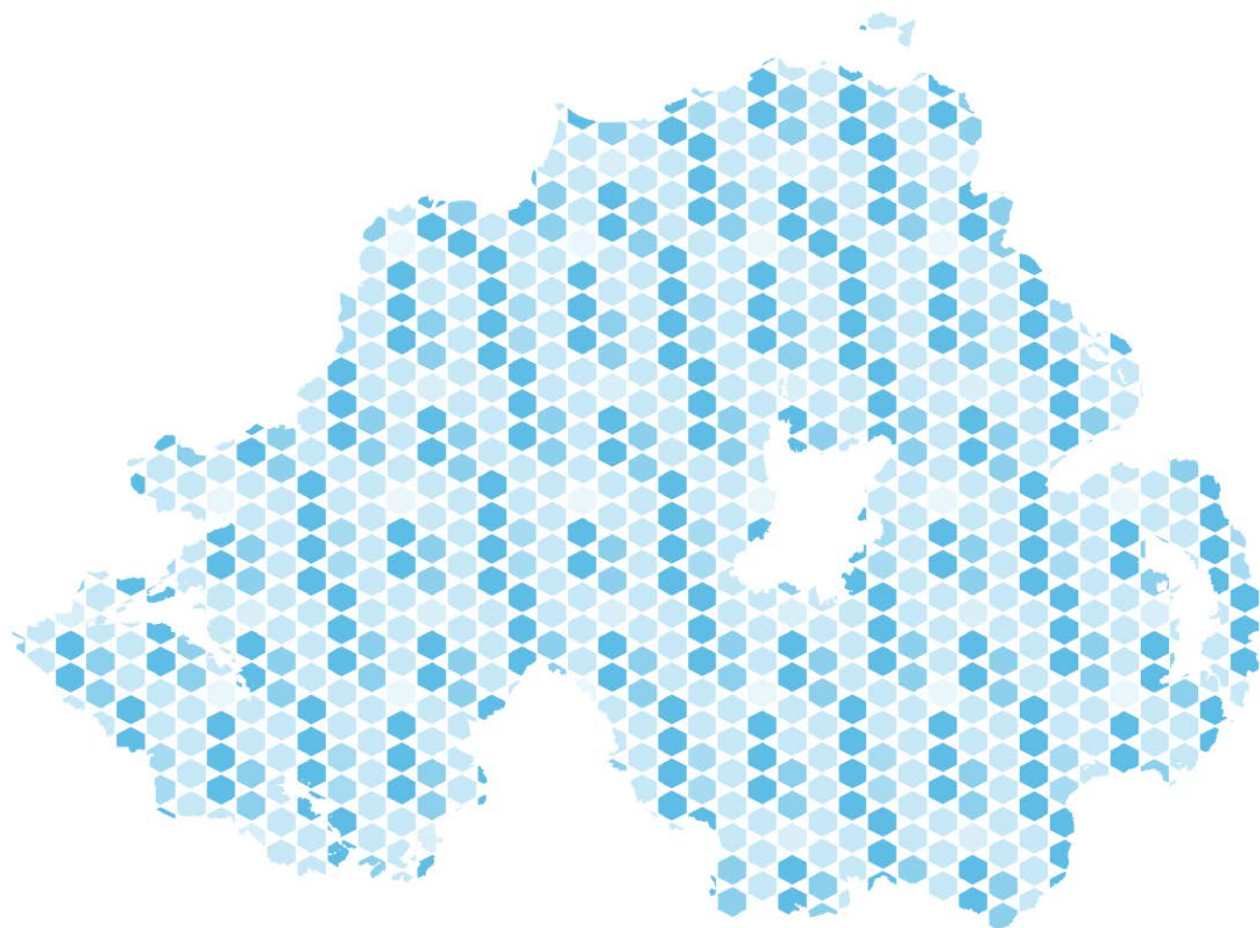


# PRIMARY INSPECTION 2015-16



Education and Training  
Inspectorate

Parkhall Primary School,  
Antrim

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.

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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.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.

