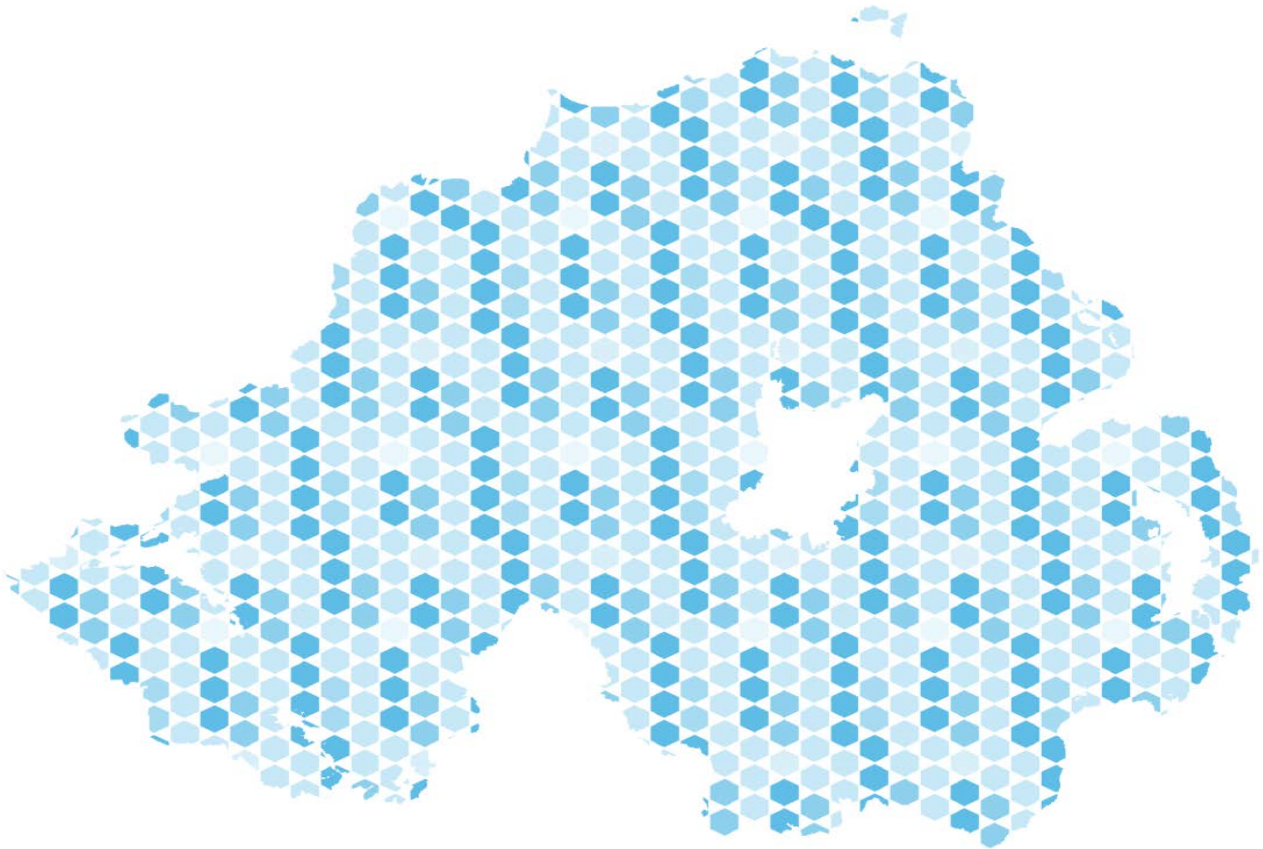


PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

St Malachy's Primary School,
Ballymoyer, County Armagh

Maintained, co-educational

Report of an Inspection in
January 2018

eti

The Education and Training Inspectorate
Promoting Improvement

Providing inspection services for:

Department of Education
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INTRODUCTION

1. Context

St Malachy's Primary School is a maintained primary school situated in Ballymoyer, County Armagh. Almost all of the children attending the school come from the surrounding rural area. Over the last four years, enrolment in the school has remained steady, whilst the percentage of children entitled to free school meals has declined significantly. There are four classes in the school and three of these are composite classes. A new teaching principal was appointed in 2015 and two new teachers were appointed in 2016. The school fosters strong links with the local community and has been successful in its recent application for Peace IV Shared Education Initiative funding. The school is justly proud of its two Eco-Schools green flags.

St Malachy's Primary School	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
Enrolment	69	66	69	74
% School attendance	96.0	96.2	95.9	N/A
% NI Primary school average	95.4	95.5	N/A	N/A
FSME Percentage ¹	42%	45.5%	37.7%	23%
No. of children on SEN register	12	9	11	17
% of children on SEN register	17%	14%	15.9%	23%
No. of children with statements of educational need	*	*	*	*

Source: data as held by the school.

