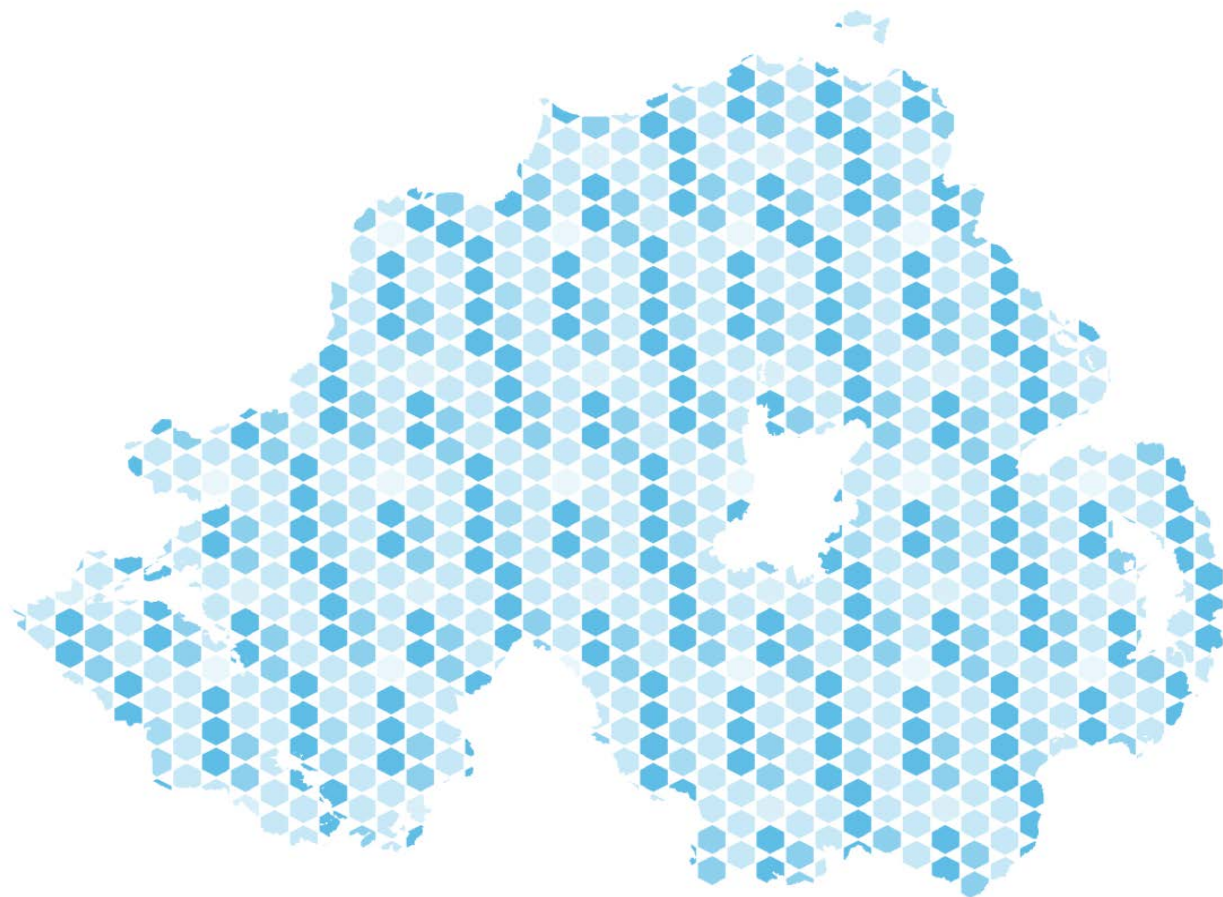


# PRIMARY INSPECTION 2015-16



Education and Training  
Inspectorate

St Brigid's Primary School,  
Altamuskin, County Tyrone

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



## 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 a representative from the governors;
- meetings with groups of children; and
- the opportunity for the parents, teaching and support staff to complete a confidential questionnaire.

Fifty-nine percent of parents and almost all of the staff (teaching and non-teaching) responded to the questionnaires. The responses to the parental questionnaires indicated satisfaction with and support for the life and work of the school. In particular, the parents highlighted the recent improvements to the learning environment and commented on the positive start made by the new principal. The staff responded positively on aspects of learning and teaching, including meeting the needs of the children. The staff responses indicated agreement and disagreement in almost equal measure across most of the questions. The ETI has reported to the principal and a representative of the board of governors the main issues 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; and
- quality of leadership and management.

## **3. Context**

St Brigid's Primary School is a maintained primary school situated in the Parish of Errigal Ciaran, three miles outside Sixmilecross. The children attending the school come mainly from the surrounding and wider rural area. The enrolment has fluctuated over the last four years. Over the same period, the percentage of children entitled to free school meals has decreased and the proportion of children requiring additional support with aspects of their learning has increased.

