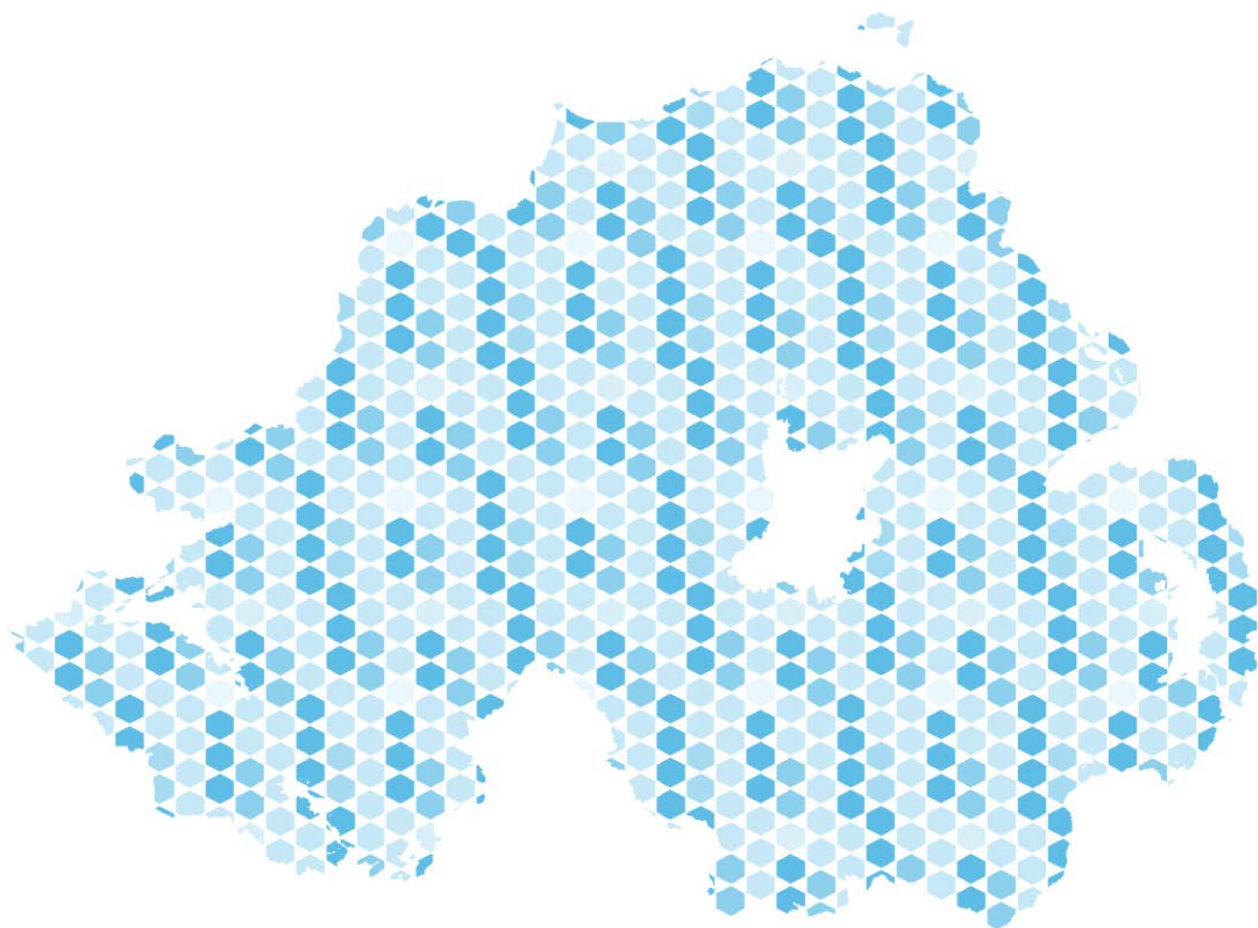


PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Dundela Infants School
and Nursery Unit, Belfast

Controlled Infant School and Nursery Unit

Report of an Inspection in
November 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 Achievements 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: [Together Towards Improvement primary | Education Training Inspectorate](#).

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 groups of children; and
- the opportunity for the parents, teaching and support staff to complete a confidential questionnaire.

Most of the responses from the confidential parental questionnaire were highly positive about the quality of the provision in the school. In particular, the parents reported their appreciation of the good progress their children make, the welcoming ethos and the opportunity to participate in literacy and numeracy workshops. Almost all of the responses from the teaching and support staff questionnaire were highly positive and indicated an appreciation of the team approach to their work, their participation in staff development and the effective communication within the school. Fewer than five parents responded to the questionnaire within the nursery unit. The ETI has reported to the principal and a representative of the board of governors 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
- quality of leadership and management.

3. Context

Dundela Infants Primary School and Nursery Unit is a controlled infant primary school with a two-class intake nursery unit which provides full-time places. The school caters for children in years one to three; almost all of the children transfer to Strandtown Primary School for years four to seven. Most of the children attending the school and the nursery unit come from the local area. The enrolment has remained stable with an increasing trend in the number of newcomer children. The school operates at almost full capacity. A new vice-principal and two new teachers were appointed and took up post in September 2016. At the time of the inspection, there was a substitute teacher within the nursery unit.

