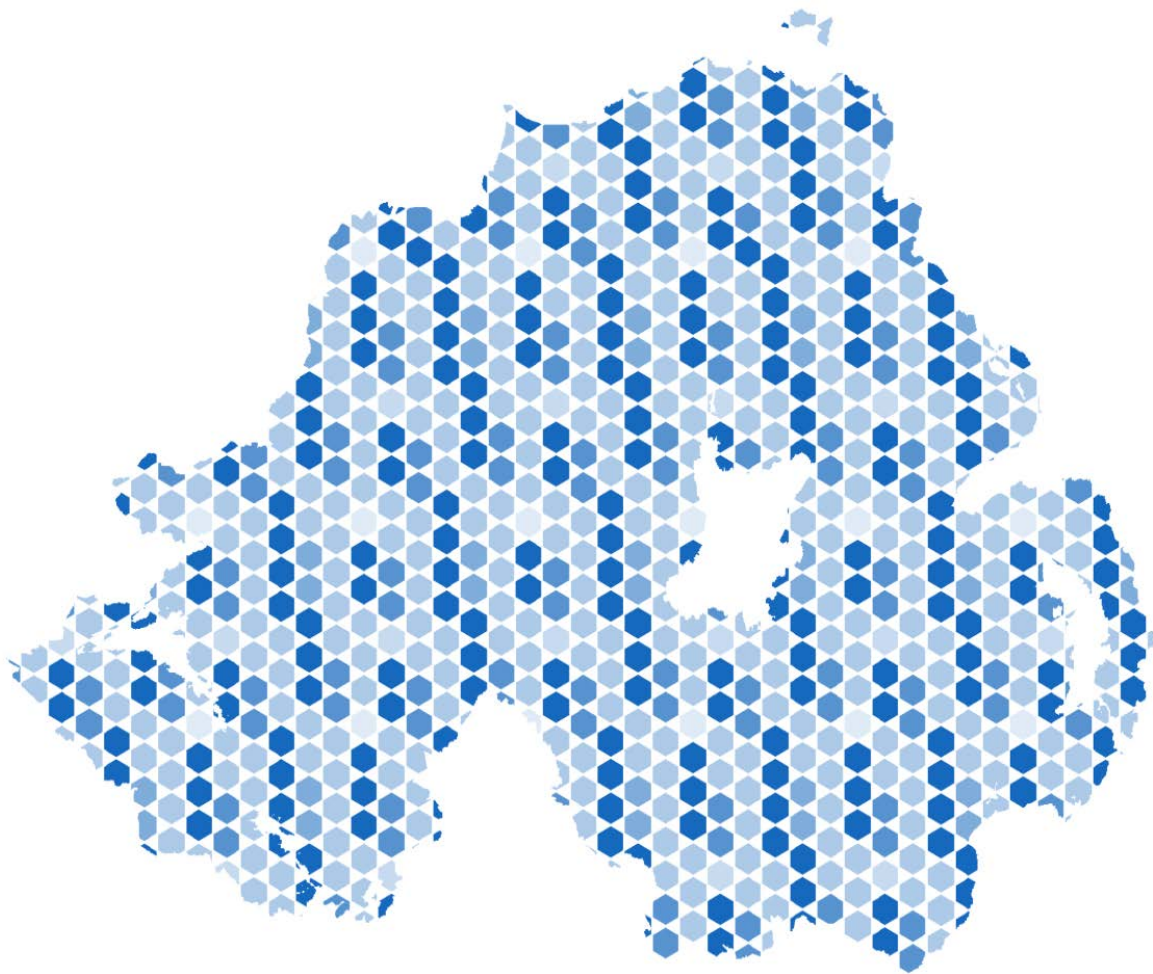


Education and Training Inspectorate

SPECIAL INSPECTION



Lisanally School, Armagh

DE Ref No (531-6577)

Report of an Inspection in June 2019



The Education and Training Inspectorate
Promoting Improvement

Providing inspection services for:

Department of Education
Department for the Economy
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1. Context

Lisanally School is situated in Armagh city and provides education for 84 pupils aged from three to nineteen years who have complex and severe learning difficulties. The pupils travel to the school from a wide geographical area. The enrolment has gradually increased within recent years. The school is in a shared education partnership with a local primary school.

2. Parents and staff questionnaire responses

A small number of parents and 38% of the staff responded to the online, confidential questionnaire. The responses to the parental questionnaire were very positive and the written comments indicated high levels of satisfaction with the life and work of the school. The responses to the staff questionnaire endorsed the effective work within the school, and highlighted the warm and welcoming ethos. The ETI has communicated to the principal and the chair of the board of governors the main findings, from the questionnaires.

3. Focus of the inspection

The inspection focused on:

- the outcomes for pupils; in particular, how the school is addressing individual needs;
- the quality of provision in the school; and
- the quality of leadership and management.

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

- Most of the pupils are making very good progress in their learning which is evidenced in the class transfer of information booklets and class documentation. There is an appropriate emphasis on functional skills to enable them to make sufficient progress in line with their ability and interests. They enjoy their learning, are well engaged and achieve the targets set for them within lessons.

