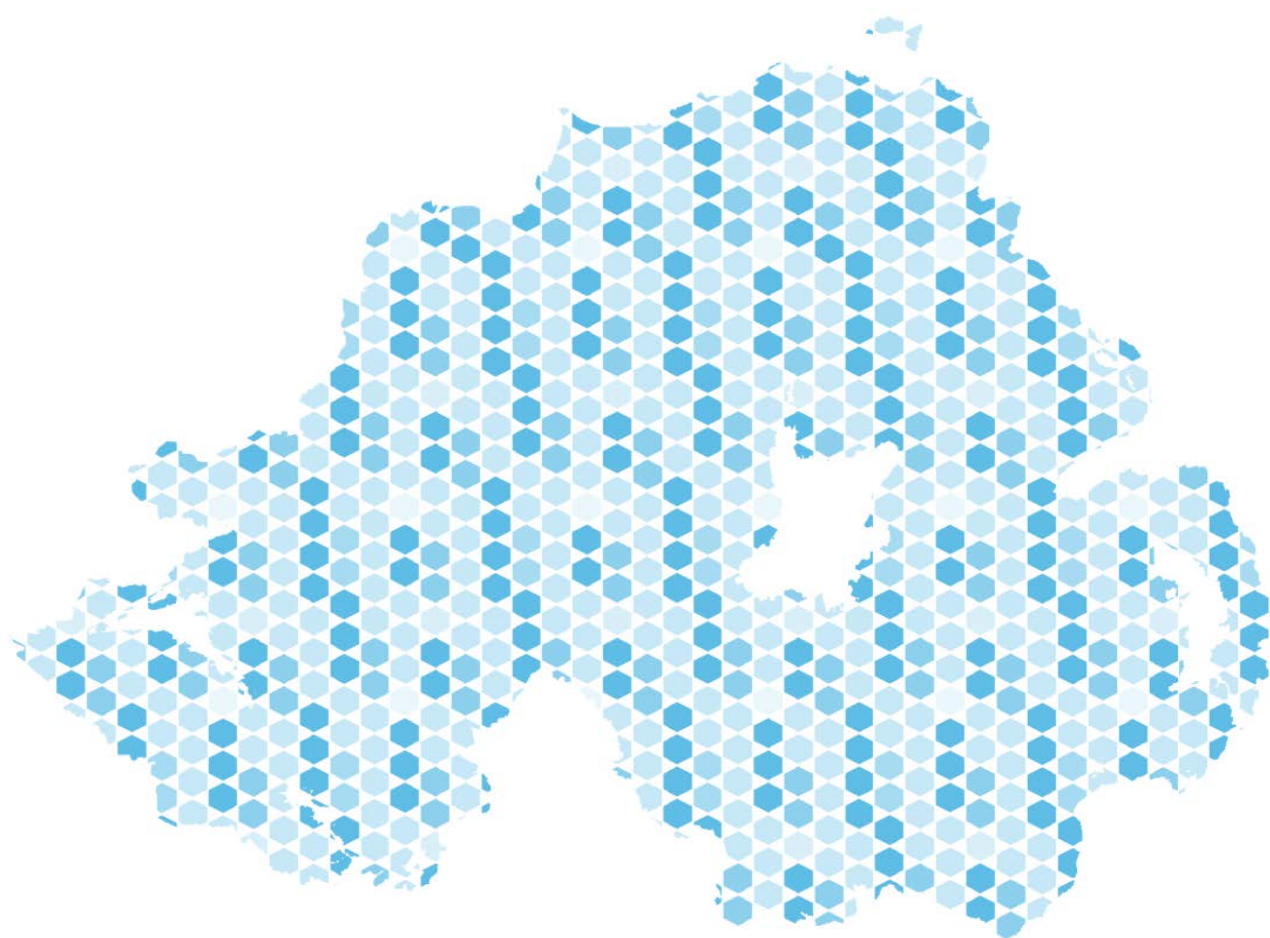


PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

St Trea's Primary School,
Ballyronan, County Derry

Report of an Inspection in
January 2016

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.

Thirty-five percent of parents and all of the staff responded to the confidential questionnaire. The responses to the parental and staff questionnaire were wholly positive. In particular, the parents highlighted the friendly and welcoming ethos of the school which is child-centred and very well thought of in the community, and the opportunities for the children to participate in a wide range of after school sporting and cultural activities. The staff commented positively on the open and effective communication, the very good team spirit and the excellent support from all colleagues including support staff, parents and governors. The ETI has reported to the principal and representatives of the board of governors the main findings emerging 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 Trea's Primary School is a maintained primary school situated in Ballymaguigan, County Derry. All of the children attending the school come from the surrounding rural area. The enrolment has remained between 119 and 126 over the last five years. The percentage of children entitled to free school meals has fluctuated between 14 and 19 in the past four years while the proportion requiring additional help with aspects of their learning has ranged from 16% to 19%.

