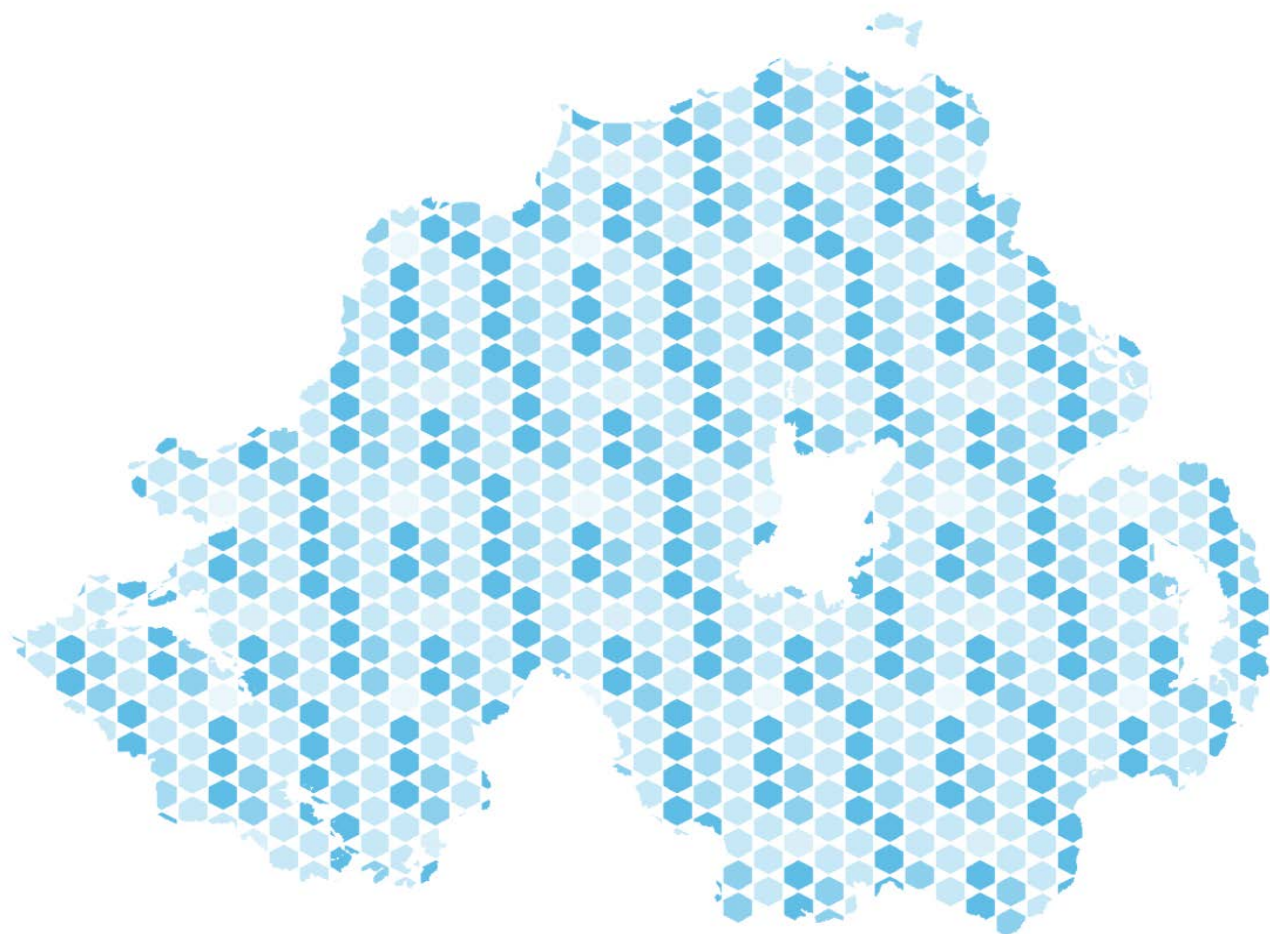


PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

St Mary's Primary School,
Glasdrumman, County Down

Report of an Inspection in
June 2016



The Education and Training Inspectorate
Promoting Improvement

Providing Inspection Services for:

Department of Education
Department for the Economy
Department for Communities

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.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 representatives from the governors;
- meetings with groups of children; and
- the opportunity for the parents, teaching and support staff to complete confidential questionnaires.

Eighteen percent of parents and 69 percent of staff responded to the confidential questionnaire. Almost all of the respondents to the parental confidential questionnaire were content with their child's experiences at the school and most of the parents expressed satisfaction with the life and work of the school. The staff responses were mostly positive, emphasising their commitment to the life and work of the school. The ETI has reported to the principal and representatives of the board of governors the main issues emerging from the questionnaires and the discussions. These related mainly to communication with parents about their children's progress, and to the leadership and management of the school.

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. Mary's Primary School is a maintained primary school situated near the village of Annalong. All of the children attending the school come from the surrounding area of Glasdrumman and Annalong. The enrolment has decreased significantly over the last four years and the school operates well below its capacity. 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 grown to almost half of the school population. A development proposal has been approved recently to amalgamate the school with two neighbouring, maintained primary schools. The school has recently joined the Mourne primary school cluster group.

St Mary's Primary School	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Enrolment	60	53	52	43
% School attendance	95	96	97	N/A
% NI Primary school average	94.9	95.6	95.4	N/A
FSME Percentage ¹	34	36	34	42
No. of children on SEN register	15	16	14	20
% of children on SEN register	26	28	27	46
No. of children with statements of educational need	4	5	5	5
No. of newcomer children	*	*	*	*

Source: data as held by the school.