- The senior pupils achieve AQA¹ unit awards in a range of subject areas such as horticulture, personal care routines, French and CCEA² entry level qualifications in life skills and digital skills for everyday life. They benefit from the opportunities to study vocational courses in Southern Regional College and CCEA entry level occupational studies taught in school. Their independence and self-esteem is enhanced greatly by the opportunities to prepare and provide food for the school 'Deli' and Café.
- The pupils report that they enjoy learning beyond the classroom, for example horse-riding and swimming. The post-16 pupils spoke positively about their school trip to Barcelona and their enjoyment in attending the gym and leisure centre.
- They access a range of well-suited and purposeful work experience placements and are prepared well for the transition to a range of further education or training courses when they leave the school.
- During discussions with the inspectors, the pupils spoke confidently and with pride about the opportunities they have to take on meaningful roles and responsibilities, such as prefects, eco-council members and as librarians.

6. Quality of provision

- A broad, balanced and inclusive curriculum is in place across the school and information and communication technology (ICT) is used well to enhance the learning and teaching. The pupils benefit from a wide range of learning experiences with a local post-primary school to study drama and music. There is an appropriate emphasis on the development of the pupils' functional skills across the key stages.
- There are very effective arrangements for careers education, information, advice and guidance with a range of local employers who provide suitable work-experience placements for the senior pupils. The school engages well with relevant outside agencies to plan effectively for the transition of pupils to placements in further education, training agencies or employment in line with their interests and capabilities.
- The multi-disciplinary support in the school is used well to inform the planning and individual programmes for the pupils' sensory and behavioural needs. Pupils with more challenging behaviour are supported through a nurturing programme and the school's evidence demonstrates significant improvement in the behaviour of the pupils enabling them to work effectively with each other.
- The individual education plans have been reviewed recently to include a new format and more focussed targets. The staff are able to evidence that the pupils are achieving their targets through supporting documentation, such as samples of work and photographs.

¹ Assessment and Qualifications Alliance

² Council for the Curriculum Examinations and Assessment

- The majority of lessons observed during the inspection were very good. The most effective practice was characterised by the positive working relationships between teachers and classroom assistants, clear strategies for differentiation and teaching approaches which engaged and supported pupils in their interests and learning.
- The planning for learning is monitored and evaluated regularly by the class teachers but the leadership have identified the need for further development and dissemination of effective practice. Appropriate baseline assessments are in place and used well by the class teachers to inform the individual education plans.
- Based on the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the school's approach to the care and welfare of the pupils impacts positively on learning, teaching and outcomes. The working relationships at all levels are very positive and the caring and supportive ethos is evident throughout the school.

7. Leadership and management

- The senior leadership team have worked effectively with staff and governors to develop a collegiate approach to the strategic development of the school. Consequently, the staff are committed to the action plans and review, share and evaluate progress in implementing them at regular meetings.
- In the more effective practice, the co-ordinators have a clear understanding of their roles, and have effective action plans to guide the development of their areas of responsibility. However, this practice is inconsistent and there is a need for its dissemination among all middle management members to improve further the quality of pupil's learning.
- The leadership is completing comprehensive preparation for a new school development plan, including consultation with a wide range of stakeholders to inform decision making. The school leadership have begun to monitor and evaluate curriculum planning and individual education plans, however there is a need to ensure that a whole school system for tracking the individual progress of pupils and their development of functional mathematical skills is put in place.
- 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. There are aspects of governance to review, namely to: have further insight and knowledge of the curriculum and outcomes of the pupils.

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 pupils report that they feel safe in the school and that they are aware of what to do if they have any concerns about their safety or welfare.

9. Overall effectiveness

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.

Statistical data

Lisanally Special School	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Enrolment school	92	79	80	84
% Attendance	92.4	93.9	93.6	93.8
% FSME ³	28	27	22	29
Newcomers	7	8	8	9

Source: data as held by the school.

³ The term 'FSME Percentage' refers to the percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals.

Inspection methodology and evidence base

The ETI's Inspection and Self-Evaluation Framework which guides inspection and self-evaluation within special schools is available on the ETI website [The Inspection and Self-Evaluation Framework \(ISEF\): Special Education | Education Training Inspectorate](#)

Inspectors scrutinised documentation and held formal and informal discussions with pupils, teachers and staff with specific responsibilities.

The arrangements for this inspection included:

- a meeting with a representative from the governors;
- meetings with groups of pupils; and
- the opportunity for the parents, teaching and support staff to complete a confidential 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 management⁴:

Outstanding
Very good
Good
Important area(s) for improvement
Requires significant improvement
Requires urgent improvement

The ETI use the following levels when reporting on governance:

High degree of confidence
Confidence
Limited confidence

The ETI use the following levels when reporting on safeguarding:

Reflects the guidance
Reflects broadly the guidance
Unsatisfactory

The ETI use the following levels when reporting on care and welfare:

Impacts positively on learning, teaching and outcomes for learners.
Does not impact positively enough on learning, teaching and outcomes for learners.

⁴ And the overall provision in a unit, as applicable.

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.

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