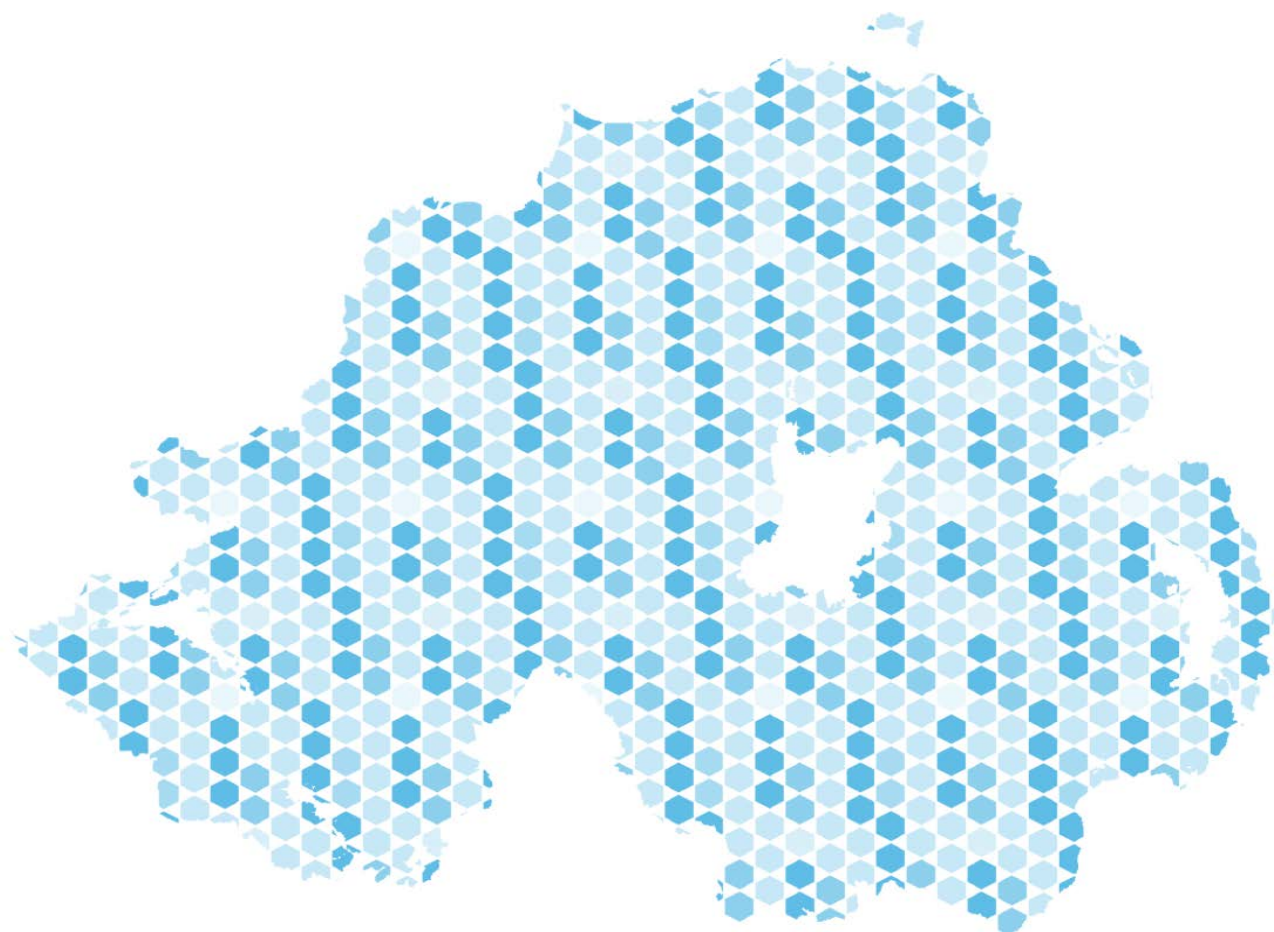


PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Sacred Heart Primary School,
Dungannon, County Tyrone

Report of an Inspection in
June 2016



The Education and Training Inspectorate
Promoting Improvement

Providing Inspection Services for:

Department of Education
Department for the Economy
Department for Communities

CUSTOMER
SERVICE
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 confidential questionnaires.

Almost sixty-nine percent of parents responded to the confidential questionnaire. Nearly all of the responses, including the written comments, were highly affirmative of the work of the school. In particular, the parents highlighted the hard-working and dedicated staff, the leadership and approachability of the principal and the school's significance to the local community. Similarly, all of the staff, who completed the questionnaires, were wholly positive about the work of the school including the harmonious working relations that exist. The ETI has reported to the principal and representatives of the board of governors the main findings emerging from the questionnaires and the discussions.

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 literacy; including how the school is addressing low attainment and underachievement where applicable;
- quality of provision for learning with a particular focus on literacy, including the children in the reception group; and
- quality of leadership and management.

3. Context

Sacred Heart Primary School is a maintained co-educational primary school located in the Parish of Cookstown, on the outskirts of the village of Rock. Last year, the school celebrated its fortieth anniversary. The enrolment has remained steady in the past three years and there are currently nine pre-school children enrolled in a reception group. The percentage of children entitled to free school meals and the percentage of children requiring additional help with aspects of their learning have both remained generally steady over the past four years. The school maintains purposeful links with neighbouring controlled primary schools.

