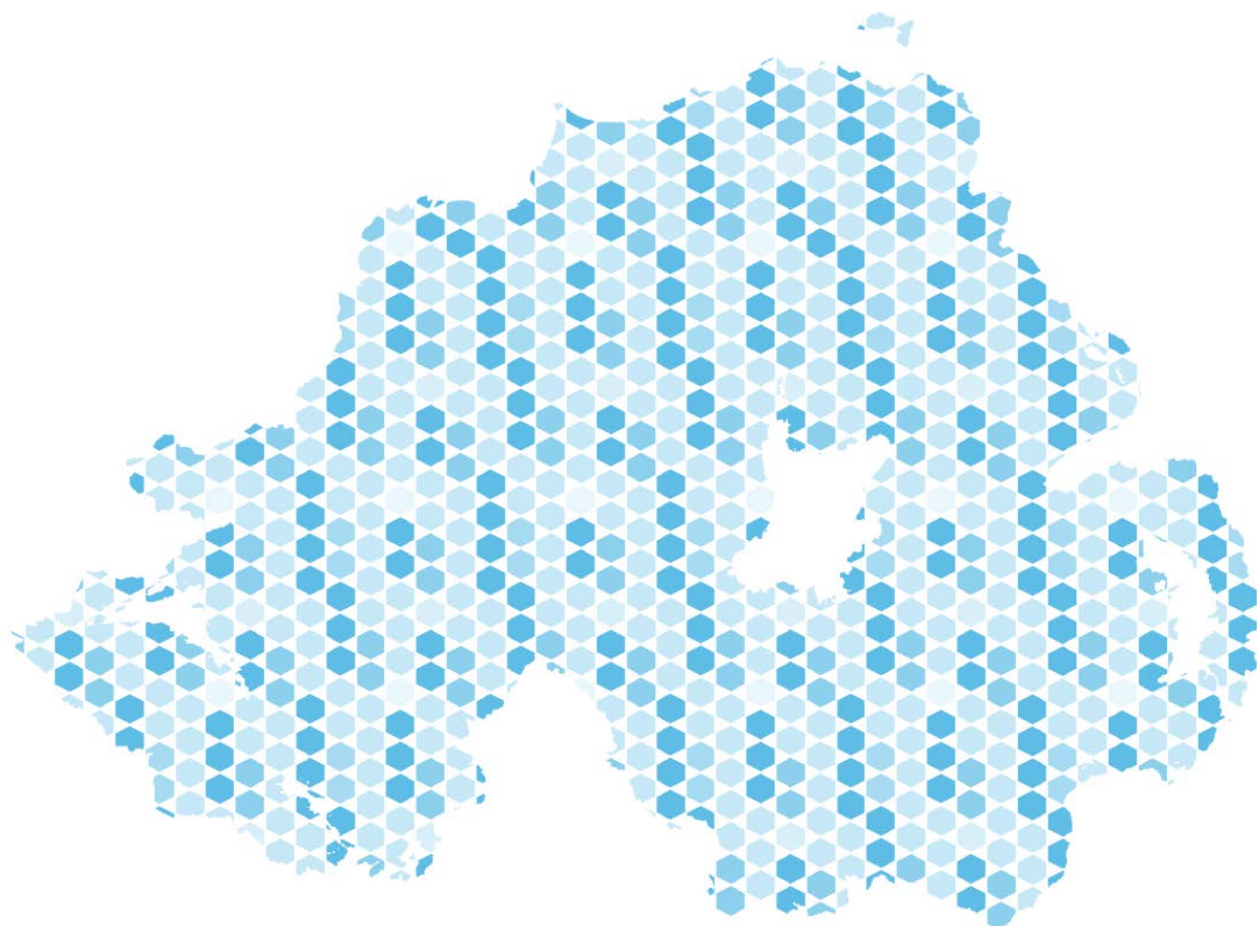


PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Tonagh Primary School and
Nursery Unit, Lisburn,
County Antrim

Controlled , co-educational

Report of an Inspection in
September 2016



Providing inspection services for:

Department of Education
Department for the Economy
and other commissioning Departments



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 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.

