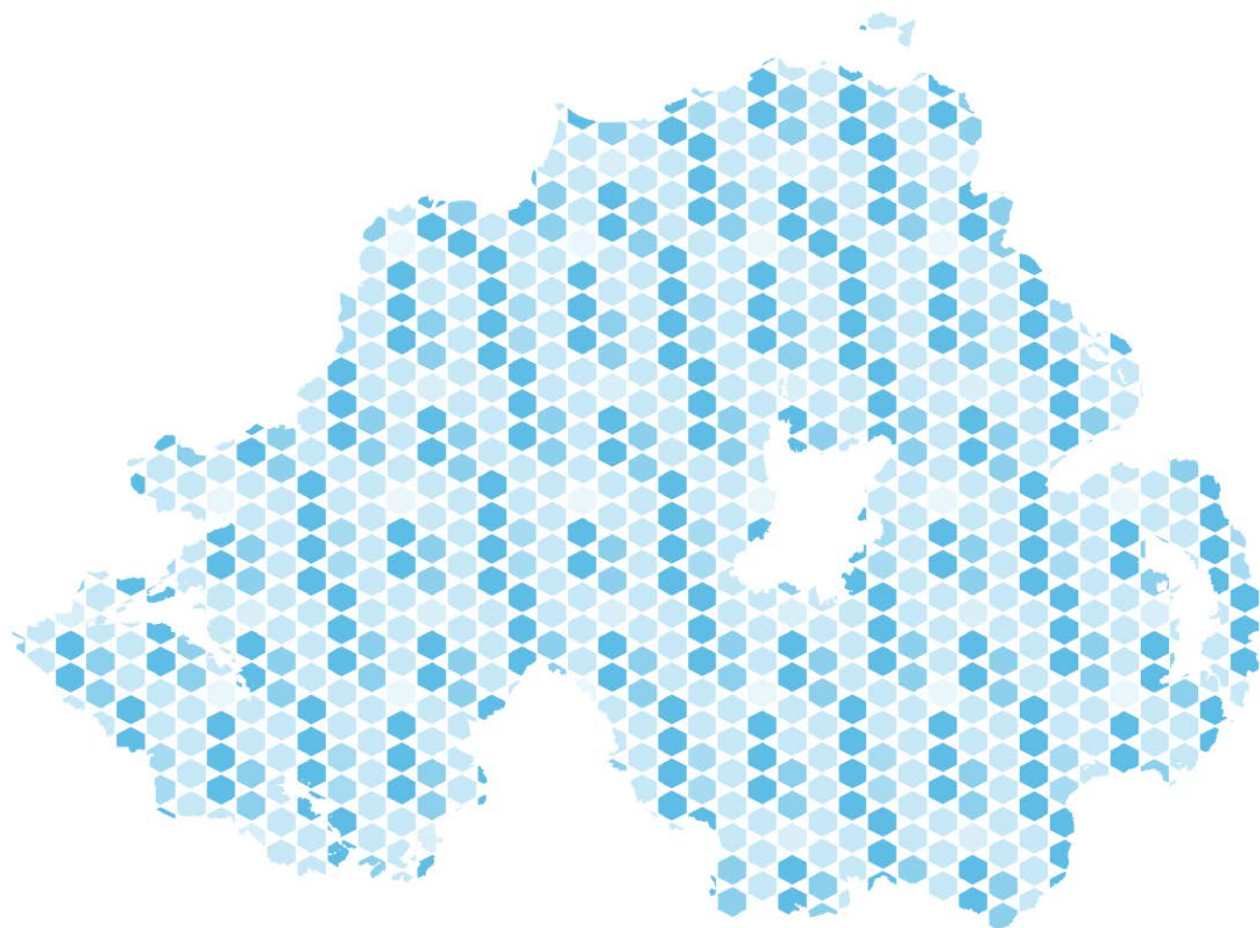


# PRIMARY INSPECTION 2015-16



Education and Training  
Inspectorate

Knockbreda Primary School,  
Belfast

Report of an Inspection in  
November 2015

## 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	5
8. Overall effectiveness	5
Appendix	

## **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.eti.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 year 6 and year 7 children; and
- the opportunity for the parents, teaching and support staff to complete a confidential questionnaire.

