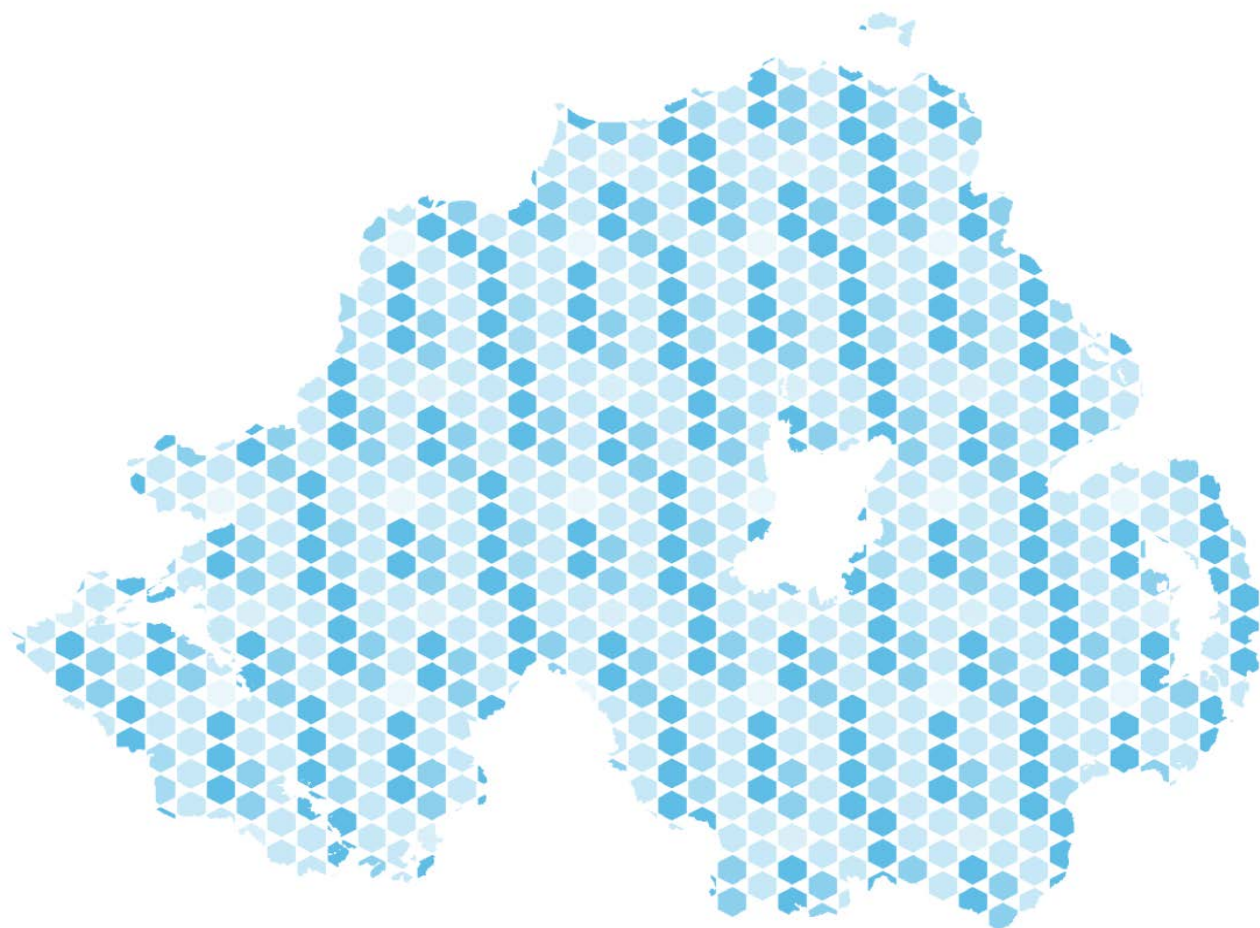


# PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training  
Inspectorate

Belvoir Park Primary School,  
Nursery Unit and Social  
Communication and Speech and  
Language Provision, Belfast

Report of an Inspection in  
January 2016

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

Eight percent of parents and sixty-six percent of the teaching and non-teaching staff responded to the questionnaires. Most of the responses from the parental and staff questionnaires were positive about the life and work of the school. In particular the parents appreciate the helpful and regular information they receive about their children's learning and the way in which staff support the development of the children's personal, social and emotional skills. The staff responses highlighted the way in which the curriculum is tailored to meet the individual interests and needs of the children, and how the well-being and care of the children is supported in school. The ETI has reported to the principal and a representative of the board of governors the views of the parents and staff and the main issues emerging from the questionnaires 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 in literacy and numeracy; including how the school is addressing low attainment and underachievement where applicable;
- quality of provision for learning in the school including the nursery unit and the social communication and speech and language unit; and
- quality of leadership and management.

