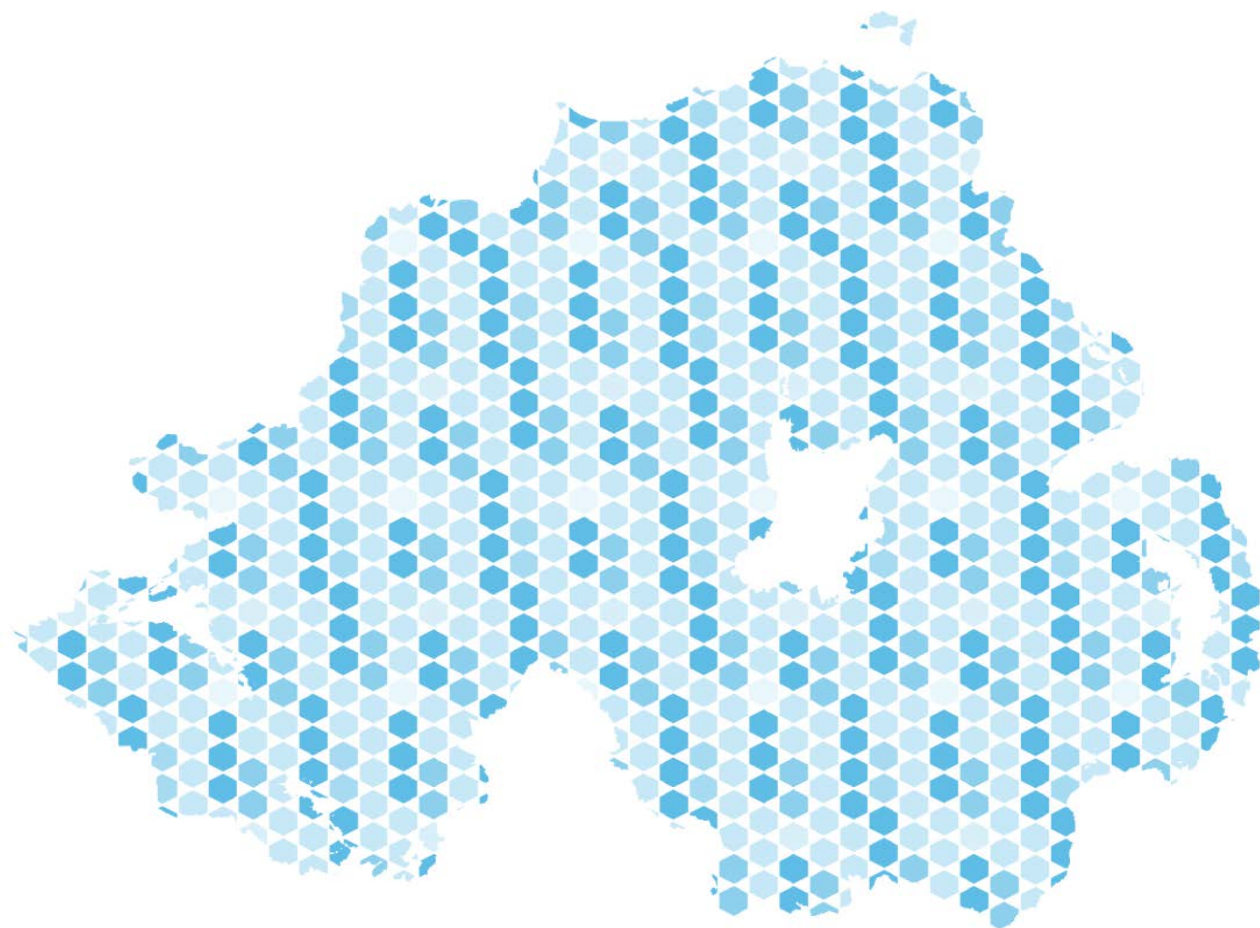


PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Gibson Primary School,
Omagh, County Tyrone

Controlled, co-educational

Report of an Inspection in
October 2016



Providing inspection services for:

Department of Education
Department for the Economy
and other commissioning Departments



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.

Contents

Section	Page
1. Inspection method and evidence base	1
2. Focus of inspection	1
3. Context	1
4. Overall findings of the inspection	2
5. Achievements and standards	2
6. Provision for learning	3
7. Leadership and management	4
8. Overall effectiveness	5

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.