Approximately twelve per cent of the parents responded to the confidential questionnaire; they indicated high levels of satisfaction with all aspects of the school's work. In particular, the parents highlighted the commitment to, and the support for, their children provided by all of the staff, the caring ethos and the good range of extra-curricular activities. Almost all of the staff completed the questionnaire and they were very positive about all aspects of the life and work of the school. The ETI has reported to the principal and a representative of the board of governors the comments 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 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**

Knockbreda Primary School is a controlled school located in south Belfast, County Antrim. In addition to the children in the primary school there is a learning support centre comprising a junior and a senior class. The children attending the school and the learning centre come from the immediate and wider areas. The enrolment has increased over the last four years, as has the percentage of children entitled to free school meals and the proportion requiring additional support with aspects of their learning. Over the past three years, the school has experienced significant changes in staffing, including the composition of the middle and senior management teams.

<b>Knockbreda Primary School</b>	<b>2012-13</b>	<b>2013-14</b>	<b>2014-15</b>	<b>2015-16</b>
Enrolment	179	187	200	201
Learning Support Centre	19	22	23	22
% School attendance	94.5	96.2	95.9	N/A
% NI Primary school average	94.9	95.6	N/A	N/A
FSME Percentage <sup>1</sup>	22.4	23.5	17	23.5
No. of children on SEN register	31	37	41	30
% of children on SEN register	27.9	26.7	30.5	32
No. of children with statements of educational need	28	29	33	32
No. of newcomer children	0	*	*	0

**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>Important areas for improvement</b>
<b>Achievements and standards</b>	Good
<b>Provision for learning</b>	Important areas for Improvement
<b>Leadership and management</b>	Important areas for improvement
<b>Learning Support Centre</b>	Important areas for improvement

#### 5. Achievements and standards

- The children are courteous, welcoming and generally well-motivated learners; they engage readily with their peers and are respectful towards the staff and visitors to the school. Most children settle well to their learning and respond positively to the activities provided by their teachers.
- The school's performance data demonstrates 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 or above expectation.
- In the foundation stage (FS), the children are well settled and confident; they relate well to their peers, are at ease with the staff and turn to them readily when they require support.
- By the end of KS 2, the children who attend the learning support centre demonstrate appropriate self-management and resilience in their learning.

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

- The children are keen to talk about and share their learning with others. When given the opportunity, they contribute well to group discussions, listening and responding to the views of others. They show a positive attitude towards and interest in books and use a range of strategies to attempt unfamiliar words. During the inspection, the year 7 children read with fluency and expression and shared their views on a range of books and authors they enjoy. In the FS, the children are beginning to develop their ability to write independently and, as they progress through the school, they write across a range of genres for different purposes and audiences.
- The children engage well with practical mathematical activities. During discussions with inspectors, the year 7 children demonstrated confidence in their learning across the mathematics curriculum, and used a range of strategies, demonstrating flexibility in their mathematical thinking.
- Across the school, the children would benefit from more purposeful opportunities to develop and apply their learning in numeracy and literacy across other areas of the curriculum, including the world around us and play-based learning, in order to raise further the standards they attain.
- The children enjoy using information and communication technology (ICT) to record and share their work with others.

## **6. Provision for learning**

- In the most effective practice, in a minority of the lessons observed, the teachers set the learning in real life, meaningful contexts; there is appropriate pace and challenge and the work is matched well to the children's interests and abilities. In the less effective practice, the focus is on the completion of activities rather than the process for learning; there is over-direction by the teacher and there are missed opportunities to develop the children's thinking skills and personal capabilities.
- The teachers plan regularly for the teaching within their classrooms but overall, the planning does not indicate systematic progression in the children's learning. The teachers need to plan for differentiation in the lessons by using more effectively the analysis of the school's performance data and their evaluations of the children's learning. The teachers' evaluations of their planning require significant development to better inform future learning and teaching. To assist with the evaluation of the planning and the tracking of the children's learning the staff should develop a common approach to the planning process across the school.
- The children who require additional support with aspects of their learning are identified early through teacher observations and the analysis of performance data. These children benefit from withdrawal support for literacy and numeracy and from the school's links with relevant external agencies. There is a need to ensure that the individual education plans inform directly the class teachers' planning for the children's learning, that targets set for the children provide appropriate challenge and that the children's progress in meeting their targets is robustly assessed and tracked.

