

Education and Training Inspectorate

PRIMARY INSPECTION



Churchtown Primary School, Cookstown, County Tyrone

Controlled, co-educational DE ref no (501-6141)

Report of an Inspection in March 2019



The Education and Training Inspectorate
Promoting Improvement

Providing inspection services for:

Department of Education
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CONTENTS

SECTION	PAGE
1. Context	1
2. Children's, parents' and staff questionnaire responses	1
3. Focus of the inspection	2
4. Overall findings of the inspection	2
5. Outcomes for learners	2
6. Quality of provision	2
7. Leadership and management	3
8. Safeguarding	3
9. Overall effectiveness	3

APPENDICES

- A. Inspection methodology and evidence base
- B. Reporting terms used by the Education and Training Inspectorate

INTRODUCTION

1. Context

Churchtown Primary School is a controlled primary school situated outside Cookstown in County Tyrone. The school is led and managed by an executive principal¹. Almost all of the children attending the school come from the surrounding rural area and the enrolment has increased slightly over the last four years. Over the same period, the percentage of children entitled to free school meals has decreased, while the proportion requiring additional help with aspects of their learning has remained steady. The school is committed to a shared education partnership with a local maintained school and reports that this partnership is beneficial to the children, staff and wider community.

Churchtown Primary School	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Enrolment	32	30	29	36
% School attendance	95.3	96.3	94.7	N/A
% NI Primary School average	95.5	95.5	94.9	N/A
FSME ² Percentage	25.0	20	20.7	16.6
No. of children on SEN register	5	5	*	5
% of children on SEN register	15.6	16.7	13.8	13.8
No. of children with statements of educational needs	*	*	*	*

Source: data as held by the school.

* fewer than 5

N/A not available

2. Children's, parents' and staff questionnaire responses

Approximately 20% of parents, 55% of staff and 83% of the year 7 children responded to the online, confidential questionnaires; all of these responses were highly positive.

The responses to the parental questionnaire and the additional written comments highlighted the parents' contentment with their children's learning experiences, in particular, the pastoral and learning support provided for individual children and the range of additional enrichment opportunities for learning.

The responses to the staff questionnaire emphasised the very positive working relationships within the school, their appreciation for the support of the governors, parents and community and the very happy and caring environment for learning.

The responses to the year 7 online questionnaire indicated the children's enjoyment of their learning in school and the range of extra-curricular activities; in particular, the children mentioned their enjoyment of the shared learning work with their maintained school partner.

The ETI has communicated to the principal and the chair of the board of governors the main findings and any individual issues arising from the questionnaires.

¹ An executive principal is responsible for the leadership and management of more than one school on a full-time basis.

² The term 'FSME Percentage' refers to the percentage of children entitled to free school meals.

3. Focus of the inspection

In order to promote improvement in the interest of all children, the inspection linked internal and external approaches to evaluate the:

- outcomes for children with a particular focus on literacy;
- quality of provision with a particular focus on literacy including across the curriculum; and
- quality of leadership and management.

4. Overall findings of the inspection

Overall effectiveness	High level of capacity for sustained improvement
Outcomes for learners	Very good
Quality of provision	Very good
Leadership and management	Very good

KEY FINDINGS

5. Outcomes for learners

- The children have very good talking and listening skills; they contribute well to class discussions and express opinions with confidence. The year 7 children, with whom the inspectors met, spoke enthusiastically about their enjoyment of reading and discussed their favourite authors and genres. As they progress through the school, the children write for an increasing range of purposes, with depth of expression.
- All of the children, including those who have been identified as needing support with aspects of their learning, make very good progress and achieve in line with their ability.
- The children are well-disposed to learning; they participate with enthusiasm in their lessons and have good levels of concentration and perseverance. The children are polite, respectful to one another and to adults and their behaviour is exemplary. They take on leadership roles with enthusiasm, such as, reading to younger children, being 'playground buddies' or members of the Eco-committee and are justly proud of being awarded their second Eco-School Green Flag.

6. Quality of provision

- The school has recently developed the planning for learning; this work is making a positive impact on the children's learning. All of the teaching observed during the inspection was effective in developing the children's learning; most of the lessons were very good. These lessons were characterised by highly effective questioning which encouraged the children to think critically, contextualised learning and resources were used to good effect; the children were fully engaged and enjoying their lessons.

- The school is very effective in identifying children's individual needs and provides appropriate interventions and support; the classroom assistants support the children well. The individual education plans for children with special educational needs are effective in guiding this support, thereby enabling the children to make progress in their learning and development.
- Based on the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the school's approach to the care and welfare of the children impacts positively on learning, teaching and outcomes. The children experience a very caring and supportive learning environment.

7. Leadership and management

- Leadership at all levels is focused clearly on fulfilling the school's mission statement of 'Caring, Believing, Achieving' through their shared commitment to meeting the needs of all of the children. The staff work collegially and resolutely to improve further the children's well-being, learning experiences and outcomes.
- The school development plan is informed well by the school's self-evaluation work which includes the effective analysis of the school's internal qualitative and quantitative data and information from the extensive consultation with the children, parents, staff and governors. The associated action plans are clear and succinct, guide well the school's improvement work and are impacting positively on the children's experiences. Progress against the targets set is monitored regularly and a very good focus is placed on the professional development of staff, which is aligned closely to the school's priorities for development.
- The governors are very well informed about the work and life of the school, supportive of its developmental work and the cross-community dimension. They manage the resources very effectively and, in recent years, have undertaken challenging work including the renegotiation of leadership roles and responsibilities to enable the effective management of the school in the best interests of the children and their families. Based on the evidence available at the time of inspection, the ETI's evaluation is that there can be a high degree of confidence in the aspects of governance evaluated.
- It will be important that the employing authority, school governors and the staff continue to 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. Safeguarding

- Based on the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the arrangements for safeguarding children reflect the guidance from the Department of Education. The children report that they feel safe and happy in school and are aware of what to do if they have any concerns about their safety or well-being.

9. Overall effectiveness

Churchtown Primary 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.

Inspection methodology and evidence base

The ETI's Inspection and Self-Evaluation Framework is available on the ETI website: [The Inspection and Self-Evaluation Framework \(ISEF\): Effective Practice and Self-Evaluation Questions for Primary | Education Training Inspectorate](#)

Inspectors observe learning and teaching, scrutinise documentation and the children's written work and hold formal and informal discussions with children, teachers and staff with specific responsibilities.

The arrangements for inspection include:

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

Reporting terms used by the Education and Training Inspectorate

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 ETI use the following performance levels when reporting on outcomes for learners, quality of provision and leadership and management³:

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

The ETI use the following levels when reporting on governance:

High degree of confidence
Confidence
Limited confidence

The ETI use the following levels when reporting on safeguarding:

Reflects the guidance
Reflects broadly the guidance
Unsatisfactory

The ETI use the following levels when reporting on care and welfare:

Impacts positively on learning, teaching and outcomes for learners.
Does not impact positively enough on learning, teaching and outcomes for learners.

³ And the overall provision in a unit, as applicable.

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 in 12 to 18 months.
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 in 18 to 24 months.

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