Thirty-two percent of parents, most of the teaching and all of the support staff responded to the confidential questionnaires. The responses to the parental confidential questionnaire indicated very high levels of satisfaction with the life and work of the school. In particular, the parents highlighted: the distinct caring, family ethos evident in the school; the friendly, approachable staff; the happy children and the enormous respect the children have for the principal. The responses to the teaching and support staff questionnaire were also very positive; they emphasised their enjoyment of working in the school, the high level of job satisfaction and their appreciation of the excellent, approachable principal who provides clear leadership and guidance. The ETI has reported to the principal and representatives of the board of governors the main findings emerging from the parental and staff confidential questionnaires.

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, and
- quality of leadership and management.

3. Context

Gibson Primary School is a controlled primary school situated in Omagh, County Tyrone. Almost all of the children attending the school come from Omagh and the surrounding area. There has been a steady increase in enrolment over the last four years. In addition, to the mainstream classes, year 1 to year 7, the school provides two Language Support Classes (LSC) for a number of year 1 - 4 children who require specific assistance in relation to their speech and language development. The fostering of the children's musical and sporting talents is a key feature of the school's provision and contributes significantly to their personal and social development.

Gibson Primary School	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
Enrolment	281	294	300	311
Enrolment in LSC	24	21	18	23
% School attendance	95.5	95.3	95.7%	97.5%
% NI Primary school average	95.6	95.4	N/A	N/A
FSME Percentage ¹	38.2%	38.1%	39%	37.4%
No. of children on SEN register	81	73	78	77
% of children on SEN register	25.6%	23%	24.5%	23.4%
No. of children with statements of educational need	9	7	7	10
No. of newcomer children	18	26	28	34

Source: data as held by the school.

N/A not available

* fewer than 5

4. Overall findings of the inspection

Overall effectiveness	High level of capacity for sustained improvement
Achievements and standards	Very good
Provision for learning	Very good
Leadership and Management	Very good
Language Support Centre	Outstanding

5. Achievements and standards

- Most of the children, and almost all of the children who require additional support with their learning, achieve very good standards in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT).
- From the foundation stage, the children's talking and listening skills are well-developed and they use confidently ICT to recall and explain their learning through play. As the children progress, they share their ideas with increasing maturity and confidence in small and larger groups. By year 7, the children read with fluency and show a keen interest in, and knowledge of, their novels and non-fiction books. They produce very good quality writing for a wide range of purposes, appropriate to their interests and ability level. Most of the children, including those with special educational needs, use and apply a range of literacy skills with increasing accuracy across the curriculum.
- From the foundation stage, the children's early numeracy concepts and mathematical language are well developed; they sort, match, count, and make effective comparisons in measurement. Across the key stages, the children including those with special education needs, enjoy learning mathematics, talk enthusiastically about their work and engage well with practical activities. The high standard of the work in the children's books shows appropriate progression across the key stages. By year 7, the most able children demonstrate a very

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

good understanding of mathematical concepts; they can think flexibly in problem-solving tasks and can apply their mathematical knowledge, including mental mathematics strategies, in a range of contexts, using appropriate mathematical language to explain their reasoning.

- Across the school the children use ICT competently to enhance and develop their skills and capabilities.
- In the speech and language units the children settle very quickly into the routines of the school and the classroom. They are making excellent progress in their language skills, social skills, and in the curriculum areas.
- The children are very welcoming, courteous and display very good personal and social skills. They respond positively to the teachers' high expectations and demonstrate very good levels of independence, confidence and enjoyment in their learning. The children interact confidently with the teachers and their peers, are respectful to one another and are very proud of their school. The work of the choir observed during the inspection was outstanding.

