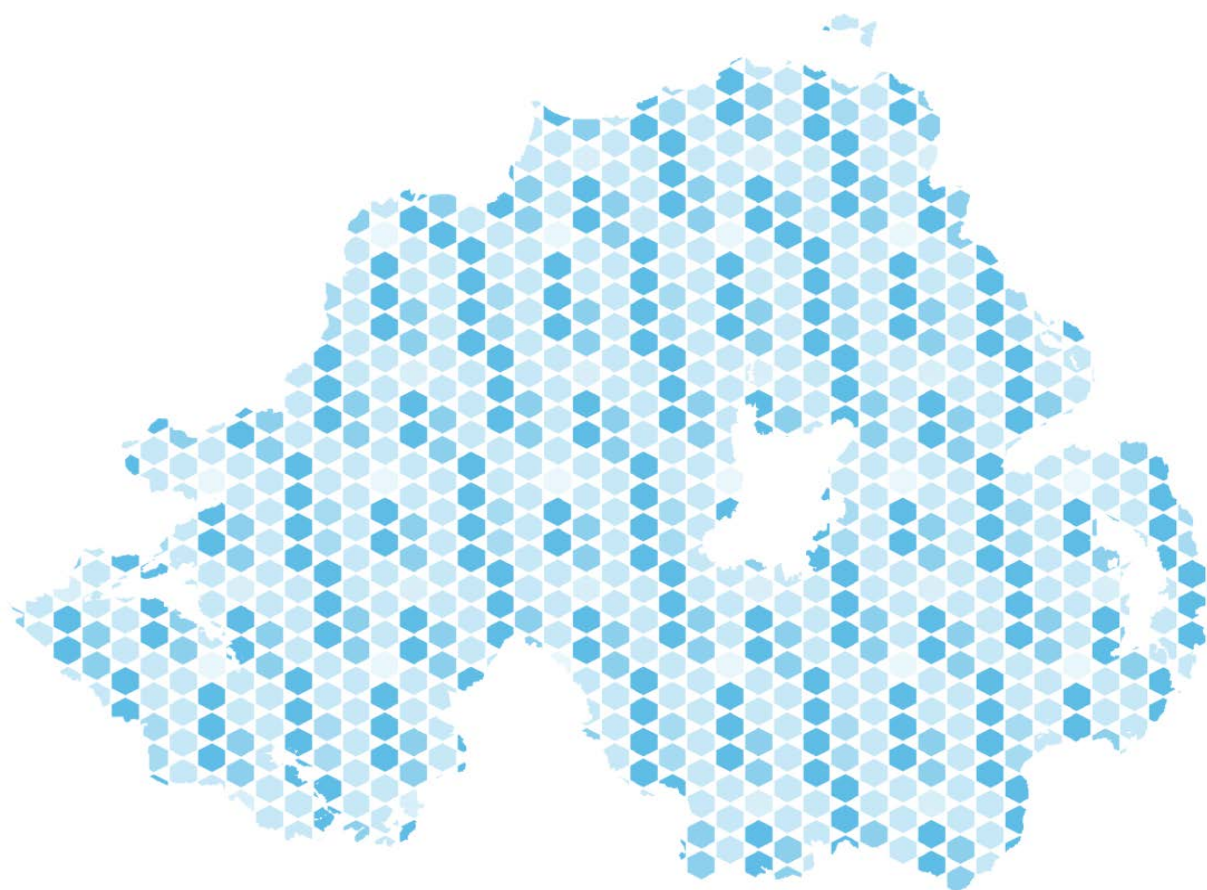


PRIMARY INSPECTION 2015-16



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Killowen Primary School,
Rostrevor, County Down

Report of an Inspection in
October 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



CSE



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.

Twenty-four percent of parents responded to the questionnaires. Their responses indicated satisfaction with aspects of the school's provision. In particular, the parents acknowledged their children's enjoyment of learning and the caring ethos which is developing well the children's personal, social and emotional skills. A significant minority of the parents raised concerns about the quality of communication and the lack of an appropriately differentiated curriculum to meet the needs of the children. All of the staff completed questionnaires and their responses were generally supportive of the work of the school. The ETI has reported to the principal and three representatives of the board of governors the responses from the 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 with a particular focus on numeracy; including how the school is addressing low attainment and underachievement where applicable;
- quality of provision for learning with a particular focus on numeracy; and
- quality of leadership and management.

