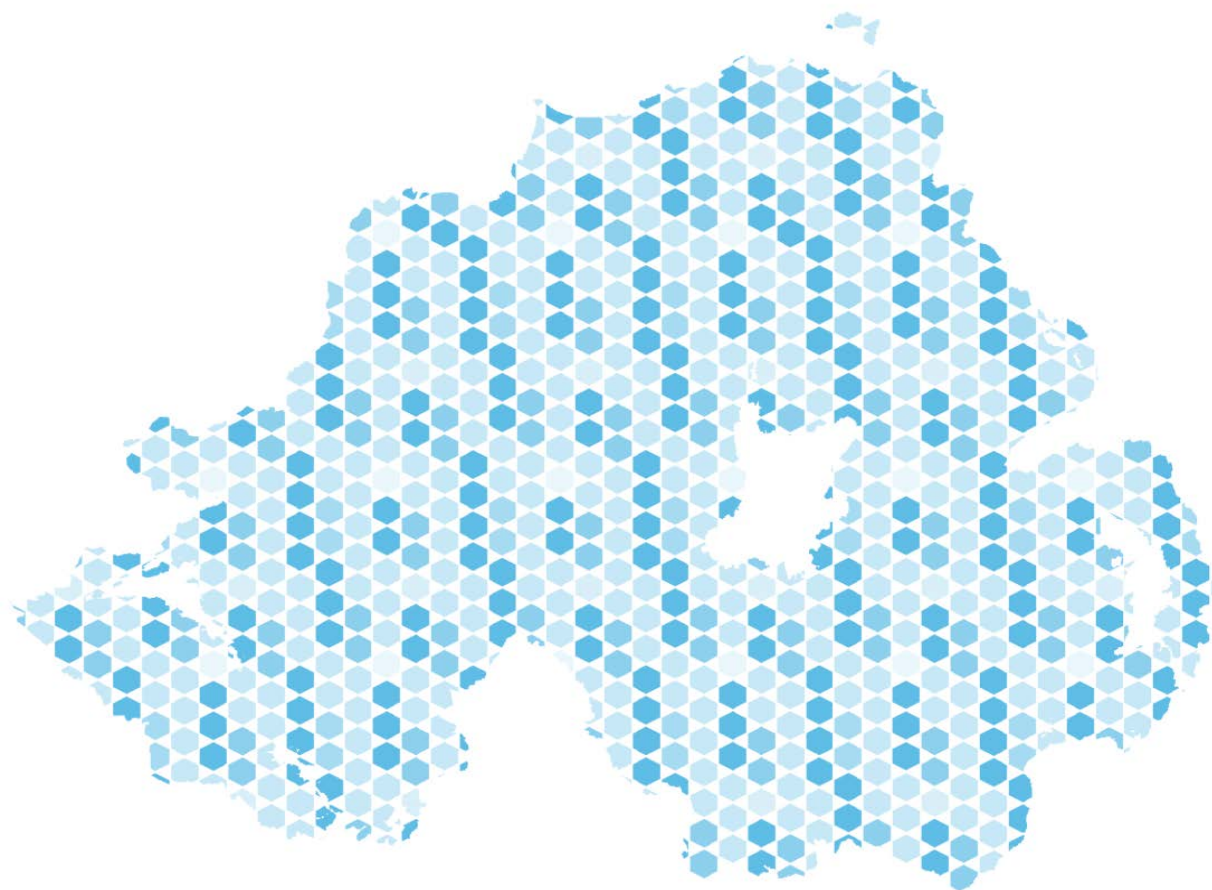


PRIMARY INSPECTION 2015-16



Education and Training
Inspectorate

St Mary's Gortnaghey Primary
School, Dungiven,
County Londonderry

Report of an Inspection in
September 2015



*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



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	3
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.eti.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.

Thirty-nine percent of parents responded to the questionnaires. Their responses indicated very high levels of satisfaction with the life and work of the school. In particular, the parents praised the helpful and approachable staff who work hard to create a welcoming learning environment for the children. All of the staff completed questionnaires and their responses were wholly positive; they emphasised the excellent teamwork and their pride in the school. The ETI has reported to the principal and a representative of the board of governors the responses from the questionnaires.

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 numeracy; including how the school is addressing low attainment and underachievement where applicable;
- quality of provision for learning with a particular focus on numeracy; and
- quality of leadership and management.