Having been involved in a number of cross-community school-based initiatives over many years, the school is continuing to build effectively on a shared education programme with the local controlled primary school. In addition, the school is part of a cluster of primary schools in the local area.

St Trea's Primary School	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Enrolment	119	126	119	119
% School attendance	96.1	97.3	97.0	N/A
% NI Primary school average	94.9	95.6	N/A	N/A
FSME Percentage ¹	14	17	17	19
No. of children on SEN register	23	19	15	20
% of children on SEN register	19.3	15.1	12.6	16.8
No. of children with statements of educational need	*	*	*	*
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	High level of capacity for sustained improvement
Achievements and standards	Outstanding
Provision for learning	Very good
Leadership and management	Outstanding

5. Achievements and standards

- The children respond very positively and with great enthusiasm to the well-planned tasks and activities organised by their teachers. They apply their skills in numeracy across the curriculum in a variety of meaningful and real-life contexts. The children reflect upon their learning and put forward ideas that improve the quality of their work. They respond positively to the high expectations of their teachers and their parents, and aspire to achieve the highest standards possible in their work. The children's behaviour is excellent; they learn effectively due to the positive ethos in all of the classrooms.
- The school's internal performance data shows that almost all of the children, including those who require additional support with aspects of their learning, make progress in mathematics and English in line with their ability.
- By year 7, the most able children demonstrate very good mathematical knowledge and understanding and apply their numeracy skills in other areas of the curriculum and in school life. Using appropriate mathematical language, they justify their chosen methods, opinions and conclusions. Across the school, the children are flexible in their thinking and enjoy the challenge of completing investigations and solving problems when working independently, in pairs and in groups.

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

- When appropriate, the children use a wide range of digital media to research information for their topic work. By year 7, they have developed a very good range of information and communication technology (ICT) skills which supports and extends their learning across the curriculum.

6. Provision for learning

- All of the lessons observed during the inspection were effective in engaging the children's interest and progressing their learning. The teachers use skilful questioning to challenge the children to organise their ideas, deepen their understanding and develop further their responses. They mark the children's work regularly and provide feedback which directs the children well on how to improve the quality of their work. The teachers' detailed observations, reflections and collective analysis of assessment data are used very effectively to identify underachievement, inform each teacher's planning and ensure that the children reach their potential.
- In mathematics, the children access a wide range of activities with an important emphasis on mental mathematics, problem-solving and investigation. The teachers have agreed and placed an important focus on developing the children's mathematical language which is benefiting the development of their problem-solving skills. A particular strength of the school's provision is the meaningful and very effective development of the children's numeracy skills across other areas of learning, in particular, through the provision for play in the foundation stage and in the topics studied in the World Around Us. The skilful use of ICT-based games, challenges and competitions enhances effectively the children's enjoyment of and learning in mathematics and is an important and effective feature of the provision.
- The teachers support effectively those children who have been identified as having special educational needs. A rigorous analysis of the data and specialist assessments inform the provision of the skilfully targeted withdrawal support. The special educational needs co-ordinator, teachers and classroom assistants work effectively as a team to monitor the progress of the children identified with special educational needs and to adjust the support as required. Ongoing staff development, which addresses the changing needs of the children, supports the preventative, inclusive approach to addressing special educational needs in the school. The classroom assistants support very effectively the children's learning.
- A key strength of the school's provision is the high priority given to the children's pastoral care. An inclusive, child-centred ethos permeates all aspects of school life in which the children's achievements are recognised and celebrated. The children's social and emotional development is supported well through the well-considered personal development and mutual understanding programme. The children's purposeful involvement in the school- and Eco- councils develops effectively the children's decision making and leadership skills.
- The school promotes healthy eating and physical activity through the effective implementation of the healthy eating policy and through providing the children with regular access to a wide range of sporting activities which develops in them the attitudes and behaviours to adopt and maintain healthy lifestyles.

7. Leadership and management

- The teachers in the school, supported by the parents and governors, have worked in a highly effective collegial manner to embed and sustain whole school improvement over a significant period of time. Led effectively by the principal, all of the staff are committed fully to meeting the individual needs of all the children and to sustaining the high standards they achieve.
- The process of school improvement planning uses, very effectively, rigorous self-evaluation which is underpinned by an appropriate analysis of quantitative data, teacher observations and consultation with the whole school community. At a whole school level, there is evidence of significant progress towards the agreed goals across a number of important areas within the school development plan.²
- The school has agreed shared education initiatives with the local controlled primary school and has held jointly curricular and professional development training for both sets of staff.
- 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 are well-informed about the life and work of the school and carry out effectively their support and challenge functions.
- 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

St Trea'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.

² The school development plan meets the requirements of the School Development Planning Regulations (NI) 2010.

Health and Safety

1. Three of the internal classrooms require viewing panels in the doors.
2. There is a need for the employing authority, board of governors and principal to carry out a risk assessment of the remaining area of the perimeter of the school which has not been fenced.

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