Dundela Infant School and Nursery Unit	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
Enrolment	248	246	246	239
% School attendance	94.4	94.6	94.8	N/A
% NI Primary school average	95.6	95.4	N/A	N/A
FSME Percentage ¹	36.7	38.2	41.5	38.0
% of children on SEN register	19.0	19.9	18.7	16.3
No. of children with statements of educational need	*	7	8	7
No. of newcomer children	15	24	32	38

Source: data as held by the school.

* fewer than 5

4. Overall findings of the inspection

Overall effectiveness	Important areas for improvement
Achievements and standards	Good
Provision for learning	Good
Leadership and management	Important areas for improvement
Nursery Unit	Important areas for improvement

5. Achievements and standards

- The children achieve good standards in literacy. They engage confidently with the adults and their peers and listen attentively. The children are developing their reading skills well and, by year 3, the most able read with good fluency and increasing expression. Throughout the school, the children enjoy reading; during the inspection, groups of children were observed reading from a range of fiction and non-fiction texts and employing effectively a range of reading strategies. The children are confident in using their phonetic knowledge and write to a very good standard; by year 3, they are confident in writing across a range of writing types.
- The children achieve good standards in numeracy. Their work is accurate and well presented and they are secure in their knowledge of key number concepts. The children enjoy and have a positive attitude towards their mathematics and, by year 3, the most able can use a good range of mathematical language to talk about their activities and to explain their thinking. They are developing well their understanding of handling data as evident in their confident use of a range of graphs. The children need more frequent opportunities to use these skills for independent problem solving and mathematical investigations.
- The children use information and communication technology (ICT) programmes to create pictures and to consolidate aspects of their learning in literacy and numeracy. They are capable of using ICT in a more integrated, challenging and creative way.

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

- The children have very positive attitudes and dispositions for learning. The daily routines are well established, they settle quickly to their tasks and work well in pairs, small groups and independently. They persevere with tasks and, when provided with sufficient time, complete activities to a good standard. The children are not sufficiently confident to take risks in their learning, exercise their own decisions or develop their own creative ideas. Their thinking skills and personal capabilities are underdeveloped.
- The children who require additional support with aspects of their learning are making good progress in meeting the targets on their individual education plans. They respond well to the good use of visual prompts and strategies being implemented by staff to scaffold their learning and promote positive behaviour. The newcomer children in the school are making very good progress in the development of their language and communication skills.
- In the nursery unit, almost all of the children are well-settled and their behaviour is very good. They are increasingly secure in the routines of the day and develop well their social skills and understanding of early mathematical concepts during the range of play opportunities available to them. Most of the children play collaboratively and purposefully and are beginning to form friendships with each other. Their fine motor skills are developing well as they use, with increasing skill, the good variety of tools available across the play areas. The children engage enthusiastically in energetic play during the outdoor sessions and are developing well their running, jumping, climbing and balancing skills. The children's own creative expression and curiosity are less well developed.

6. Provision for learning

- The quality of the learning and teaching ranged from outstanding to having important areas for improvement. The majority of the teaching was good; one-fifth had important areas for improvement.
- The teachers have high expectations of the children's behaviour; there is a settled and attentive learning environment within all of the classrooms. Effective open-ended questioning by the teachers encourages the children to give extended oral responses. In the very best practice, in one-fifth of the lessons, the rigorous evaluations of learning are linked well to detailed planning for groups and individual children, resulting in learning tasks that are well matched to the full range of needs and abilities within the class. The children are challenged well to develop further their thinking skills. In the less effective practice, in one-fifth of the lessons, over - direction by the teacher, limited time to complete tasks and lack of sufficient differentiation impacted negatively on the extent of the children's learning. The best practice needs to be shared and disseminated to give a more consistent approach to learning and teaching across the school.