* fewer than 5

N/A not available

4. Overall findings of the inspection

Overall effectiveness	Address urgently the significant areas for improvement
Achievements and standards	Important areas for improvement
Provision for learning	Important areas for improvement
Leadership and management	Requires significant improvement

5. Achievements and standards

- In a significant minority of lessons, the children have limited opportunities to: talk in a reflective manner about problem solving; share roles and responsibilities and explain their thinking. In general, the children are friendly to visitors and most work well with each other in pairs or small groups. Overall, the children's standards in information and communication technology (ICT) require improvement; across the school, the teachers provide too few ICT-related activities to develop the children's skills.
- The school's performance data shows that most of the children, including those who require additional support with aspects of their learning, make progress in English in line with expectation. In mathematics, the school's data indicates that almost all of the children make progress at or above expectation.
- There is limited progression in the standards of talking and listening from key stage (KS) 1 to the end of KS 2. A majority of the children can offer opinions in group and class discussions but use only general vocabulary and do not always speak clearly. In contrast, in the foundation stage, the children are developing well their talking and listening skills. They interact confidently with their peers in small groups and pairs to share ideas and feelings and can present their ideas to the class. They are beginning to evaluate each other's work by asking questions of their peers and offering suggestions for improvement when prompted. By year 7, the most able children read with fluency and for meaning. The standard of work in the children's books requires improvement. The children write in a variety of forms and for a range of purposes, however, their writing does not always have the correct features of the particular form and lacks accuracy in basic grammar and spelling.

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

6. Provision for learning

- The quality of learning, teaching and assessment has important areas for improvement. The majority of the medium-term planning is not differentiated sufficiently to provide for the needs of all of the children. There is variation in the format of the planning and few planned opportunities to develop the children's thinking skills and personal capabilities. There is a lack of consistency in the quality of the teachers' evaluations and in the impact of the evaluations on future planning. In the lessons observed, the learning was not consolidated effectively in the plenary sessions and requires improvement to develop the children's assessment of their learning. There is little marking for improvement across the school.
- The children who require support with aspects of their learning are identified early and appropriate withdrawal support is provided to address difficulties at an early stage. In contrast, the effectiveness of the support in class varies; in a minority of lessons observed, well differentiated work was provided that challenged and supported the children and all staff worked together in clearly defined roles. There is an inconsistent approach to the writing of the learning targets for the individual education plans. They do not focus appropriately on the incremental progression for each child and do not always include the strategies that will be used by staff to support the children in achieving their targets. The staff training in special educational needs requires consistent implementation across all key stages.
- The teachers' planning for literacy lacks progression in talking and listening, reading and writing. The teachers provide limited opportunities for the children to develop purposeful talking and listening, linked to the intended learning and to use the full range of the writing forms. Information and communication technology is not used sufficiently to improve the quality of the children's written work and for them to develop individual presentation skills.
- There are positive working relationships between the children and the staff and there is an inclusive welcoming ethos. The children have no mechanisms through which to express their ideas on the life and work of the school.
- The school gives good attention to promoting healthy eating and physical activity thereby encouraging the children to adopt healthy lifestyles.

7. Leadership and management

- The leadership and management of the school at senior level requires significant improvement. There are no systems in place to monitor and evaluate the quality and consistency of the children's learning experiences and the standards they achieve. At the time of inspection, a number of key policies were either out of date or not in existence.

- The school development plan² has been informed by consultation with most of the stakeholders, except the children, on the school's priorities. The action plans are not focused clearly on the literacy, numeracy and ICT standards achieved by the children and do not contain specific, measurable targets based on rigorous self-evaluation of the quantitative and qualitative data available in the school. As a consequence, the co-ordinators in the key areas of learning do not have a clear oversight of the progress of the targets and the extent of the improvement in the children's attainment.
- 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 not sufficiently informed about: the action to promote improvement in standards; and the creation and review of the statutory policies and procedures. They do not exercise their challenge function to ensure the effectiveness of leadership.
- 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:
 - ensure the designated governor has received child protection training;
 - update the child protection policy;
 - put in place intimate care policies and an e-safety policy; and
 - ensure all parents know how to inform the school in the event of a concern.
- In discussions with the inspectors, the children in year 6 reported that they feel happy and secure 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's provision and budget, in order to address the current and future needs of the children and the staff.

8. Overall effectiveness

St Mary's Primary 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 are to:

- address the safeguarding and child protection issues;
- review the roles and responsibilities in the management structure to establish systematic monitoring and evaluation of the children's learning experiences and attainment in order to raise standards and improve the quality of learning and teaching; and
- strengthen the governance of the school.

² The school development plan is non-compliant with the requirements of the School Development Planning Regulations (NI) 2010

The ETI will return to the school within six working weeks to monitor the progress in addressing the safeguarding issues.

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.

APPENDIX

Health and Safety / Accommodation

1. Not all of the classrooms have a vision panel in the door.

ADDENDUM ON SAFEGUARDING ARRANGEMENTS – SEPTEMBER 2016

ST MARY'S PRIMARY SCHOOL, GLASDRUMMAN, COUNTY DOWN (503-6001)

In line with the child protection/safeguarding procedures of the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI), the district inspector returned to St Mary's Primary School on 15 September 2016 as a follow-up to the inspection which took place on 1 and 2 June 2016; the purpose of the visit was to ensure that the safeguarding issues, evaluated as unsatisfactory in the inspection, had been addressed.

On the basis of the evidence available, the revised arrangements were evaluated as satisfactory.

During the interim period, the school had received support from the Child Protection School Support Service of the Education Authority.

Inspection of safeguarding will form part of the follow-up inspection process.

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