* fewer than 5

N/A not available

2. Views of parents and staff

Seventy-six percent of parents and 73% of the staff responded to the confidential, online questionnaires. The responses to the parental questionnaire were highly positive; all respondents agreed that the school is well led, that their children enjoy learning in the school and they are making good progress. The responses to the staff questionnaire endorsed the effectiveness of the school leadership and the positive ethos, reflected in effective working relationships and happy, well cared for children. The ETI has communicated to the principal and representatives from the board of governors the main findings arising from the questionnaires.

3. Focus of the inspection

In order to promote improvement in the interest of all children, the inspection linked internal and external approaches to evaluate the:

- outcomes for children with a particular focus on literacy including across the curriculum;
- quality of provision with a particular focus on literacy; and
- quality of leadership and management.

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

4. Overall findings of the inspection

Overall effectiveness	High level of capacity for sustained improvement
Outcomes for learners	Very good
Quality of provision	Very good
Leadership and management	Very good

KEY FINDINGS

5. Outcomes for learners

- The children achieve very good standards in literacy. The school has placed a clear focus on developing reading; consequently, the children are enthusiastic readers and have very good comprehension skills. In discussion with the inspectors, a group of year 7 children read with fluency and understanding and they talked confidently about their favourite authors and genres; they reported that they enjoy reading. The children have very good talking and listening skills and the standard of written work in their literacy books is high. The school's internal data shows almost all children achieve in line with, or above, expectation.
- From the foundation stage onwards, the children are developing well their skills and confidence in using information and communication technology (ICT) and they achieve high standards by the end of key stage (KS) 2.
- The children make very good progress commensurate with their abilities and stage of development. The school is using data very effectively to both track and demonstrate the progress made by individual children, including those identified as having special educational needs.
- The children have very positive dispositions to learning and work well both independently and collaboratively with their peers. The children are respectful, listen carefully to the views of others and are very considerate of one another's feelings.

6. Quality of provision

- All of the teaching observed was good or better in developing learning. The majority of lessons observed were very good; in those lessons, the children were engaged fully with their learning which was practical and contextualised. The children benefit from a wide range of enriching learning opportunities, including those provided beyond the classroom. The provision is underpinned very well by the planning for literacy and numeracy, which has clear lines of progression. The teachers are very effective in identifying children's individual needs and provide appropriate interventions; the classroom assistants are highly skilled in supporting the children. The individual education plans for children with special educational needs are effective in guiding learning and enabling progress.
- Based on the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the school's approach to the care and welfare of the children impacts positively on learning, teaching and outcomes. The children are very well cared for in a supportive learning environment.

7. Leadership and management

- The leadership and management at all levels, supported by the staff is very committed to improving the learning experiences, standards attained and well-being of every child. There is a highly effective self-evaluation process in place which improves the outcomes for the children. School development planning is informed by the effective use of data and whole school community consultation, including valuable, and valued, input from the children. The action plans are effective in identifying appropriate targets and the associated work is impacting positively on learning and teaching.
- The staff have availed of appropriate professional development opportunities. There are established procedures in place for regular reviewing of classroom practice, monitoring the progress of the action plans and sharing good practice; these processes are instrumental in bringing about further improvements.
- Based on the evidence available 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. The governors manage the resources very effectively, are well informed about all aspects of school life and oversee very well the improvement work of the school. The children's welfare and learning are central to all decisions made by the governors.
- 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. Safeguarding

Based on the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the arrangements for safeguarding children reflect the guidance from the Department of Education. The children report that they feel safe, are very happy in school and know what to do if they have any concerns about their safety or welfare. A particular strength of the school is to educate children about potential dangers, including farm and online safety.

9. Overall effectiveness

St Malachy's 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/Accommodation

1. There is currently no perimeter fence between the school's playing field and the adjoining church.

Inspection methodology and evidence base

The ETI's Inspection and Self-Evaluation Framework is available on the ETI website: [The Inspection and Self-Evaluation Framework \(ISEF\): Effective Practice and Self-Evaluation Questions for Primary | Education Training Inspectorate](#)

Inspectors observe learning and teaching, scrutinise documentation and the children's written work and hold formal and informal discussions with children, teachers and staff with specific responsibilities.

The arrangements for inspection include:

- 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, online questionnaire.

Reporting terms used by the Education and Training Inspectorate

Quantitative terms

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 ETI use the following performance levels when reporting on outcomes for learners, quality of provision and leadership and management²:

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 in 12 to 18 months.
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 in 18 to 24 months.

² And the overall provision in a unit, as applicable.

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