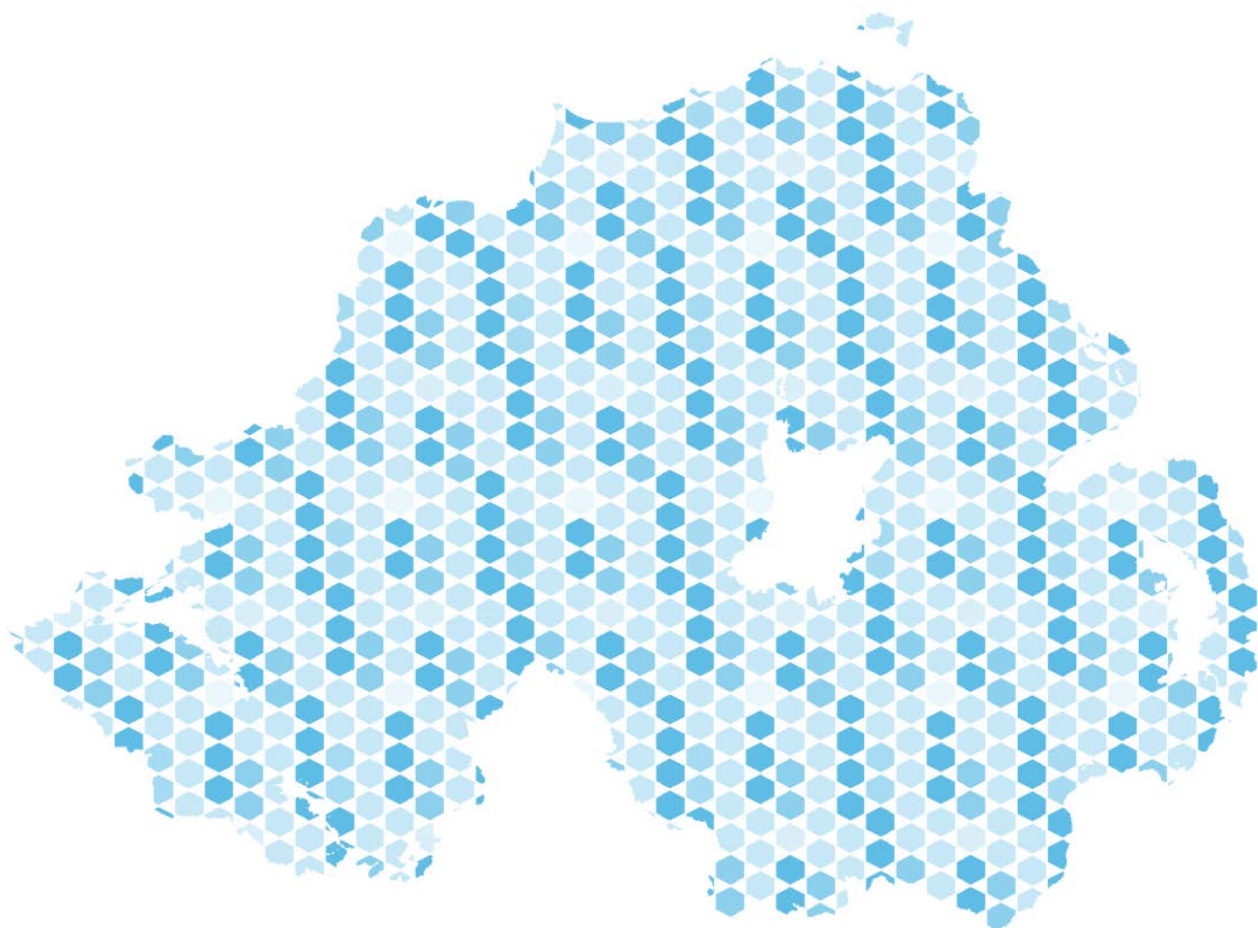


PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Ballymacward Primary School,
Lisburn, County Antrim

Maintained, co-educational

Report of a Follow-up Inspection
in December 2017



The Education and Training Inspectorate
Promoting Improvement

Providing inspection services for:

Department of Education
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FOLLOW-UP TO THE INSPECTION OF BALLYMACWARD PRIMARY SCHOOL, LISBURN, BT28 3SU (403-0573)

The Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) carried out an inspection of Ballymacward Primary School in January 2016¹, which concluded that the school needed to address urgently significant areas for improvement in the interest of all the learners. The areas for improvement were to:

- improve the quality of learning and teaching, with a particular focus on effective planning;
- raise the standards achieved by the children in all aspects of literacy; and
- establish a systematic and rigorous process for monitoring and evaluating the provision at all levels in order to inform the school development planning process.