Almost ten percent of the parents and 84% of the staff responded to the questionnaires. All of the responses indicated high levels of satisfaction with the educational and pastoral provision provided by the school and no issues were raised.

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 in literacy and numeracy (including how the school is addressing low attainment and underachievement where applicable);
- quality of provision for learning in the school including the nursery unit; and
- quality of leadership and management.

3. Context

Tonagh Primary School is a controlled primary school with a Nursery Unit. It is situated in Lisburn and almost all of the children come from the surrounding area. Over the past four years, the enrolment has remained fairly constant, while the percentage of children entitled to free school meals and the percentage of children requiring additional support with their learning have both decreased. Currently, there are a small number of newcomer children. Over the past two years, the year one intake to the school has been oversubscribed.

Tonagh Primary School	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
Enrolment	242	252	259	240
% School attendance	93.3%	93.9%	93.8%	97.1%
% NI Primary school average	95.6%	95.4%	N/A	N/A
FSME Percentage ¹	54%	52%	46%	40%
No. of children on SEN register	72	73	62	54
% of children on SEN register	30%	29%	24%	23%
No. of children with statements of educational need	7	7	10	10
No. of newcomer children	7	6	7	*

Source: data as held by the school.

* fewer than 5

N/A not available

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
Nursery Unit	Good

5. Achievements and standards

- Across the key stages, most of the children achieve good standards in all areas of literacy. Almost all of the children in the foundation stage have good listening skills and are willing to engage in whole-class discussions. As the children progress through the school, they are developing their planning, editing and presentational skills in their written work to improve both their accuracy and competence in writing in a range of forms and for a variety of audiences. There are, however, limited opportunities for the children to use information and communication technology (ICT) independently to express their ideas through podcasts and interactive presentations.
- Across all key stages, the standards in mathematics are good. Most of the children can use a range of mental calculation strategies to solve problems and can apply their learning to a variety of real life contexts. The majority of the children present their work to a high standard, there is, however, variation in the quality of the presentation of the work in the books in key stage 2 (KS2). By the end of KS2, the most able children have a good knowledge and understanding of number and are confident in their understanding of the other areas of the mathematics curriculum. The children need to develop further their ability to talk about their learning in mathematics and justify their answers using appropriate mathematical language.

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

- In the nursery unit, most of the children are well settled for the beginning of their pre-school year. They are increasingly secure in the routines of the day and transitions, especially from outdoor to indoor play. The children are developing well their independence, effective social skills and positive attitudes to their learning. Most of them engage in collaborative and purposeful play; their fine motor skills are developing well because of the good variety of tools available in the play areas. The children listen attentively to the group story session and engage with enjoyment in the songs and rhymes. They have a good understanding of early mathematical concepts, such as, number and comparative and positional language through the practice of the snack routine and play.
- The children are friendly, courteous to visitors and are well-behaved. When given the opportunity, in most of the lessons observed, they display a positive disposition to learning, engage enthusiastically with their teachers and work well with their peers.
- While there are limited yet good examples of the effective use of ICT across the curriculum, the children's ICT skills are not collated consistently and analysed sufficiently to monitor and evaluate accurately progression across the key stages.