A small number of the parents responded to the confidential questionnaires; they indicated high levels of satisfaction with the life and work of the school. In particular, the parents highlighted the support for their children provided by all of the staff. Almost all of the teaching 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 representatives of the board of governors the comments made by the staff in 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**

Parkhall Primary School is a controlled primary school situated in Antrim. The children attending the school come mainly from the immediate area. The enrolment has fluctuated slightly over the last four years. The percentage of children entitled to free school meals and the proportion requiring additional support with aspects of their learning have both decreased slightly over the same period. Over the past three years, the school has experienced significant changes in staffing; at the time of the inspection, there were three teachers employed in a temporary capacity and a recent job-share arrangement has been introduced. Furthermore, there have been ongoing changes to the composition of the middle and senior management teams.

<b>Parkhall Primary School</b>	<b>2012-13</b>	<b>2013-14</b>	<b>2014-15</b>	<b>2015-16</b>
Enrolment	213	223	217	206
% School attendance	93.8	94.3	94.1	96
% NI Primary school average	94.9	95.6	N/A	N/A
FSME Percentage <sup>1</sup>	59.6	60.1	61.8	57.3
No. of children on SEN register	56	60	63	60
% of children on SEN register	26.3	26.9	30.9	25.7
No. of children with statements of educational need	5	6	*	6
No. of newcomer children	6	6	5	5

**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>	Good
<b>Leadership and management</b>	Important areas for improvement

#### 5. Achievements and standards

- The children are courteous, happy 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 children's work is celebrated in attractive displays around the school.
- The school's performance data demonstrates that the majority of the children, including most of those who require additional support with aspects of their learning, make progress in English and mathematics and achieve in line with their ability or above expectation.
- In the foundation stage, the children enjoy the opportunities to engage in play-based learning which enables them to develop further their personal, social and emotional development. However, the children require more challenging activities to promote a wider range of skills and learning.
- Across the key stages, the children enjoy their learning and almost all contribute confidently to whole-class and group discussions when provided with the opportunities by their teachers. From an early age, the children show a positive attitude towards and interest in books and they use a range of strategies to support their reading. During the inspection, the year 7 children read with fluency and expression and shared their views about a range of authors. In KS1, the children develop independent writing through the provision of well-constructed scaffolding and topics that capture their imagination. There is a good emphasis placed on the development of the children's handwriting and the presentation of their work. In KS2, the majority of the children write with increasing accuracy and purpose.

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

- The children in the foundation stage develop a good understanding of number, shape and pattern. As they progress through the school, the children become more secure in their numeracy skills, mathematical knowledge and understanding. They display positive attitudes towards mathematics, are motivated by the additional opportunities which enhance and consolidate their learning including, for example, the activities provided during Mathematics week. The children in year 7 demonstrated confidence and competence in their mathematical learning during their discussions with the inspectors.
- The children have regular opportunities to use information and communication technology (ICT); they attain good standards and use ICT well to enhance their work.

## **6. Provision for learning**

- A majority of the lessons observed were effective in promoting the children's learning. In the most effective practice, in one-third of the lessons observed, the teachers linked the learning to the children's interests, classroom organisation supported well the children's independence and the learning intentions were appropriate and used effectively by the teachers to focus the children on their learning.
- While all of the teachers plan regularly for the teaching within their classrooms; overall, the planning does not indicate systematic progression in the children's learning. The teachers' evaluations of their planning require significant development. 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 children who require additional support with aspects of their learning are identified early through teacher observations and the analysis of the school's internal data. Diagnostic tools are used effectively to identify further specific need and these children benefit from a range of withdrawal sessions and peripatetic support. The classroom assistants work well with the teaching staff to provide targeted support for those children with statements of special educational need. In the most effective lessons, carefully planned and differentiated activities in class provide effective support and challenge for the children who require additional support with aspects of their learning and their progress is tracked and evaluated to inform future planning. There are effective links with parents through consultations and the sharing of targets on the individual educational plans.
- Across the key stages, almost all of the children talk enthusiastically about their learning in literacy and numeracy. The children work competently in pairs or groups, sharing and developing their ideas. The recent focus on improving the quality of reading throughout the school has led to a systematic, whole school approach to the planning and teaching of guided reading. This has had a positive impact on the children's achievement in, and enjoyment of, reading. A good start has been made to monitoring and evaluating the guided reading programme. The staff need to develop an agreed policy for writing across the key stages to ensure progression in the writing forms and to increase the children's opportunities to write in meaningful contexts across the curriculum.

