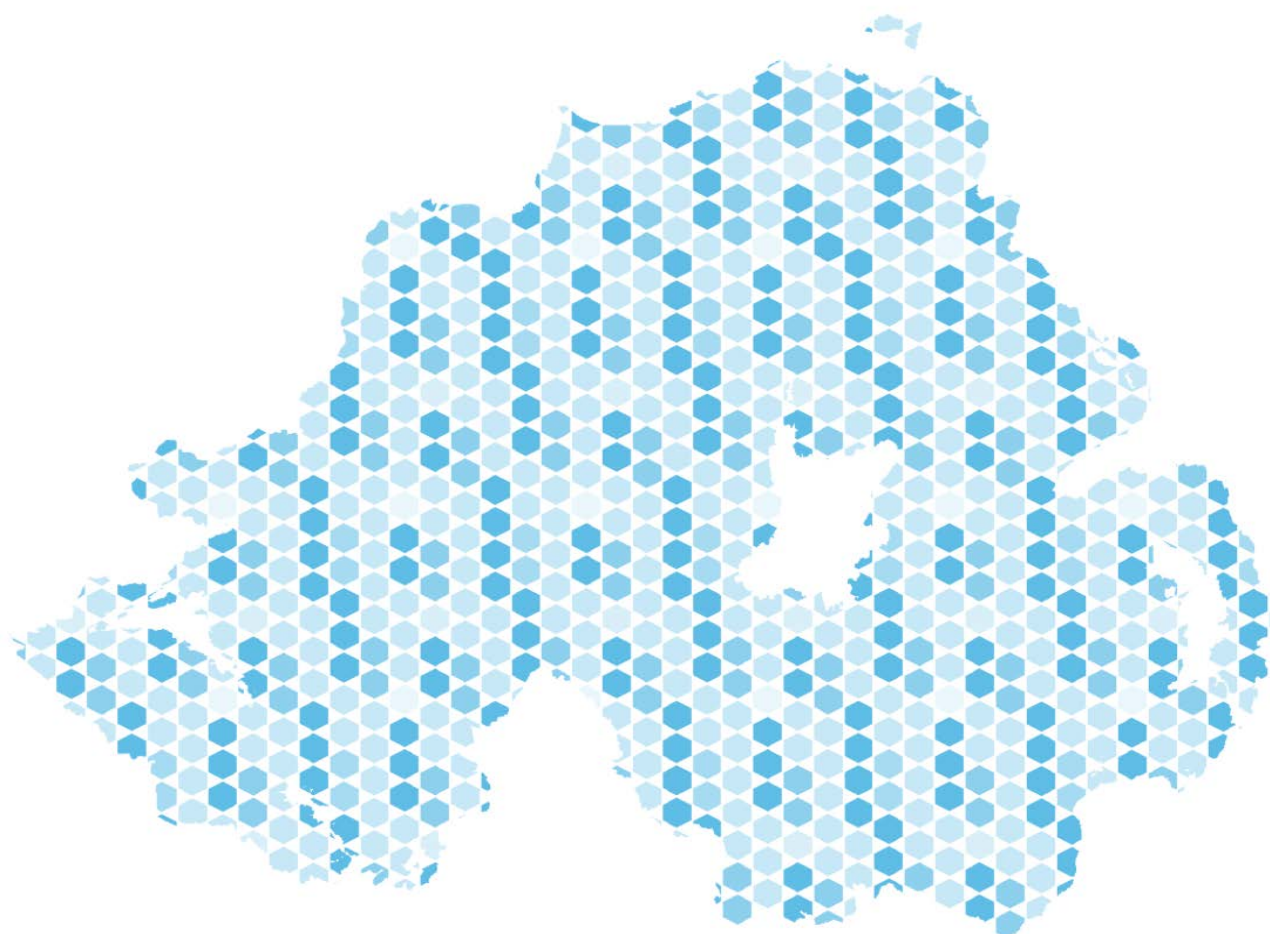


PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

St Colman's Bann Primary
School, Laurencetown,
County Armagh

Report of an Inspection in
December 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.

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	4
8. Overall effectiveness	4
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.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.

Twenty-two percent of parents and 83% of staff responded to the questionnaires. The responses to the parental questionnaires indicated very high levels of satisfaction with the life and work of the school. In particular, the parents highlighted their appreciation of the high quality pastoral care and provision for the children's learning, and the approachability and responsiveness of the staff and principal. Most of the staff completed questionnaires and their responses were unanimously positive; they emphasised the quality of working relationships across the school and endorsed the strategic leadership of the principal. The ETI has communicated to the principal and a representative of the board of governors the main messages emerging from the questionnaires. No significant issues were raised.