6. Provision for learning

- Overall, the quality of the planning, learning, teaching and assessment is good. The learning and teaching was good in most of the lessons observed. The characteristics of the effective lessons include: learning that builds on the children's interests and abilities; supportive working relationships in the classroom; appropriate pace and challenge in the learning; and, well-planned opportunities for the children to collaborate in paired and group work. The practice that had important areas for improvement, in almost one-quarter of the lessons observed, is characterised by: a lack of planning for the learning needs of all the children; too much teacher exposition; and, tasks pitched at too low or high a level, resulting in a minority of children being unable to engage with the learning. Throughout the school, the classroom assistants make a valuable contribution to the lessons and support the children well with their learning.
- The long term planning for literacy focuses effectively on identified areas for improvement in literacy at whole school level and provides clear progression in knowledge and skills development across each year group. A wide range of classroom management strategies are used well to motivate and engage the children. In the most effective literacy provision, in a majority of the lessons observed, the work was well structured and provided a range of opportunities for whole class, paired and group working, and individual activities. Reading is developed appropriately across the school through phonics programmes, shared and guided reading, and a range of fiction and non-fiction reading opportunities and related activities. The provision for the development of writing is mostly good, and the children write for a variety of audiences and purposes, however, there are missed opportunities for the children to develop further their independent, extended writing across the curriculum. At KS 2, the children also need further opportunities to edit and redraft their work and to improve the presentation and accuracy of their work. All of the literacy withdrawal sessions observed were effective in supporting and promoting learning. The learning experiences are well planned and provide evidence of impact and progression, particularly at KS1.

- The long term planning for numeracy outlines clearly the progression in knowledge and skills across each year group and provides appropriate guidance for the teachers. In the most effective numeracy provision, in a majority of the lessons observed, the work was differentiated appropriately with suitably structured, active learning activities and engaging introductions to lessons which consolidated mental mathematics skills. In most of the lessons observed in KS 2, however, the planning for learning was not sufficiently well developed to meet the needs of the children, resulting in inappropriate levels of challenge and in missed opportunities to promote learning. All of the numeracy withdrawal lessons observed were good in promoting learning. In these lessons, the learning experiences had a purposeful context and the children had opportunities to extend their thinking through open-ended investigations and collaborative working. The staff need to disseminate the effective practice across the school to ensure consistency in the learning experiences for all of the children.
- The quality of the nursery provision is good. The comprehensive planning is informed effectively by the staff's systematic and relevant observations of the children's responses and indicates progression and challenge in their learning. The quality of the interactions between the staff and the children is consistently of a very good standard. They respond to the children's individual interests, model play and use effectively open-ended questions to extend the children's language and thinking skills. Outdoor play resources are limited; the staff have identified appropriately the need to acquire further resources to extend the energetic and imaginative play.
- The quality of pastoral care in the school and the nursery unit is very good. A welcoming, respectful ethos pervades the learning environment and staff respond sensitively to the children's needs. The children have well-planned opportunities to experience leadership and decision making roles in order to develop further their thinking skills and personal capabilities.

7. Leadership and management

- The senior management team members have a clear strategic direction for future developments and to the on-going improvement of the provision within the school. They are highly committed to the well-being of the children and the staff. The school development plan (SDP) is at the beginning of a new three-year cycle, and is informed appropriately by: a thorough analysis of the school's performance data; ongoing monitoring and evaluation of provision and standards by key co-ordinators; and, consultation with the whole-school community. The associated action plans, however, need to be more focused on the learning experiences of all the children and their attainment, in order to guide better the process of monitoring and evaluation at all levels.
- The school maintains effective links with the parents who are actively encouraged and supported by the school to become involved in their children's education.

- 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 are involved willingly in the life and work of the school. They have a good understanding of the strengths and areas for improvement in the school and have undertaken appropriate training to support them in their work. There is an aspect of governance to review, namely to:
 - monitor more closely the outworking of the action plans associated with the school development plan to ensure the actions taken are effective at bringing about the required improvement.
- 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 KS 2 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

Tonagh Primary School and Nursery Unit demonstrates the capacity to identify and bring about improvement in the interest of all the learners.

The inspection has identified the need to:

- share and embed more consistently the effective practice within the school; and
- monitor and evaluate more rigorously the impact of planning, learning and teaching on effecting improvement and raising the standards the children achieve.

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