- A broad and balanced range of mathematical learning experiences across the key areas of number, shape and space, measures and data-handling is provided for the children. In the most effective practice, problem-solving activities were used effectively to develop the children's numeracy skills and their understanding of mathematical concepts. The staff have identified the need to provide more opportunities for problem-solving activities and open-ended investigative work.
- The school has put in place a range of strategies to support the children who have been identified as underachieving in literacy and numeracy and the monitoring of this provision indicates that the children are benefiting from the learning activities, which are meeting well their individual needs. It will be important for the staff to develop further the use of data to track all of the children's progress and to use the information to inform better the learning and teaching.
- The programme for play-based learning requires significant improvement to ensure progression in the children's learning and a more extensive programme and range of resources need to be put in place to support the younger children in their learning across the curriculum.
- Pastoral care in the school is very good. The provision is characterised by the child-centred ethos, the very good working relationships between the staff and the children, and the effective engagement with external agencies to meet the needs of all the children. The children's social and emotional development is given a high priority and their achievements are recognised and celebrated. Through membership of the school- and Eco-councils, the children undertake important roles and responsibilities, develop their leadership skills and contribute meaningfully to the improvement of their school. The wide range of after-school clubs enhance the quality of the children's overall learning experiences and contribute significantly to their personal development. The school raises significant funds to support a range of charities to heighten the children's awareness of the needs of others.
- The school gives very good attention to promoting healthy eating and physical activity, through the implementation of a healthy eating policy and a wide range of extra-curricular sporting activities which raise the children's awareness of the importance to adopt healthy lifestyles.

## **7. Leadership and management**

- The senior leadership of the school, in particular the principal and board of governors, promotes a collegial approach to the work of the school; the inclusive nature of the school is evident through the value placed upon every member of the school community and the celebration of the children's work and achievements. The senior leadership works tirelessly in the interest of the children and their families.

- The current school development plan is comprehensive and outlines much of the developmental work undertaken by the school over the three year period of the plan. The processes for self-evaluation to bring about improvement, including the analysis and use of internal performance data, are at an early stage of development. It will be important for the senior leadership team and staff to develop further the processes for monitoring and evaluating the quality of learning and teaching within the school. The governors and principal need to review the roles and responsibilities of the co-ordinators and the deployment of the teaching staff to ensure more effective use of the staff's expertise in the best interest of developing further the children's learning.
- The staff work diligently to engage the parents in their children's learning and provide very useful 'link letters' to help parents support their children with their learning. The staff have identified appropriately the need to develop further the existing links with the feeder pre-schools and to review the settling-in arrangements for year one children to ensure greater account is taken of the children's previous learning.
- Based on the evidence available at the time of inspection, there can be confidence in the aspects of governance evaluated. The governors provide constructive support and guidance in their work with the staff. They are very well informed and engaged actively in the life and work of the school. The governors have developed individual link-governor roles to support staff and keep abreast of developments in all the key areas of the curriculum. They have a strategic overview of the school and an understanding of the school's place within the local and wider community. It will be important for the governors to exercise their challenge function as they support the school in the development of the co-ordinators' roles and responsibilities and in raising the standards the children attain.
- 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 said 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 needs to address important areas for improvement in the interest of all the learners.

The main areas for improvement include the need to:

- improve the current processes for self-evaluation, including developing further the use of data and the systems for monitoring and evaluating the quality of learning and teaching;
- review the roles and responsibilities of the co-ordinators and the staff to ensure more effective use of their expertise; and



- review and develop the play based learning programme in the foundation stage to build more effectively on the children's prior learning and to support progression in their learning in all areas of the curriculum.

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 are limited car parking arrangements at the school. The employing authority, board of governors and principal need to review the flow of traffic in the interests of the safety of the children.
2. There is a need to review the maintenance of the flat roof and window frames in parts of the school to ensure the safety and well-being of the children.

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