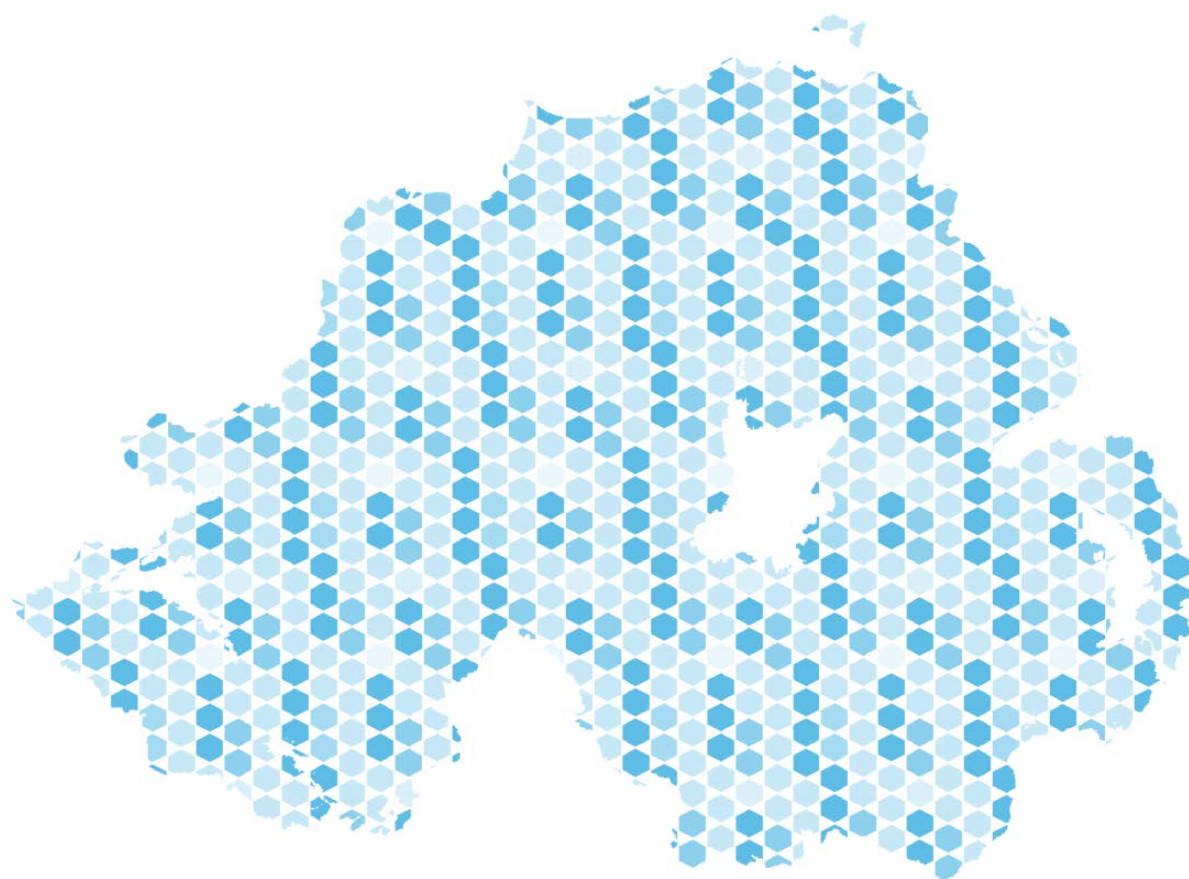


PRIMARY INSPECTION 2015-16



Education and Training
Inspectorate

St Jarlath's Primary School,
Blackwatertown, County Tyrone

Report of an Inspection in
September 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 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-one percent of the parents responded to the questionnaires; their responses indicated very high levels of support for and satisfaction with the work of the school. In particular, the parents praised the leadership of the principal, the very welcoming atmosphere in the school, the dedicated, friendly staff and the extensive range of sporting and cultural opportunities provided for the children. Eighty-three percent of the staff completed questionnaires and their responses were wholly positive; in particular, the staff highlighted their enjoyment of working in the school, the happy, friendly environment and the highly effective teamwork. The ETI has reported to the principal and representatives of the board of governors, and discussed with them the main issues arising from the questionnaires.