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. Colman's Bann Primary School is a maintained primary school situated on the Drumnascamph Road in Laurencetown. Most of the children attending the school come from the surrounding area, with a few travelling from Banbridge. Over the past three years, the enrolment has increased by around 11%. The percentage of children entitled to free school meals and the proportion requiring additional help with aspects of their learning have remained consistent over the past four years. The average attendance rate of the children has been above the Northern Ireland average for the past three years.

The staff have established recently a partnership with a local controlled primary school with a view to developing shared educational experiences for the children.

St Colman's Bann Primary School	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Enrolment	105	104	111	118
% School attendance	96.7	96.3	95.9	N/A
% NI Primary school average	94.9	95.6	N/A	N/A
FSME Percentage ¹	21.0	17.3	16.2	18.6
No. of children on SEN register	22	25	20	25
% of children on SEN register	21.0	25.0	18.0	21.2
No. of children with statements of educational need	6	5	*	*
No. of newcomer children	0	0	0	0

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 outcomes	Outstanding
Provision for learning	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Outstanding

5. Achievements and standards

- The children are engaged actively in their learning: they are making significant progress in developing their thinking skills and personal capabilities through the successful whole-school approach to the provision of valuable collaborative and independent learning experiences. By year 7, the children are reflective, mature learners who are able to articulate their thinking well and transfer their learning and skills across a range of contexts.
- The school's internal performance data indicates 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. In years 6 and 7, all of the children are working in line with their ability or above expectation.
- Overall, the standards achieved by the children in literacy are outstanding. Across the key stages, the children write with accuracy and flair for a range of purposes and audiences. The standard of the children's writing on display and in books is consistently high. During the inspection, a small group of children from year 7 read fluently, expressively and with very good comprehension.

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

6. Provision for learning

- The planning, teaching and assessment were highly effective in all of the lessons observed; a majority of lessons were outstanding. Throughout the provision, the working relationships are of a high order and children are inspired to learn through experiences which are engaging and contextualised. Appropriate pace, challenge and progression are in evidence and the teachers make effective use of questioning to build on incidental opportunities for learning, to deepen the children's thinking and to develop their oral responses. The information and communication technology (ICT) is deployed skilfully to enhance learning, in particular to provide support and challenge and to develop the children's independence.
- The children who require additional support with their learning are identified at an early stage through assessment using standardised tests and teacher observation. The teachers write clear, individual education plan targets that are implemented well in the classroom. Additional support for the children's literacy is an effective blend of approaches by the teachers and classroom assistants to meet the children's individual needs. The numeracy support sessions are practical, interactive and develop well the children's skills and confidence. The staff track carefully the effectiveness of the interventions, and the resulting information is used well to inform further planning for support and learning strategies.
- The whole-school literacy provision has been thoroughly audited and a well-targeted programme has been implemented, linking the development of the children's reading, writing and spelling skills. The teachers provide a literacy-rich learning environment; a significant, sustained period of literacy daily and consistently effective classroom practice which is progressive and well differentiated. An appropriate focus is placed on the development of the children's reading skills throughout the school and the children enjoy reading and talk with enthusiasm about their books. The teachers plan a broad range of opportunities for the children to develop their writing skills in a wide variety of contexts. The children have excellent opportunities to develop further their talking and listening skills through class discussions and group and paired work. They enjoy activities in which they express their opinions and ideas, make inferences and draw appropriate conclusions.
- The pastoral care in the school is outstanding. The school is a welcoming, supportive and secure learning environment where the children develop readily their self-confidence and self-esteem. The children's behaviour is excellent; they treat each other and the adults with care and kindness. The children have opportunities to undertake leadership roles and to contribute to the improvement of their school through the school council and Eco- committee.
- The school gives very good attention to promoting healthy eating and physical activity through the healthy break policy, the physical education (PE) curriculum and a range of extra-curricular sporting activities, thereby encouraging the children to adopt healthy lifestyles.

7. Leadership and management

- The leadership of the school is highly effective, demonstrating a clear, strategic vision and an uncompromising drive for school improvement. The school development plan is devised in consultation with all members of the school community and is informed by highly effective use of internal school data. It focuses appropriately on improving further the quality of the children's learning experiences and the standards that they attain. There are thorough, robust self-evaluation processes in place: the leadership monitors through the extensive system of planning and assessment for learning, and observation in classes, providing challenge and support for staff. A high priority is placed on capacity-building: the principal leads and implements an exemplary programme of continuing professional development and discussion of effective learning and teaching amongst the staff. This has contributed to an effective collegial ethos, shared expectations and consistently high quality provision and improved standards in the children's learning.
- Based on the evidence available at the time of inspection, ETI's evaluation is that there can be a high degree of confidence in the aspects of governance evaluated. The governors are highly committed and fully involved in the life and work of the school.
- 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 ETI will monitor how the school sustains improvement.

Health and Safety

1. The employing authority, governors and principal need to review the limited drop-off provision at the school which causes undue traffic congestion and is hazardous to the children, parents and local residents.

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