3. Context

St Mary's Gortnaghey Primary School is a maintained primary school situated in the village of Gortnaghey, approximately four miles from the town of Dungiven. All of the children attending the school come from the village and the surrounding rural area. The enrolment has increased steadily over the last four years. The percentage of children entitled to free school meals has increased in the past four years while the proportion requiring additional help with aspects of their learning has remained steady. A new principal took up post in September 2014.

St Mary's Gortnaghey Primary School	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
Enrolment	41	44	54	57
% School attendance	96.6	95.3	97.0	N/A
% NI Primary school average	94.9	95.6	N/A	N/A
FSME Percentage ¹	47	50	46	54
No. of children on SEN register	5	12	10	10
% of children on SEN register	12	27	20	17
No. of children with statements of educational need	*	0	*	*
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

Overall effectiveness	Capacity to identify and bring about improvement
Achievements and standards	Good
Provision for learning	Good
Leadership and management	Good

5. Achievements and standards

- The children are courteous and respectful; their behaviour is excellent. Throughout the school, the children manage themselves very well and, when given the opportunity, work collaboratively with their peers. The children engage in their learning with enthusiasm and interest. They use a range of resources competently and confidently to support and 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 enjoy practical numeracy activities and understand the relevance of their mathematical learning to real life situations. Most of the children are developing well their knowledge of basic number facts and the associated mathematical language. The children have a limited range of mental mathematics strategies to solve problems; they would benefit from more opportunities to talk about their mathematical thinking and learning in numeracy lessons and across the curriculum.
- The children who require additional support with aspects of their learning make steady progress in meeting the targets outlined in their individual education plans. These children work confidently alongside their peers and are integrated well into all aspects of school life.

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

6. Provision for learning

- The teachers' medium term planning is detailed and guides well the teachers' practice. The subsequent evaluations are focused on the children's learning and informed by the teachers' knowledge of their individual needs. Most of the lessons observed were effective in promoting and progressing the children's learning. In the best practice, the teachers' skilful questioning developed well the children's thinking and oral responses.
- The provision for children with additional educational needs is coherent, flexible and focused on the holistic development of the children. The children are supported effectively by their teachers, classroom assistants and peers. The individual education plans are child-centred and inform well classroom practice.
- The numeracy programme throughout the school is broad and balanced. All of the teachers are committed to improving further the quality of the learning experiences for, and standards achieved by, the children in numeracy. To develop further the children's competence in numeracy, the teachers have identified the need to provide more regular opportunities for the children to: explain the mathematical reasoning behind their answers; and, engage in practical problem-solving and open-ended investigations.
- The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care is good. There is a caring, friendly and inclusive ethos; the children are proud of their school and their achievements. The children contribute regularly to decision making through their active involvement in the school council and the recently established Eco council. The school provides a wide range of additional learning experiences for the children which develop well their physical, academic and social skills.

7. Leadership and management

- The recently established leadership team has a well-defined management structure in place and has a clear vision for the future development of the school. The key priorities within the school development are appropriate and are informed by the rigorous analysis of data and self-evaluation. It is appropriate that the school has identified the need to widen consultation with all members of the school community as part of the school improvement process. The school's action plans need to be refined further to ensure that there is a sharper focus on staff development to improve further the quality of learning, teaching and standards throughout the school.
- Based on the evidence available at the time of inspection, the ETI's evaluation is that there can be confidence in the aspects of governance evaluated. The governors have worked well with the recently appointed principal to develop their knowledge of the school development planning process and in their management of the school budget. There is an aspect of governance to review, namely: to improve further their understanding of curricular developments within the school and their impact on the children's achievements and standards, providing challenge where appropriate.

- On the basis of the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the school has satisfactory arrangements in place for safeguarding children. These arrangements broadly reflect the guidance issued by the Department of Education. The following area needs to be addressed: the intimate care policy needs to be updated and shared with staff and parents. In discussions with the inspectors, the children in years 6 and 7 said that they felt safe and happy in school and 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 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.

Health and Safety / Accommodation

1. There are no disabled toilet facilities in the school.

© CROWN COPYRIGHT 2015

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part, except for commercial purposes or in connection with a prospectus or advertisement, provided that the source and date thereof are stated.

Copies of this report are available on the ETI website: www.etini.gov.uk