## **3. Context**

Belvoir Park Primary School is a controlled primary school situated in the Belvoir Park Estate in Belfast. In addition to the mainstream classes the school has an integrated double nursery unit, three social communication classes and two speech and language classes. Most of the children attending the school come from the local area with a small number in the nursery unit coming from further afield. The enrolment in the primary school has risen steadily over the past four years and the nursery unit has maintained full capacity for the last three years.

<b>Belvoir Park Primary School</b>	<b>2012-13</b>	<b>2013-14</b>	<b>2014-15</b>	<b>2015-16</b>
Enrolment	182	188	208	210
Enrolment in LSC	34	36	32	42
Enrolment in the Nursery Unit	51	52	52	52
% School attendance	92.9	94.1	93.6	92.2
% NI Primary school average	94.9	95.6	95.4	N/A
FSME Percentage <sup>1</sup>	36.5	47.8	47.9	46.4
% of children on SEN register	38.5	41.5	43.3	44.8
No. of children with statements of educational need including the LSC	41	41	41	50
No. of newcomer children	11	15	22	19

**Source:** data as held by the school.

\* fewer than 5

N/A not available

#### **4. Overall findings of the inspection**

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Capacity to identify and bring about improvement</b>
<b>Achievements and standards</b>	Good
<b>Provision for learning</b>	Good
<b>Leadership and management</b>	Good
<b>Nursery Unit</b>	Good
<b>Social Communication and Speech and Language Provision</b>	Very Good

#### **5. Achievements and standards**

- The children in the mainstream classes, the nursery unit and the social communication and speech and language provision classes are developing positive attitudes and dispositions to learning. The children are well behaved; they are welcoming to visitors and courteous to their peers and staff. The rewards system throughout the school contributes to the children's enthusiasm and motivation and they settle quickly to the planned learning activities.
- The school's performance data shows that most children, including those who require additional support with aspects of their learning, make progress in English and mathematics in line with their ability or above expectation.
- The children in the nursery unit are making good progress in most areas of the pre-school curriculum. They co-operate well with the daily routines and respond quickly to the strategies used to promote positive behaviour. Most of the children are developing good levels of independence and concentration and can sustain their play productively at a range of activities for prolonged periods. The children are developing well their listening skills; they listen attentively to group stories and most of them participate well during songs and rhymes. A majority of the children are beginning to understand early mathematical concepts including shape, size and capacity. The children identified as requiring help with aspects of their learning are progressing well, with adult support.

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

- The children in the foundation stage are making good progress in developing their language and literacy skills. Throughout the school the quality of the children's written work in the samples viewed is of a good quality. By the end of key stage 2 most of the children read with fluency and confidence. Almost all of the children communicate and co-operate well with one another in group and paired work and contribute confidently to whole class discussions.
- The children demonstrate very positive attitudes towards mathematics; they engage well in the varied learning activities provided for them and have a good grasp of the importance of numeracy to everyday life. In the foundation stage the children develop appropriately their mathematical language and understanding of shape, space and measures and make competent use of the practical resources and games to support their learning. The teachers need to provide greater opportunities for the children to apply these skills more widely, independently and creatively during their play based learning sessions and daily routines. As the children progress through the school, learning is consolidated well and the children become more confident in their mathematical knowledge, skills and understanding so that, by the end of key stage 2, most of the children achieve good standards in numeracy.
- The children in the social communication and speech and language classes make very good progress in literacy and numeracy, in line with their ability, and develop social skills that will help them make transitions at each stage of learning. They develop oral skills, confidence and resilience through whole-class discussion and well-conceived opportunities to work together.
- The children develop their skills in using information and communication technology (UICIT) as they progress through the school, so that, by year 7, they achieve good standards. The co-ordinator for ICT has appropriately identified the need to further integrate ICT as a medium for learning within lessons, to ensure consistent progression across every year group and to enhance further the learning experiences for all of the children.

## **6. Provision for learning**

- The teachers prepare detailed yearly, medium and daily planners to guide the work of the children. In the best practice assessment information and evaluations are used to inform future planning and provide differentiated learning and teaching opportunities. Within the social communication and speech and language unit the planning is individualised to meet the complex needs of the children.
- The teachers mark the children's work regularly but there is a need to develop a more consistent approach to the usefulness of the written feedback to improve further the standards the children's achieve. In the lessons observed nearly all of the teaching was good or better with a significant minority very good. In the best practice the lessons are set within meaningful real life contexts and resources are used effectively to support the children's understanding. The teachers make skilful use of effective questioning to extend the children's thinking, consolidate the learning and develop the children's oral skills. The classroom assistants provide effective support for the children's learning and social skills. In the less effective practice the lessons lacked pace and the activities did not provide sufficient opportunity for learning.