Sacred Heart Primary School	2012-13	2013-/14	2014-15	2015/-16
Enrolment (years 1-7)	119	108	111	112
Reception children	5	5	7	9
% School attendance	95.2	96.6	97.3	96.1
% NI Primary school average	94.9	95.6	95.4	N/A
FSME Percentage ¹	31	35	34	31
No. of children on SEN register				
% of children on SEN register	15	16	16	13
No. of children with statements of educational needs	8	6	6	4
No. of newcomers	*	*	*	*

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	Very good
Provision for learning	Very good
Leadership and management	Very good

5. Achievements and standards

- The children are welcoming, polite and well-spoken. Nearly all are highly motivated and settle quickly and enthusiastically to their learning. The children engage well with their peers and are respectful towards the staff and visitors to the school. Their proficient use of information and communication technology (ICT) allows them to improve their learning by managing information and presenting it in a range of appropriate formats.
- The school's performance data shows that almost all of the children, including those who require support with aspects of their learning, make progress in English and in mathematics at or above expectation.
- In the foundation stage, the children develop well their communication and self-management skills and are provided with good opportunities to develop their writing skills. The quality of the children's written work is high. Almost all of the children respond positively and with enthusiasm to the rich cross-curricular opportunities to write in extended, creative and well-researched ways. By the end of key stage (KS) 2, the children read with accuracy and confidence. In a majority of classes, the effective questioning by the teacher enables the children to supply reasoned and extended responses.

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

- The children in the reception group are well settled and demonstrate good levels of independence. They work well in pairs and groups and can spend lengthy periods at play. The children produce representational work of a good standard. However, on occasions, the resources are focused narrowly on a theme and the work is overly-directed which limits their imagination and creativity.

6. Provision for learning

- There is a comprehensive and well-integrated approach to assessment, planning, learning and teaching across the school. The teachers' planning is well informed by the evaluation of the children's previous learning and knowledge and there is appropriate breadth and progression. The good practice, in a majority of the lessons observed, included well-planned opportunities for the children to work together and to learn from one another. The school has had a recent focus on the development of effective questioning and this was an evident characteristic of the majority of the lessons observed where the children were being encouraged to supply extended and reasoned responses. The teachers correct regularly the children's work. In the most effective practice, the teachers supply supportive written and oral feedback which includes suggestions as to how the children can improve further the quality of the work they produce. This marking policy needs to be applied more consistently across the school.
- The provision for the children who require additional support with aspects of their learning is highly effective. Early identification is prioritised through staff observations and the careful analysis of internal assessment data. The support for literacy and numeracy is provided through a programme of well focused withdrawal sessions and in-class support. The individual education plans are focused clearly on the specific needs of the children and are monitored by the special educational needs co-ordinator. The classroom assistants work closely with the class teachers to provide well-targeted support for the children.
- There are important areas for improvement in the provision for the children in the reception group. The record keeping processes of the children's responses to the activities are not sufficiently robust to provide an accurate profile of the children's progress and development in all areas of the pre-school curriculum. The planning does not reflect clearly enough the pre-school curriculum and lacks challenge and progression in the children's learning throughout the year.
- The school has a consistent approach to the children's acquisition and development of literacy skills. In the foundation stage, the children have become familiar with different forms of print and experiment with informal mark making and almost all are starting to write words and explore sentence structures. As they progress, the children experience a wide variety of writing activities across a range of forms. Reading, including for information, is taught as an explicit skill that is also transferred effectively across the curriculum. The school has invested in a computer-based reading programme which supplements well the reading schemes already in place and which comprise part of the wide range of resources available for the promotion of literacy. These include effective use of ICT which enriches further the children's learning experiences.

- The pastoral care in the school is a key strength with a clear commitment to the provision of high quality pastoral care at all levels. There is a mutual respect between the children and the staff who value the children's achievements and celebrate them accordingly. The children take pride in their work.
- The school gives very good attention to promoting healthy eating and physical activity, thereby encouraging the children to adopt and maintain healthy lifestyles.

7. Leadership and management

- The strategic leadership, including the co-ordinators, take forward very effectively the school's agreed vision for meeting the pastoral and learning needs of all of the children. They focus diligently and enthusiastically on the continuous improvement of all aspects of the school's provision. Together, the entire staff team is highly committed to bringing about the children's all-round development and to improving further the standards which they attain.
- Robust self-evaluation and meaningful consultation and review involving the staff, children and parents underpin the well-embedded school improvement processes. The school's key priorities and most of the associated action plans include appropriate procedures for monitoring and evaluating the quality and impact of the children's learning experiences. The teachers are using the internal performance data increasingly well to evaluate and make appropriate responses to outcomes and trends in the children's attainments and to prioritise future areas for improvement.
- The governors are very well-informed and exercise their challenge function thoughtfully and conscientiously in supporting the principal and staff in the implementation of the school development plan (SDP). Based on the evidence presented at the time of inspection, the parents, staff and school community can have a high degree of confidence in the aspects of governance evaluated. The governors, in consultation with the senior leadership team, need to review the provision for those children in the reception group.
- 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, a group of year 6 children reported that they feel happy and secure in school knowing who to go to if they have any concerns about their safety or well-being.

8. Overall effectiveness

Sacred Heart 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.

Health and Safety

1. The board of governors and employing authority need to review urgently the lack of secured access on the buildings across the school site.
2. Car parking at the front of the school becomes very congested at drop-off and pick-up times and presents a risk for pedestrians.

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