2. Focus of inspection

In order to promote improvement in the interest of all children, the purpose of the inspection is, through effective linking of internal and external approaches, to evaluate the:

1. children's achievements and standards with a particular focus on numeracy, including, how the school is addressing low attainment and underachievement where applicable;
2. quality of provision for learning with a particular focus on numeracy and;
3. quality of leadership and management

3. Context

St Jarlath's Primary School is situated in the village of Blackwatertown in County Tyrone. Almost all of the children who attend the school come from the villages of Blackwatertown, Benburb and the surrounding rural area. The school's enrolment is consistent and stands currently at 166 children. The number of children entitled to free school meals and those who require additional support with their learning have remained steady over the last four years whilst the number of newcomer children has increased from 10% to 16%. The outworking of the school's mission statement "finding success in every child" permeates the life and work of the school evidenced by the questionnaire returns and the inspection findings.

St Jarlath's Primary School	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
Enrolment	160	165	164	166
% School attendance	95.6	96	96.4	98.7
% NI Primary school average	94.9	95.6	N/A	N/A
FSME Percentage ¹	22	24	21	20
% (No) of children on SEN register	16 % (26)	15% (26)	18 % (30)	15% (25)
No. of children with statements of educational needs	*	*	*	*
No. of newcomer children	16	22	25	26

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	Outstanding

5. Achievements and standards

- The children are very welcoming, well motivated and demonstrate very good levels of engagement and enjoyment in the learning process. They articulate well their ideas and opinions and are very willing to help others. The children are developing effective strategies for problem solving, take pride in their achievements and present their work to a very good standard.
- The school's internal assessment data shows that nearly all of the children make progress in English and mathematics in line with their ability or above expectation.
- The children achieve very good standards in numeracy. By year 7, the children are secure in their knowledge of key mathematical concepts, show flexibility in their thinking and are able to apply their knowledge across all areas of the curriculum.
- The children who require additional support with aspects of their learning are making progress, most are working in line with their ability and reach the standards of which they are capable.
- The children use information and communication technology (ICT) confidently to enhance their learning.

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

* less than 5

6. Provision for learning

- There is an effective whole school approach to the arrangements for planning, learning and assessment throughout the school. The teachers plan conscientiously to ensure continuity and progression in the children's learning. In best practice, the planning is matched to the needs of the children, and the teachers' evaluations inform appropriately future action for individuals and groups.
- All of the lessons observed were effective in promoting learning. In the best practice, in most of the lessons, the teachers build very well on the children's prior knowledge and establish effective connections across the areas of learning. They make very skilful use of open-ended questions to develop the children's understanding, extend their learning and challenge their thinking, and; the plenary sessions are used to consolidate well the children's learning. The classroom assistants provide valuable support to the teachers.
- The school has a very inclusive approach to special education needs and the provision is outstanding. The children who require additional support with aspects of their learning are identified early and benefit from very effective intervention strategies. Additional provision is matched very well to the children's needs. The support is of a very high quality and has a positive impact on the children's learning, self-esteem and the standards they achieve.
- The children have well planned opportunities to develop a very good understanding of numeracy through appropriate practical activities, particularly in the foundation stage and key stage 1. A particular strength of the provision is the development of the children's problem solving and investigative skills in topical and real life contexts throughout the key stages.
- The quality of pastoral care in the school is outstanding. There is an inclusive supportive ethos throughout the school and high quality working relationships at all levels. A strong sense of community pervades the life and work of the school. The children in year 6, talked enthusiastically about their experiences in school; in particular they highlighted their enjoyment of learning and the support they receive from all members of staff.

7. Leadership and management

- The leadership and management of the school is highly effective, there is a shared vision for school improvement and clear strategic direction for future developments in the school.
- The school improvement process is underpinned by rigorous self-evaluation and effective analysis and understanding of qualitative and quantitative data. It is linked to a coherent school development plan, which is informed by extensive consultation with the board of governors, staff and parents. The key priorities of the school development plan concentrate appropriately on improving further the quality of the children's learning experiences and the standards that they attain.

- The school development plan is supported by a well-structured staff development programme. There is very good evidence that the opportunities taken for continuing professional development are impacting positively on the quality of learning and teaching in the school.
- Based on the evidence presented at the time of inspection, the ETI's evaluation is that there can be a high degree of confidence in the aspects of governance evaluated. It is clear that the governors have a well-developed strategic overview of the school and are well informed of all aspects of school life, in particular, the standards achieved by the children. They provide high levels of challenge and support to the work of the senior leadership team.
- 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 year 6 children reported that they felt very secure in school and knew what to do if they had 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.

Accommodation

1. There is a need for a vision panel in the door of the central library room.

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