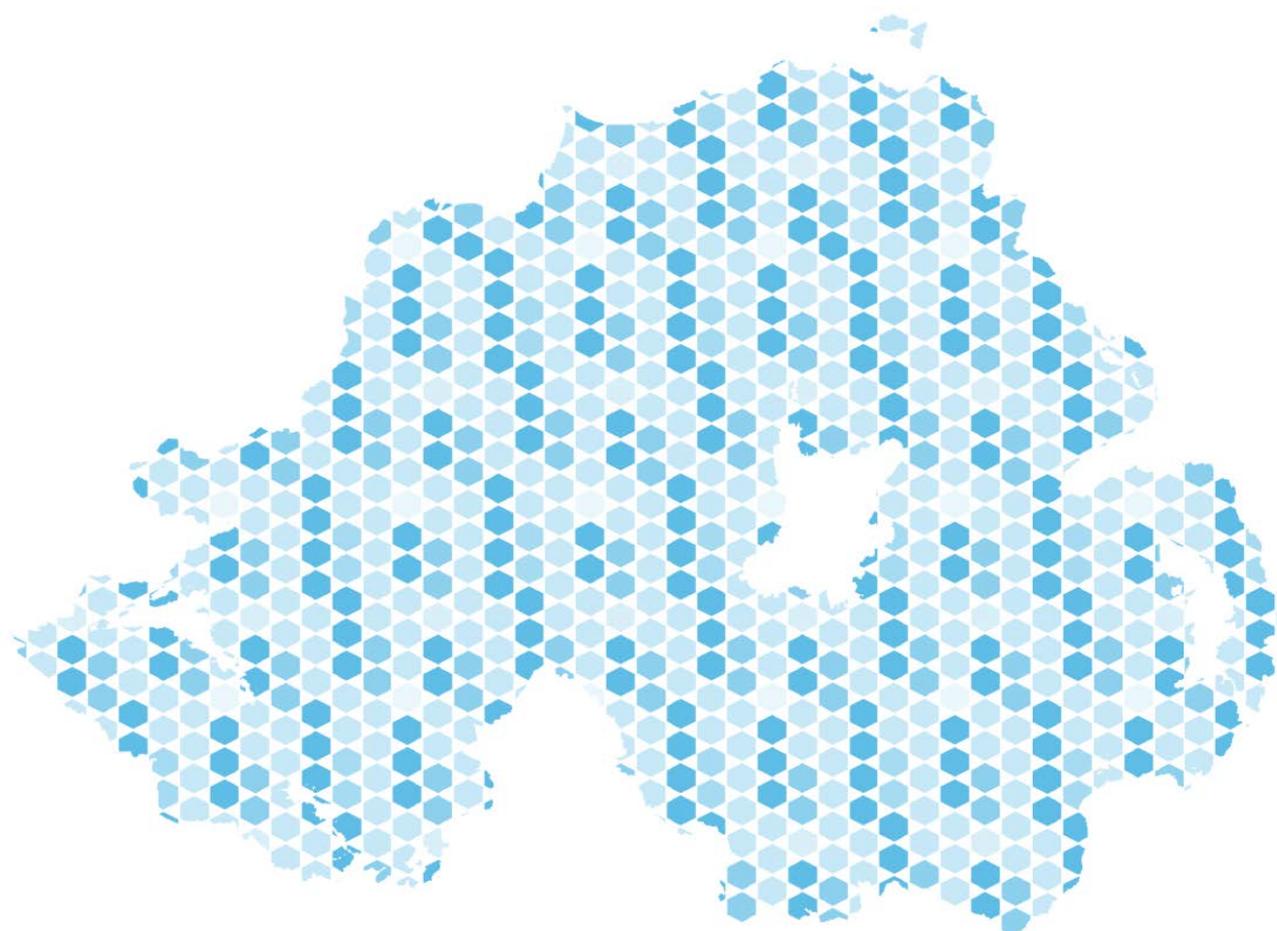


PRIMARY INSPECTION 2015-16



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Altishane Primary School,
Dunamanagh, County Tyrone

Report of an Inspection in
November 2015

eti

*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 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%

Performance levels

The Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) use the following performance levels when reporting on Achievement and standards, on Provision for learning and on Leadership and management:

Outstanding
Very good
Good
Important area(s) for improvement
Requires significant improvement
Requires urgent improvement

Overall effectiveness

The ETI use one of the following inspection outcomes when evaluating the overall effectiveness of the school:

The school has a high level of capacity for sustained improvement in the interest of all the learners. The ETI will monitor how the school sustains improvement.
The school demonstrates the capacity to identify and bring about improvement in the interest of all the learners. The ETI will monitor how the school sustains improvement.
The school needs to address (an) important area(s) for improvement in the interest of all the learners. The ETI will monitor and report on the school's progress in addressing the area(s) for improvement. There will be a formal follow-up inspection.
The school needs to address urgently the significant areas for improvement identified in the interest of all the learners. It requires external support to do so. The ETI will monitor and report on the school's progress in addressing the areas for improvement. There will be a formal follow-up inspection.

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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 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 learning and teaching, 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.

Fifty-three percent of parents and 100% of staff responded to the questionnaires. The responses to the parental questionnaires indicated very high levels of satisfaction with all aspects of the life and work of the school. In particular, the parents highlighted how the staff work very hard to meet well all of the children's individual needs and extend and enrich their learning and the very good progress which the children make in their all round development. All of the staff responses to the questionnaires were highly affirmative; the written responses indicated their commitment to the collaborative team approach to providing a child-centred learning environment and the continuous improvement of the children's learning experiences. The ETI has reported to the principal and representatives of the board of governors on the questionnaire responses and the discussions.