3. Context

Killowen Primary School is a maintained primary school situated approximately three miles outside Rostrevor, County Down. Most of the children come from the village and the surrounding rural area. The school population has declined steadily over the last four years.

| Killowen Primary School | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 |
|---|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Enrolment | 106 | 104 | 99 | 93 |
| % School attendance | 94.8 | 96.8 | 96.3 | N/A |
| % NI Primary school average | 94.9 | 95.6 | N/A | N/A |
| FSME Percentage ¹ | 15% | 21% | 17% | 12% |
| No. of children on SEN register | 11 | 12 | 18 | 13 |
| % of children on SEN register | 10 | 11 | 17 | 14 |
| No. of children with statements of educational need | * | * | * | 0 |
| No. of newcomer children | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

Source: data as held by the school N/A = not available

* fewer than 5

4. Overall findings of the inspection

| | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| Overall effectiveness | Address urgently the significant areas for improvement |
| Achievements and standards | Good |
| Provision for learning | Important areas for improvement |
| Leadership and management | Requires significant improvement |

5. Achievements and standards

- The children are very courteous, welcoming and friendly. In most of the lessons, the children co-operate well with one another and support each other with their work. Most of the children are well-motivated, enjoy engaging in classroom discussions and are keen to talk about their learning.
- The school's performance data shows that most of the children, including those who require additional support with aspects of their learning, make progress in English and mathematics in line with their ability; over one-fifth of the children make progress above expectation.
- In the foundation stage, the children are developing well their mathematical knowledge through a combination of formal and play-based activities. As they progress through the school, the children are able to use a wider range of mental mathematics strategies to answer problems. By year 7, they are able to answer number problems confidently and explain their reasoning using appropriate mathematical vocabulary.

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

6. Provision for learning

- There is a whole-school approach to planning which provides adequate guidance for the teachers. The staff need to review the planning processes in order to cater for the wide range of needs and abilities within the composite classes and, to provide sufficient challenge and progression in the learning. In the most effective practice, in half of the lessons observed, the learning and teaching was differentiated appropriately and provided opportunities for the children to talk about their learning. This effective practice needs to be disseminated and embedded throughout the school. In the less effective practice, the tasks were not sufficiently challenging with a significant minority of the children not fully engaged with their learning. There is undue variation in the marking of the children's work throughout the school.
- The staff use well a range of internal assessment data and teacher observations to identify early those children who require additional support. The targets within the individual education plans need be more clearly focused on the individual needs of the children and linked to effective strategies to support the children with their learning.
- The children in the reception group are settled and are developing well their confidence and independence in their work and play. Some aspects of their learning, including their early mathematical experiences, are too formal. The staff need to ensure that the provision for these children is in line with the pre-school curricular guidance and is matched appropriately to the children's needs and stage of development.
- The numeracy planning is broad and balanced across the key stages. Mental agility starter activities are used effectively to develop the children's mathematical vocabulary and promote mathematical thinking. Provision in mathematics needs to be developed further by providing more opportunities for the children to use and apply their mathematical skills in problem solving and open-ended investigations across the curriculum.
- Amongst the strengths of the arrangements for pastoral care are: the caring ethos; the positive working relationships within the classrooms; and, the developing voice of the children in aspects of school life through the school council and newly-formed Eco-council. However, there are important areas for improvement which include: developing more effective systems for communication; revising the school's pastoral care policies through wide consultation, ensuring that they are in line with the Department of Education's (DE) guidance; and, extending the range of extra-curricular activities available to the children.

7. Leadership and management

- The quality of leadership and management requires significant improvement. The learning co-ordinators need to develop their confidence and capacity in monitoring the provision in their respective areas of responsibility and, ensure the work they undertake raises standards in the learning and teaching. It will be important for the senior leadership to lead and monitor this important improvement work in order to build capacity at all levels.

- The school's processes for self-evaluation leading to improvement are at an early stage of development. The school's management has begun to use the internal assessment data and responses from staff and parental questionnaires to identify areas for improvement. It is appropriate that this consultation is to be widened further to include the school governors. While action plans are in place for literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT), there remains a need for these to outline more clearly the baseline position of the school, staff development opportunities and the learning and teaching strategies to bring about improvement. Central to this improvement work is the implementation of a systematic approach to monitoring and evaluating the impact of the action planning on the quality of provision.
- Based on the evidence available at the time of inspection, the ETI's evaluation is that there can be limited confidence in the aspects of governance evaluated. The governors are supportive of the school but need to be better informed about all aspects of the school provision in order to carry out effectively their statutory responsibilities. In particular, there is a need to ensure that: minutes of meetings are prepared in accordance with the requirements of the scheme of management; parents receive an annual report from governors; and, the school prospectus is updated.
- 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 adequately reflect the guidance issued by DE. In particular, the school needs to: review and update all child protection and safeguarding policies and ensure these are made available to all relevant stakeholders; present an annual written report on child protection to governors and ensure this is recorded in the minutes; urgently review their systems for risk assessing; and ensure the designated governor, deputy designated teacher and principal receive training. In discussions with the inspectors, the children in year 6 said that they were 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 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 areas for improvement are to:

- develop effective communication between the governors, the principal, the staff and the parents;
- ensure that the senior leadership and learning co-ordinators adopt a more systematic approach to monitoring and evaluating the impact of action planning on the quality of learning and teaching;

- review the school's admissions policy for enrolment in the reception class; and,
- address the deficiencies in the safeguarding arrangements outlined in the report.

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 within an 18-24 month period.

Health and Safety / Accommodation

1. There is a need to review all access points into and within the school, including access to temporary classrooms.
2. The school boundary fencing is not secure in places.

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