6. Provision for learning

- There is a very good, coherent approach to planning, learning and assessment throughout the school. The teachers' planning is effective and informs well learning and teaching. The majority of the individual education plans have specific and measurable targets for each child and include suitable strategies to support the children's needs. The children's work is marked regularly and the teacher's written comments provide clear guidance on what needs to be improved and how to improve it.
- During the inspection, most of the lessons observed were good or better; almost two-thirds were very good or outstanding. In these lessons, the teachers built on prior knowledge, established effective connections across the areas of learning and used effective questioning to extend the children's responses. The learning activities for children who require additional support with their learning were linked effectively to the individual education plans, targets and strategies. A key strength of the provision is the excellent use made of the large woodland area within the school grounds that provides the children with enriching, relevant and authentic outdoor learning experiences. This has a positive impact on the outcomes achieved by the children and contributes significantly to their overall learning. The classroom assistants make an important and valuable contribution to the children's learning.
- In a small number of the key stage (KS)1 classes observed there was over-direction of the learning by the teachers resulting in lower levels of engagement by the children. In order to ensure greater consistency of high quality learning experiences for all of the children it will be important to disseminate further the very good and outstanding practice existing in the school.
- There is a well-balanced approach for progression in all areas of the literacy curriculum. The children who require additional support in developing their literacy skills benefit from well-targeted intervention strategies to develop their key word vocabulary, which enables them to progress. Many of the writing tasks are set skilfully within meaningful contexts, including reporting on school life, educational trips and community events. Across the school, the teachers are developing further the consistency in the agreed use of strategies to improve further the children's writing skills.

- An appropriate and varied range of teaching strategies are used well to foster the children's enjoyment of, interest in and disposition to numeracy across the curriculum. The teachers use engaging introductions to lessons to consolidate and contextualise the children's mental mathematics skills; purposeful and well planned investigations in mathematics are used to good effect to develop the children's confidence and competence in the use of mathematical language to explain their thinking. As the children progress through the key stages they benefit from the teachers' well-chosen use of a wide range of practical materials, games and tablet computers to stimulate their mathematical curiosity and develop further their problem solving skills.
- The quality of the provision in the language support centre is outstanding. There is an appropriately individualised programme and structure for each child, building on skilful assessments by the speech and language therapists, and teachers. The children, some of whom have complex needs, are managed sensitively through highly effective collaborative working practices amongst the teachers, classroom assistants, therapists and language technical instructors. There is effective liaison with parents to ensure they are well informed, in particular, the children's homework folders provide parents with very good quality resources for consolidating and extending the children's learning. The therapists maintain their work with the children when they leave the centre, to ensure valuable continuity of support, until the children are discharged from therapy.
- The quality of the pastoral care provision is outstanding. The values-based whole school ethos is underpinned by trust and the mutually respectful working relationships which promote inclusive, caring and supportive behaviours within the school.

7. Leadership and management

- The senior leadership team provide highly effective strategic leadership based on mutual respect and collegiality in developing and monitoring the pastoral and curricular areas of school life. They inspire confidence and respect within the school community. The senior leadership team sets a positive tone for the work of the school based on a shared vision for ongoing school improvement which is focused appropriately on providing the highest possible experiences and outcomes for the children. They are supported very well by the staff and the newly formed leadership partnerships that are disseminating best practice and developing further the monitoring and evaluation of the curricular areas of responsibility.
- A culture of self-evaluation and reflection which involves the children, staff, parents and governors, is evident throughout all aspects of the school's provision. A very effective school development plan², (SDP) is in place and is clearly focused on raising further the very good standards achieved by the children. The key priorities identified in the school development plan are appropriate and there are regular opportunities for staff to evaluate the school's progress in effecting improvement.

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

- There are well-established links with the local schools and the wider community to support further the children's learning and enhance the curriculum; for example, the children's personal development programmes and preventative curriculum are enhanced through input from local voluntary agencies. The parents are informed well about the life and work of the school through regular meetings, newsletters and the school website. The active Parent Teachers Association is engaged in many aspects of school life and provides very valuable support and additional resources for the school to support the children's learning.
- 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. The governors are highly committed to the whole school community. They are well informed about school developments, and are involved appropriately in decisions regarding the strategic direction and development of 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 KS2 understand the school rules and the importance of keeping safe. They reported that they are happy and secure in school and know what to do if they have any concerns about their well-being.

8. Overall effectiveness

Gibson 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.

© CROWN COPYRIGHT 2016

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part, except for commercial purposes or in connection with a prospectus or advertisement, provided that the source and date thereof are stated.

Copies of this report are available on the ETI website: www.etini.gov.uk