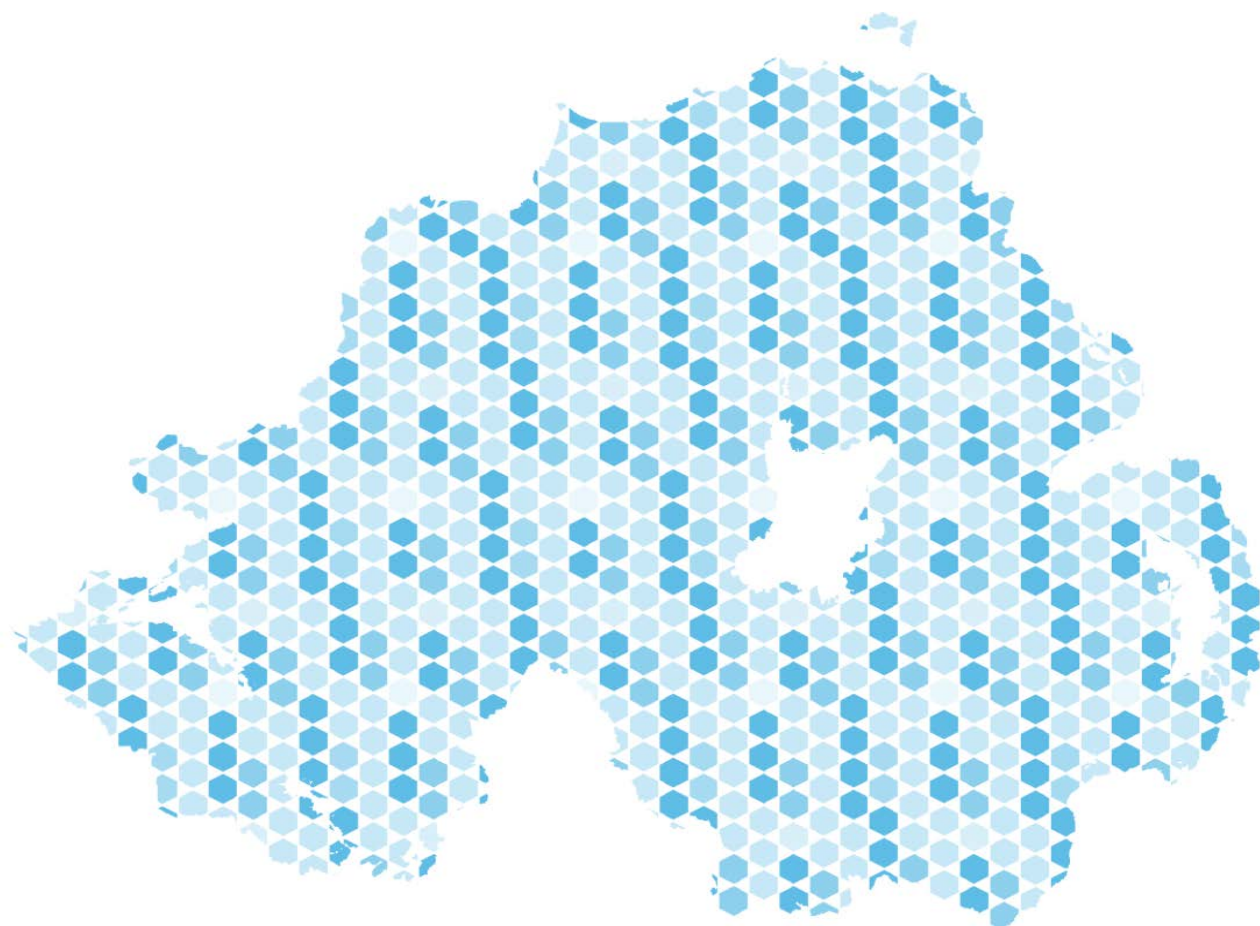


PRIMARY INSPECTION 2015-16



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Lisbellaw Primary School
and Nursery Unit,
County Fermanagh

Report of an Inspection in
November 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
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EXCELLENCE



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.