As a consequence, the Department of Education entered the school into the Formal Intervention Process under the Every School a Good School² policy.

The school's action plans were of a good quality. The school's development plan was adjusted in light of the inspection findings.

The ETI carried out an interim follow-up visit in December 2016 and a follow-up inspection in December 2017.

In the interval since the initial inspection, the following actions or changes which affect the work of the school have taken place:

- new staff, both teaching and support, have been appointed;
- the lines of communication between key co-ordinators and governors have been strengthened;
- the staff and governors have received regular support and training from the Education Authority (EA) and the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools (CCMS) in aspects of: governance; leadership and management; and, literacy;
- the school has established partnerships with a number of other schools;
- the staff have reviewed and amended whole-school, medium- and short-term planners;
- key curricular and pastoral policies have been reviewed and updated;
- a systematic process for monitoring and evaluating the provision and outcomes in literacy is now in place;
- a range of quantitative and qualitative data is now used to identify whole-school, class, small group and individual targets;

¹ [Primary Inspection - Ballymacward Primary School, Lisburn, County Antrim | Education Training Inspectorate](#)

² [Every school a good school - a policy for school improvement | Department of Education](#)

- interventions in literacy and numeracy have been introduced; and
- a more consistent whole-school format for individual education plans has been introduced.

Key findings

- The outcomes for children in literacy are now good. In most of the classes, the children work well individually, in pairs and in groups, and contribute confidently to whole-class discussions. The children: plan, draft and edit their work; write for a range of purposes and audiences; and, most present their work to a good standard.
- The quality of provision in literacy is now good. The planning in most of the classes promotes the development of the children's thinking skills and creativity, guides well the learning and teaching and is supported by appropriate on-going evaluations. There is now a systematic approach in place for the teaching of guided reading, with clear learning intentions which are evaluated regularly by most of the teachers and monitored by the literacy co-ordinator. During the follow-up inspection process, all of the lessons observed were good or better in promoting effective learning in literacy; one quarter were very good. In these lessons: the learning was well-paced and suitably challenging; the teachers used skilful questioning to encourage extended responses from the children and develop their thinking and creativity; and, the children worked well together in groups to complete the stimulating learning tasks set for them by their teachers. The classroom assistants provide valuable support to the teachers and reinforce and extend the children's learning throughout the school.
- A more consistent whole-school format has been introduced for individual education plans which includes the children's interests and strengths and incorporates contributions from the children to their own learning. There is inconsistency, however, in the quality of the individual education plans as the strategies for supporting the children do not always align closely enough to the individual targets and require greater clarity.
- The quality and effectiveness of leadership, management and action to promote improvement are now an important area for improvement. In spite of the rigorous systems that are now in place for monitoring and evaluating the provision and outcomes in literacy, the quality of planning for and evaluating learning is not good enough in upper key stage (KS) 2. This needs to improve in order to meet better the needs of all of the children and to continue to raise the standards.
- The literacy co-ordination is now comprehensive with rigorous processes for monitoring and evaluation in all aspects of literacy. A range of qualitative and quantitative data is collated and analysed effectively to identify whole-school, class, small group and individual targets and appropriate interventions are put in place. The literacy co-ordinator has facilitated skilfully a collegial approach to school improvement which is impacting positively on the leadership and management of other key curricular areas within the school.

- Based on the evidence available at the time of the follow-up inspection, the ETI's evaluation is that there can be confidence in the aspects of governance evaluated. The governors are now better informed about the children's outcomes and the work of the school through the effective links that have been established with the key co-ordinators. They exercise both their support and challenge functions to good effect, which has resulted in the improved outcomes, provision and leadership of literacy. There are aspects of governance to review, namely, to monitor carefully the provision in upper KS 2 and the effectiveness of strategic leadership.
- It continues to be important that the employing authority, 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.

Overall Effectiveness

Ballymacward Primary School needs to address important areas for improvement. The follow-up inspection has identified the following areas for improvement:

- the need to monitor carefully the provision in upper KS 2, in order to ensure consistency in the quality of the children's learning experiences and outcomes throughout the school; and
- to improve further the strategic leadership of the school.

The ETI will conduct a further follow-up inspection in 12-18 months.

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