- In the nursery unit the detailed written planning ensures the children are provided with a range of interesting activities across the 6 areas of learning both indoors and outdoors. The daily timetable is well managed with very smooth and unobtrusive transitions between each part of the day. A range of assessment information is used well to identify children who require early intervention and support and provides useful initial information to parents. The planning and assessment need to be reviewed and developed further to ensure children's progress is tracked more systematically and the information is used to match the programme more fully to all of the children's stages of development. The staff are caring and nurturing towards the children and in the best practice they exploit very well the learning during group sessions and within the play activities to promote language and learning.
- The learning experiences for the foundation stage children incorporate a good range of teaching approaches and practical materials during literacy and numeracy sessions to support their early literacy skills and the development of their mathematical thinking.
- The school provides a wide range of internal and external support to develop the children's reading skills including the establishment of a new, main library which complements the well-stocked class libraries. While the school has prioritised the improvement of the children's spelling through homeworks and regular tests, this important area must also be developed through wider and more imaginative opportunities for extended writing in order to improve further the children's writing and research skills.
- The children access a broad and balanced range of learning experiences across the main aspects of mathematics; this is supported well by opportunities to consolidate the learning in other curricular areas. An appropriate emphasis is placed on developing the children's understanding and use of mathematical language and the learning is well-supported through the effective use of practical materials. In order to improve the numeracy provision, the school needs to develop further its approaches to differentiation within mathematics and provide more opportunities for open-ended investigative work to increase the level of challenge promote greater flexibility in the children's thinking.
- The children who require additional support in aspects of their learning are identified early and appropriate interventions are put in place. There is an effective well-planned programme of withdrawal and in-class support from dedicated teachers, complemented by well-established liaison with relevant external agencies, to meet the children's literacy, numeracy, behavioural and emotional needs. A key priority in the development of the special educational needs provision is the on-going review of the individual education plans (IEPs) and arrangements for monitoring the children's progress.
- The quality of provision in the social communication and speech and language classes is very good. Forty-two children attend the two speech and language classes and the three social communication classes. They benefit from the positive ethos and well-embedded routines in all the classes. A particular strength of the provision is the effective co-operation between the teachers and the classroom assistants to engage the children and enable them to overcome barriers to their learning. The children in the unit classes benefit from regular integration with their peers in the mainstream classes, in after-school clubs and in such whole-school events as the annual nativity play.

- The quality of the pastoral care is very good and is a key strength of the school. The ethos of mutual respect and inclusion is reflected in the positive and supportive learning environment within the classrooms and around the school. The staff are highly committed to the care and well-being of the children during the school day and during the well structured after-school arrangements. As they progress through the school the children have opportunities to experience leadership roles and develop their sense of responsibility when participating in, for example, the school council, the eco-council or the playground 'buddy system'. The very effective programme for personal development encourages the children to empathise with others during role-play scenarios thereby promoting higher order thinking skills.
- The school gives very good attention to promoting healthy eating and physical activity thereby encouraging the children to adopt healthy lifestyles.

## **7. Leadership and management**

- The leadership and management is highly committed to the well-being of the children and to the on-going improvement of the provision within the school. There is a comprehensive school development plan<sup>2</sup> which identifies appropriately key priorities for school improvement. The associated action plans need to be more focused on outcomes and the learning experiences of all the children, in order to guide better the process of monitoring and evaluation. The available performance data is analysed and used well by senior leadership to identify the needs of individual children and curricular priorities for development. The school has identified appropriately the need for more extensive consultation with key stakeholders within the development cycle of the three year school development plan.
- The school links with a network of voluntary and statutory agencies and offers a range of extra-curricular opportunities and educational visits to develop further the children's learning experiences, their interests and social interactions in a safe environment. While the parents contribute to the life and work of the school through support at events such as the Christmas Fair and Harvest service the school is working hard to forge further links with the parents.
- Based on the evidence available at the time of inspection, the ETI's evaluation is that there can be confidence in the aspects of governance evaluated. There are aspects of governance to review, namely to build further the capacity of the recently reconstituted governing body to contribute to the monitoring and evaluation processes within the school.
- 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 reported that they are happy and secure in school and know who to contact and what to do if they have any concerns about their well-being.

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<sup>2</sup> The school development plan meets the requirements of the School Development Planning Regulations (NI) 2010.

## **8. Overall effectiveness**

Belvoir Park Primary 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. In particular the need to:

- develop a more rigorous approach to monitoring and evaluation strategies in order to disseminate the good practice in the teaching and so improve further the quality of the children's achievements.

**Health and Safety**

1. The school needs to review urgently the arrangements for security access to three doors towards the rear of the school building.

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