Forty-six percent of parents responded to the questionnaires, with over one-fifth providing additional written comments. Parental responses indicated very high levels of satisfaction with the school's provision. In particular, the parents highlighted: the caring ethos; the committed and friendly staff; the excellent levels of communication; and, the high quality learning and teaching, referencing, in particular, the children who require additional support with aspects of their learning. All of the staff completed questionnaires and their responses were wholly positive. They emphasised the camaraderie and how all staff work closely together to meet the needs of the children. The governors expressed their appreciation of the hard work and dedication of the principal and staff. 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 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

Lisbellaw Primary School is a controlled primary school situated in the village of Lisbellaw, approximately five miles from Enniskillen. Almost all of the children come from the village and the surrounding rural area. The school has recently been the recipient of a number of awards including: Best Kept School; Investors in People Silver Award; Action Cancer Health Gold Award; Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Kite Mark; Young Enterprise Centre of Excellence; and, a third green flag in the Eco Schools' programme. The school is one of six schools in Northern Ireland that has been accredited with the British Dyslexia Association Quality Mark. The school has a well-established shared education programme with a local maintained primary school.

Lisbellaw Primary School	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Total enrolment (years 1 – 7)	193	188	187	196
Nursery unit	28	28	32	28
% School attendance	96.6	96.7	96.9	N/A
% NI Primary school average	94.9	95.6	N/A	N/A
FSME Percentage ¹	23.8	25.5	23.5	24.4
No. of children on SEN register	39	35	30	31
% of children on SEN register	20	18.6	16	15.8
No. of children with statements of educational need	*	6	5	7

Source: data as held by the school.

* fewer than 5

N/A not available

4. Overall findings of the inspection

Overall effectiveness	High level of capacity for sustained improvement
Achievements and standards	Outstanding
Provision for learning	Very good
Leadership and management	Very good
Nursery Unit	Good

5. Achievements and standards

- The children are highly motivated, respectful, and engage very well with adults and one another in the learning process. Almost all of the children take responsibility for their learning and persevere in group work activities; they are able to take turns, adopt roles, communicate effectively and collaborate to make decisions. Their behaviour is exemplary.
- The school's performance data shows that almost all 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.
- Throughout the school, the children talk confidently about their learning and share their ideas willingly with their teachers and peers. In discussion with the most able children in year 7, they expressed an enjoyment of reading, spoke knowledgeably about well-known authors, and used a wide range of strategies to read with fluency and expression. Across the key stages the children are able to write with confidence using different forms and for a variety of purposes. The children plan and redraft their work and identify ways in which they can make improvements to their own work and that of their peers. A notable strength of the school is the quality of the children's handwriting and the presentation of their work.

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

- At the end of each key stage, the children attain excellent standards in numeracy. Throughout the school, almost all of the children progress well in their knowledge and understanding of key mathematical concepts across all areas of the mathematics curriculum. They show a high level of engagement during the practical numeracy lessons and when solving mathematical problems. The most able children in year 7 demonstrate a high level of mathematical reasoning and flexibility and can explain their thinking using appropriate mathematical language.
- Most of the children in the nursery unit are well-settled and engage readily with the adults by listening to and following instructions. The children are attentive when listening to stories and join enthusiastically in songs and rhymes. The development of the children's awareness of numbers and understanding of mathematical language is progressing well through the snack routine and construction activities. The children can make choices and express their ideas during play when stimulated and curious about their learning. The nursery children with additional learning needs are making steady progress and turn readily to their classroom assistants for support.
- Across all the key stages, the children use information and communication technology (ICT) with increasing aptitude and confidence. They use a range of programs and devices to produce an excellent standard of work in digital presentations and exchanges, and in story- and film-making. The children use ICT well to enhance and record their learning, and to develop their creativity and collaborative skills through, in part, their participation in a Shared Education programme.

6. Provision for learning

- All of the lessons observed were effective in promoting successful learning. The teachers used skilful questioning to assess the extent of the children's knowledge and understanding. They provided well-planned opportunities for the children to work together co-operatively and collaboratively, and to discuss and share their learning with each other. In the most effective lessons, in approximately two-thirds of the lessons observed, the work was tailored well to provide appropriate challenge for all of the children. The children were encouraged to 'have-a-go' and were taught sensitively how initial mistakes can be used as valuable learning opportunities which promoted well their resilience, perseverance and self-esteem.
- The planning for the nursery and primary provision is detailed. The staff in the nursery unit plan using themes and there is progression in the resources and activities throughout the year. In the primary classes, the teachers use a common format for planning; the staff have identified appropriately the need to connect further the learning across the curriculum. The methods for planning and assessment in the nursery and in play-based learning within the foundation stage need to be reviewed and developed further in order to take sufficient account of all areas of the curriculum and to provide activities that meet the wide range of needs and abilities within each of the classes.