- The teachers mark the children's work well and provide them with both oral and age-appropriate written feedback to reflect on their work and make improvements. The classroom assistants are deployed very effectively and make a significant contribution to the children's learning under the guidance of the teachers. The teachers make good use of ICT as a teaching tool. The planning for activity- and play-based learning does not focus clearly on the learning outcomes and appropriate opportunities to develop further the children's own creative ideas and application of their literacy and numeracy skills.
- Children with a range of additional needs are identified early using appropriate data and teacher knowledge; relevant targets are set and reviewed regularly. Withdrawal and in-class sessions for literacy and numeracy are well planned and organised effectively for small groups and individuals identified as requiring additional support. The staff development accessed through a local special school and the subsequent use of additional specialist reading resources are enhancing further the provision for children who require support with their reading. The sessions to provide support in language and communication for newcomer children are having a positive impact on their learning and confidence.
- The staff's consistent application of the line of progression for reading that indicates the use of a range of teaching strategies has resulted in very good small group reading sessions across the classes. The teachers employ skilful questioning to develop well the children's understanding of the text and their enjoyment of the stories. The staff have adopted an approach to phonics which is designed to meet the needs of all learners and the children are becoming confident in applying these skills in both reading and writing. The management of the group activities, however, needs to provide the children with sufficient time to complete their work, consolidate their learning and provide a better range of open-ended activities to develop further the children's thinking skills.
- The quality of the provision for numeracy is good. There is a good emphasis on: developing the children's mathematical language; providing concrete learning experiences using practical materials; and, using a suitable range of teaching strategies. The mental mathematics approaches are used well to develop the children's mental agility. The planning and organisation of the mathematical tasks and use of plenary sessions lack a clear focus on the quality and extent of the learning taking place for each child. The children require more consistent opportunities to apply their mathematical knowledge and skills during play-based learning activities and the daily routines.
- The provision in the nursery unit has important areas for improvement. The processes of observation, assessment and planning are not sufficiently developed and are limiting the quality and consistency of the children's learning experiences across most of the areas of the pre-school curriculum, particularly the investigative skills in the World Around Us. There are good opportunities for learning in early mathematics and in physical development and movement, which are having a positive impact on the children's engagement, enjoyment and development in these areas. The quality of the staff interactions requires improvement to enable the staff to: respond more effectively to the children's individual interests; and, use more effectively open-ended questions to extend the children's language and thinking skills. In particular, consideration should be given to improving the quality of the provision for, and the staff's interactions with, children for whom English is not their first language.

- The quality of the pastoral care provision is good. The caring and supportive working relationships between the children and the teaching and support staff contribute to the welcoming, respectful and inclusive ethos which is conducive to learning. The children are well supported to make smooth transitions between classes and into their next school. The staff need to develop further opportunities for the children to take on roles and responsibilities, make decisions and contribute their ideas and to consider how to celebrate and reflect more fully the increasing cultural diversity within the school.

7. Leadership and management

- The leadership and management is an important area for improvement. Currently, the senior management team does not implement a sufficiently strategic and systematic approach to whole school improvement underpinned by more rigorous monitoring and evaluation of the quality of the provision and the outcomes for the children. There have been significant changes in the leadership and management at all levels. The school is in the early stage of developing a more distributive and collegial style of leadership with the development of a new senior leadership team, curricular teams and new co-ordinators in most key roles. These roles and responsibilities need to be more clearly defined and developed.
- The staff have gathered an extensive range of data by which to track the children's progress; they are beginning to analyse and use this information more effectively. There is evidence of improvement in the areas prioritised in the current school development plan. This includes: the introduction of additional support for numeracy and newcomer children; and, the development of writing, phonics and reading strategies which have impacted positively on the quality of provision and the standards achieved by the children.
- The parents are encouraged to participate in the life of the school through, for example, the Parent Teacher Association and the workshops focusing on how to help their child's learning in literacy and numeracy. Visitors from the local community enhance the children's learning experiences within the World Around Us topics in the school. The school has very effective links with the other infant schools in the local area to ensure the effective sharing of information and a smooth transition for the children to their next school. Links with a range of other schools and health professionals are used well to signpost parents for support and sharing of best practice.
- 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 is an aspect of governance to review, namely to:
 - develop further their role in monitoring the standards the children achieve across all aspects of the curriculum.

- On the basis of the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the school's arrangements for safeguarding children are unsatisfactory and do not reflect adequately the guidance issued by the Department of Education. In particular, the school needs to:
 - ensure that appropriate risk assessments are in place within the nursery unit;
 - develop more comprehensive written procedures for changing children in the nursery unit and ensure that the nursery unit staff are fully aware of, and, apply them;
 - provide information on child protection and complaints to parents of the newcomer children in the school and the nursery unit in a language appropriate to them; and
 - complete a Relationships and Sexuality Education Policy, following appropriate consultation, as set out in DE Circular 2015/22.

In discussions with the inspectors, the children in year 3 reported that they felt happy and safe in school and know what to do if they have any concerns about their well-being.

8. Overall effectiveness

Dundela Infants Primary School and Nursery Unit needs to address important areas for improvement in the interest of all the learners.

The areas for improvement are to:

- develop a more strategic and systematic approach to whole school self-evaluation and improvement by leadership and management at all levels ;
- improve the consistency in the learning and teaching;
- improve the quality of the provision in the nursery unit; and
- address the unsatisfactory safeguarding arrangements.

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 12 to 18 months.

The ETI will also return to the school within six weeks to monitor and report on progress in addressing the safeguarding issues.

ADDENDUM TO THE REPORT ON THE INSPECTION OF DUNDELA INFANTS PRIMARY SCHOOL AND NURSERY UNIT

SAFEGUARDING

In line with the child protection/safeguarding procedures of the Education and Training Inspectorate, the ETI returned to the school on the 23 February 2017.

The purpose of the visit was to ensure that the safeguarding issues, evaluated as unsatisfactory at the time of the inspection, had been addressed.

On the basis of the evidence available, the revised arrangements now reflect the guidance issued by the Department of Education.

During the interim period, the school had received support from the Child Protection School Support Service of the School Development Service of the Education Authority.

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