A new principal took up post in September 2015.

St Brigid's Primary School	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Enrolment	71	65	63	67
% School attendance	95.9	97.9	98.1	N/A
% NI Primary school average	94.9	95.6	N/A	N/A
FSME Percentage <sup>1</sup>	20	15	13	13
No. of children on SEN register	9	9	7	14
% of children on SEN register	13	14	11	20
No. of children with statements of educational need	*	*	*	*
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

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Address urgently the significant areas for improvement
<b>Achievements and standards</b>	Very good
<b>Provision for learning</b>	Very good
<b>Leadership and management</b>	Requires significant improvement

#### 5. Achievements and standards

- The children engage readily with one another and the staff and show enthusiasm for learning. From an early age, they demonstrate independence in making choices and display self-management skills when organising their activities. The children enjoy working in pairs and can adapt to roles where they are both challenging and supporting each other in their learning. They take pride in their achievements, and persevere to achieve their personal targets for improvement. The children use information and communication technology (ICT) confidently and competently to enhance their learning.
- 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.
- The children are keen and able to share and talk about their learning with their peers and adults. In the lessons observed, children presented their ideas to others confidently, asked questions and justified their views and opinions. They enjoy reading aloud and talking about characters and books; use a range of strategies to support their reading and show a keen interest in reading. The children in year 7 read fluently and with expression; they discussed their reading preferences and shared their knowledge of a range of authors. They write with increasing accuracy and for a wide range of audiences and purposes across the curriculum as they progress through the school.

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

## **6. Provision for learning**

- The quality of planning, teaching, learning and assessment in all of the lessons observed was very effective in progressing the children's learning. The teachers make effective and relevant use of a wide range of teaching strategies and resources, including ICT; they set the learning in contexts which appeal to and take account of the children's interests and local environment, and connect skilfully the children's learning across the curriculum. The supportive and challenging learning environment in all the classrooms is underpinned by high expectations and a clear sense of order and purpose. There is an effective range of assessment of learning approaches which enable the children to reflect on how well they are achieving and progressing in their learning.
- The provision for children with additional educational needs is sensitive and responsive to the children's pastoral and academic needs; as a result, they are integrated into all aspects of school life. Early intervention is impacting positively on the children's learning and on their self-esteem. The individual educational plans, which contain well-focused targets to guide the work of the teachers and classroom assistants, are informed and supported by performance data, home-school communication and the staff's knowledge of the children.
- The whole-school programme for literacy is comprehensive; it provides a clear line of development and progression and informs well the teachers' planning. A key strength of the literacy provision is the consistent approach to developing the children's talking and listening. The teachers provide the children with well-conceived opportunities to present to their peers, read aloud, lead whole-class discussion and ask questions. Talking and listening, reading and writing are skilfully integrated across the curriculum.
- The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care is good. The children's behaviour is exemplary and they interact respectfully with their peers and adults. Within the classrooms, the staff have created a purposeful climate for learning which encourages the children to ask for support when required and to make suggestions to develop aspects of their learning, based on their individual needs and interests. The school has identified appropriately the need to develop further opportunities to include the children in decisions about the life and work of the school through the provision of a school council.

## **7. Leadership and management**

- Within a short period of time, the new principal has overseen a number of improvements to the learning environment, including the outdoor area. It is appropriate that she has identified the school's safeguarding procedures and practices as an area for improvement.
- An interim school improvement plan has been put in place. However, this plan does not build upon or reflect adequately the School Development Plan 2013-2016. Self-evaluation lacks rigour and does not take sufficient account of the school's performance data, the very good quality of the learning experiences provided for the children and the standards they attain. Leadership and management needs to be developed at all levels, in order to monitor and evaluate robustly the school's provision and set appropriate targets for further development and improvement.

- 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 and committed to the school but are not involved sufficiently in the school improvement process and need to develop their capacity to perform an effective challenge function.
- 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 the Department of Education. In particular, the school needs to:
  - clarify roles and responsibilities for all staff and governors with regard to safeguarding procedures and practices, including risk assessment procedures, in the school;
  - put in place an agreed code of conduct for staff;
  - put in place record keeping arrangements in relation to safeguarding;
  - update training for staff and governors; and
  - consult with parents and children in the ongoing drafting of pastoral policies, including the new child protection policy.
- The ETI will return to the school within six working weeks to monitor progress in addressing the safeguarding and child protection issues.
- In discussions with the inspectors, the children in year 6 reported that they 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 include:

- to develop the capacity of leadership and management at all levels, in order to monitor and evaluate robustly the school's provision and set appropriate targets for further development and improvement; and
- to address the safeguarding matters identified 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 in 18 to 24 months.

**Health and Safety / Accommodation**

1. There is no security system in place with regard to access to the school buildings.
2. There are no viewing panels in the doors of the classrooms in the main building.



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