- All of the teachers mark the children's work regularly and supportively to a consistently high standard. They provide very helpful guidance on how the children can improve the quality of their work; the children are provided with appropriate opportunities to use the teacher's helpful comments to enhance and improve the standard of their work.
- In the nursery unit, the children with additional learning needs are well-integrated through the use of highly effective multi-sensory strategies and sensitive adult interventions which help the children access the curriculum and develop their communication, social and physical skills. The school has created successfully a culture of achievement and improvement with effective interventions and support programmes in place to meet the additional needs of the children. The early and methodical identification of need ensures appropriate intervention and the careful, ongoing analysis of assessments, staff observations and internal data informs the child-friendly individual education plans. Those children who have barriers to their learning are supported very well by the highly skilled and effective classroom assistants. A particular strength in the provision is the skilled specialist teaching and high quality intervention programme that is in place for literacy.
- The school provides a rich and stimulating literacy environment in which the children have access to a broad and balanced programme. The use of digital devices, talking partners and group work develops effectively the children's talking and listening skills. A well-implemented phonics programme, access to a wide range of stimulating reading materials from the class libraries and well-stocked school library, and a recent whole-school focus on guided reading, ensures that almost all of the children are fluent readers and can use a wide range of comprehension skills to interpret texts. Increasingly the teachers are developing literacy links with other areas of the curriculum, for example, through class topics and themes.
- The long-term planning for mathematics is coherent, balanced and progressive and provides clear guidance for the teachers. The lessons engage the children well in their learning by being set often in meaningful, real-life contexts and by the effective use of practical problems for the children to solve. The teachers model well for the children the use of mathematical language and, through effective questioning, provide the children with well-planned opportunities to articulate, clarify and extend their mathematical thinking. Mental mathematical strategies are a regular feature of the lessons and are infused well through the taught programme. ICT is integrated effectively to support and enrich the learning experiences, particularly in the area of data-handling.
- The nursery unit is enhanced by attractive displays of the children's artwork. The quality of the staff interaction is often purposeful and skilful in promoting learning and encouraging the children to work collaboratively. A variety of interesting activities engage the children in purposeful play. The children are willing to explore the changes in the materials when making dough; their dispositions to be curious and investigative need to be developed further particularly in the world around us area of learning.

- The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care in the school is outstanding. The working relationships at all levels are excellent and there is a strong sense of community underpinned by caring, supportive and inclusive practices. All staff are highly committed to the care and well-being of the children. The children take pride in their school and have regular opportunities to develop their leadership role through the school council, 'Playground Pals' and the 'Green Finger Gang'. The extensive range of extra-curricular activities and opportunities to participate in inter-school competitions enrich the children's learning experiences.
- The school gives outstanding attention to promoting healthy eating and physical activity thereby encouraging the children to adopt healthy lifestyles. The school received recently gold status in the Action Cancer Health Award.

7. Leadership and management

- The senior leadership team is highly effective and has a clear vision for school improvement. The learning co-ordinators are dedicated, skilled and work diligently to develop the provision in their areas of responsibility. A collegial approach to school improvement permeates the school; all staff are committed to their own continuing professional development and to supporting the school's improvement agenda. Well-planned staff meetings and staff development days are used effectively to build capacity and improve further the quality of the children's learning experiences and the standards they attain.
- The school development planning process is well-embedded. Appropriate areas for improvement have been identified through: the rigorous analysis of the school's internal performance data; the use of the ETI's 'Together Towards Improvement' quality indicators to support self-evaluation; and, extensive consultation with the whole school community. Well-established and effective structures are in place for monitoring the quality of the planning and the standards attained by the children.
- The quality of the communication and engagement with parents and the local community is a key strength of the school. The parents are well informed about their children's progress and the life and work of the school through, for example, the school website, curriculum evenings and the production of materials for parents on how they can best support their child's learning. This effective partnership between the school and parents is reflected in the school's consistently high annual attendance rate which is above the Northern Ireland average. An active Parent Teacher Association supports the school well in raising funds to purchase educational and ICT resources. The children take part regularly in local competitions and sporting events and are the proud recipients of a number of awards including the 'Best Kept School' Award and the third green flag in the ECO Schools' Programme.
- Based on the evidence presented at the time of inspection, there can be a high degree of confidence in the aspects of governance evaluated. The governors are an integral part of the school team and are fully committed to supporting the staff in providing a high quality learning environment for all of the children. Each governor is equipped to provide an appropriate level of support and challenge through direct communication with the learning co-ordinators, who present to the governors, when appropriate, the vision for improvement, action plans and the outcomes of development work in their respective areas of responsibility.

- 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 year 6 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

The school has a high level of capacity for sustained improvement in the interest of all the learners. The nursery unit 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.

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