2. Focus of inspection

In order to promote improvement in the interest of all children, the purpose of inspection is, through effective linking of internal and external approaches, to evaluate:

- the children's achievements and standards with a particular focus on literacy; including how the school is addressing low attainment and underachievement where applicable;
- the quality of provision for learning with a particular focus on literacy; and
- the quality of leadership and management.

3. Context

Altishane Primary School is a small rural school in the Parish of Donagheady, approximately four miles from Dunamanagh. The school serves a scattered rural community and most of the children come from the surrounding townlands. Over the past few years, the enrolment has reduced steadily; the school is operating at approximately 35% capacity. The percentage of children entitled to free school meals has increased significantly in the past four years while the proportion requiring additional help with aspects of their learning has decreased slightly. There are two full time teachers, one principal release teacher (1 day per week) and three ancillary support staff. The school is currently in the process of working towards an amalgamation with two other parish schools.

Altishane Primary School	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Enrolment	29	26	21	17
% School attendance	96.7	98.7	97.8	N/A
% NI Primary school average	94.9	95.6	N/A	N/A
FSME Percentage ¹	28	31	43	59
No. of children on SEN register	7	5	5	*
% of children on SEN register	24	19	24	18
No. of children with statements of educational need	0	0	0	0

Source: data as held by the school.

* fewer than 5

N/A not available

4. Overall findings of the inspection

Overall effectiveness	High level of capacity for sustained improvement
Achievements and standards	Outstanding
Provision for learning	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Outstanding

5. Achievements and standards

- The children are highly motivated learners who respect one another as they work collaboratively and independently. They are quick to make connections across their learning and use their prior knowledge well in approaching investigative and more challenging tasks. The older children care sensitively for and help to guide the younger children. They communicate a real sense of belonging and pride in who they are and their rural community. The children have enjoyed success in various local, regional and national competitions.
- The school's internal performance data shows that all children, including those who require additional support with aspects of their learning, make progress in English and mathematics in line with their ability level; more than two-fifths achieve above expectation.
- All of the children are confident and articulate in explaining and sharing their learning with one another, the staff and other adults. The younger children are developing well their ability to read and write independently and to express their ideas at increasing length using a widening range of vocabulary. By key stage 2, the children write very well across a range of forms; the many samples of their writing viewed demonstrate a clear understanding of style and audience. Throughout the school, the collections, displays and folders of the children's writing show progressing sophistication and creativity and are presented very attractively.

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

- The children identified with special educational needs in the school make progress in all aspects of their learning and personal development, both in relation to their identified needs and in line with their ability.
- Throughout the school, the children use information and communication technology (ICT) very proficiently to extend their learning and as a result, their skills are highly developed.

6. Provision for learning

- The teaching observed during the inspection was mostly very good or outstanding. The teachers ensure that the purpose for learning is clear and connect creatively key aspects of the children's knowledge and skills across the curriculum. They extend the children's thinking through skilful individualised questioning which draws out and builds further each child's understanding.
- The teachers improve and reflect continuously on the planning, evaluation and assessment to match closely the needs of all the children.
- The staff are highly committed to continuing professional development. They have gained a variety of relevant additional qualifications to enable them to identify and respond effectively to the children's specific learning needs using a wide range of tailored strategies. The children's needs are identified early and the individual education plans contain explicit detail including measurable targets and specific teaching strategies to help the children to improve their work. The classroom assistant supports the children's learning very well.
- The teachers improve continuously the school's literacy programme through extending their range of approaches and strategies, including the highly effective use of ICT. There is a clear line of progression from year 1 to year 7 to ensure balanced coverage and continuity in the holistic development of the children's talking and listening, reading and writing. In the foundation stage and key stage 1, the children need more progressive and challenging opportunities to apply these skills at an appropriate level in their play-based learning and daily routines.
- A particular strength of the provision is the level of creativity in the children's learning experiences. Key features include the children's highly developed ability in art and design, using a wide range of materials and how capably they use ICT to support, extend and express their learning across the curriculum. As a consequence of the teachers' high expectations and their adept infusion of these skills, the children produce work of a very high standard.
- The outstanding quality of the pastoral care is evident in the very caring, inclusive family ethos which is valued clearly by the children, staff, governors and the parents. All members of the school community, especially the children, live out the school vision of "*developing an understanding of ourselves, our community and the wider world.*" This is reflected in the children's local history studies, environmental projects and the celebration of their cultural heritage.
- The school gives very good attention to healthy eating and physical activity through, for example, promoting the provision of healthy snacks and the children's access to after-school sports activities to promote healthy lifestyle choices.

7. Leadership and management

- All of the children, the staff, governors and parents take a great pride in their school, its rich history and the important learning associated with the local area. As a consequence, the school development planning processes and associated actions for improvement flow from the culture and ethos of collegiality and community which characterise all aspects of the school's provision.
- The school's processes for self-evaluation leading to improvement are well developed and rigorous. The senior leadership, staff team and governors identify accurately and address systematically the areas for improvement. There are appropriate arrangements for consultation and review of the school's progress in meeting successfully its targets and the effective associated use of performance data to monitor and evaluate the children's progress in their learning.
- The governors focus continuously on maintaining and improving further the quality of the learning experiences and standards of attainment for all the children. Together with the highly-skilled and dedicated senior leadership and staff, the governors are pragmatic about the school's future and the requirement for change in the local area, emphasising the need to manage strategically the provision for the children in moving forward. Based on the evidence presented at the time of inspection, the ETI's evaluation is that there can be high confidence in the aspects of governance evaluated.
- 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 children in year 6 said that they feel safe and happy in school and know what to do if they have any concerns about their well-being.
- 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. Overall effectiveness

The school has a high level of capacity for sustained improvement in the interest of all the learners. The ETI will monitor how the school sustains improvement.

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