- The long term planning for literacy and numeracy is a useful framework to guide the teachers in their work. In the best practice, the teachers provide the children with well-planned opportunities to integrate talking and listening, reading and writing, and connect the children's learning in literacy to other areas of the curriculum. In the less effective practice, there is an over emphasis on isolated grammar exercises and closed activities. There is a need for all of the staff to develop a shared understanding of how the children's writing should progress through purposeful and relevant contexts across the curriculum. The recently refurbished library provides a pleasant environment to foster the children's interest in reading.
- The school has recently introduced a new mathematics programme across all classes. Currently, the staff are familiarising themselves with the programme with a focus on developing mental mathematics strategies. During the inspection, it was evident that the children enjoy the active learning aspect of the new programme. However, it will be important that the staff develop a shared understanding of how to tailor and integrate all aspects of the programme to ensure progression in the children's learning across the full range of mathematical concepts.
- The programme for play-based learning, in the FS, requires significant improvement to ensure progression in the children's learning through appropriate informal experiences supported by a more extensive range of resources. There is a need to review the settling-in process for the children in year one to ensure greater account is taken of their prior learning.
- The children in the learning support centre benefit from a broad curriculum, including opportunities to learn alongside their peers in the main school, which helps them prepare for the next stage in their learning. There is, however, inconsistency in the quality of the children's learning experiences across the both classes in the learning centre.
- In the more effective practice, planning in the learning support centre is tailored to each individual child, the learning experiences are challenging and the children are supported by regular and focused guidance for improvement.
- In the less effective practice, in the learning support centre, the children's learning is constrained by an over-reliance on instruction and worksheets. This approach limits the opportunities for the children to develop creativity, independence, confidence and flexibility in their thinking. It will be important that there is greater collaboration between the teachers in the learning support centre, in order to promote consistency in the children's experiences and progression in their learning.
- The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care in the school is good. There is a caring and supportive ethos which is characterised by the attention given to the promotion of programmes and activities that raise further the children's confidence and self-esteem. The children are proud of their school and when given the opportunities to do so, take on roles and responsibilities with maturity.
- The school gives good attention to promoting healthy eating, through the implementation of a healthy eating policy and the provision of a wide range of extra-curricular sporting activities which encourage the children to adopt healthy lifestyles.

## **7. Leadership and management**

- The senior leadership promotes a collegial approach to the work of the school. The current school development plan outlines important key areas for improvement; including the further development of self-evaluation to bring about improvement. The findings from this inspection endorse these areas as important for development. It will be necessary for the development plan to be adjusted and more appropriate action plans drawn up to address the areas for improvement identified within this report.
- It will be important for the senior leadership team, coordinators and teaching staff to develop further the processes for monitoring and evaluation with a sharper focus on a quality of learning and teaching which raises the standards achieved by the children.
- Based on the evidence available at the time of inspection, there can be confidence in the aspects of governance evaluated. The governors are well informed and engage actively in the life and work of the school. It will be important for the new governors to exercise their challenge function as they support the senior leadership in addressing the areas for improvement.
- On the basis of the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the school has satisfactory arrangements in place for safeguarding children. These arrangements reflect broadly the guidance issued by the Department of Education. The following area needs to be addressed:
  - ensure that the outside spaces are made secure in the interest of the children's safety.
- In discussions with the inspectors, the children in year 6 spoke positively about their experiences in school and indicated that they feel safe and know what to do if they have any concerns about their well-being.

## **8. Overall effectiveness**

The school needs to address important areas for improvement in the interest of all the children.

The main areas for improvement include the need to:

- develop further the processes for monitoring and evaluation with a sharper focus on the quality of learning and teaching to raise further the standards achieved by the children;
- review and develop an appropriate programme and resources available for play-based learning in the foundation stage; and
- ensure that the individual education plans inform directly the teachers' planning, that targets set for the children provide appropriate challenge and that the children's progress in meeting their targets is robustly assessed and tracked.

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 12-18 months.



### **Health and Safety**

1. There is a need to review the maintenance of the window frames in parts of the school and ensure all of the outside areas are secure in the interest of the safety and well-being of the children.

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