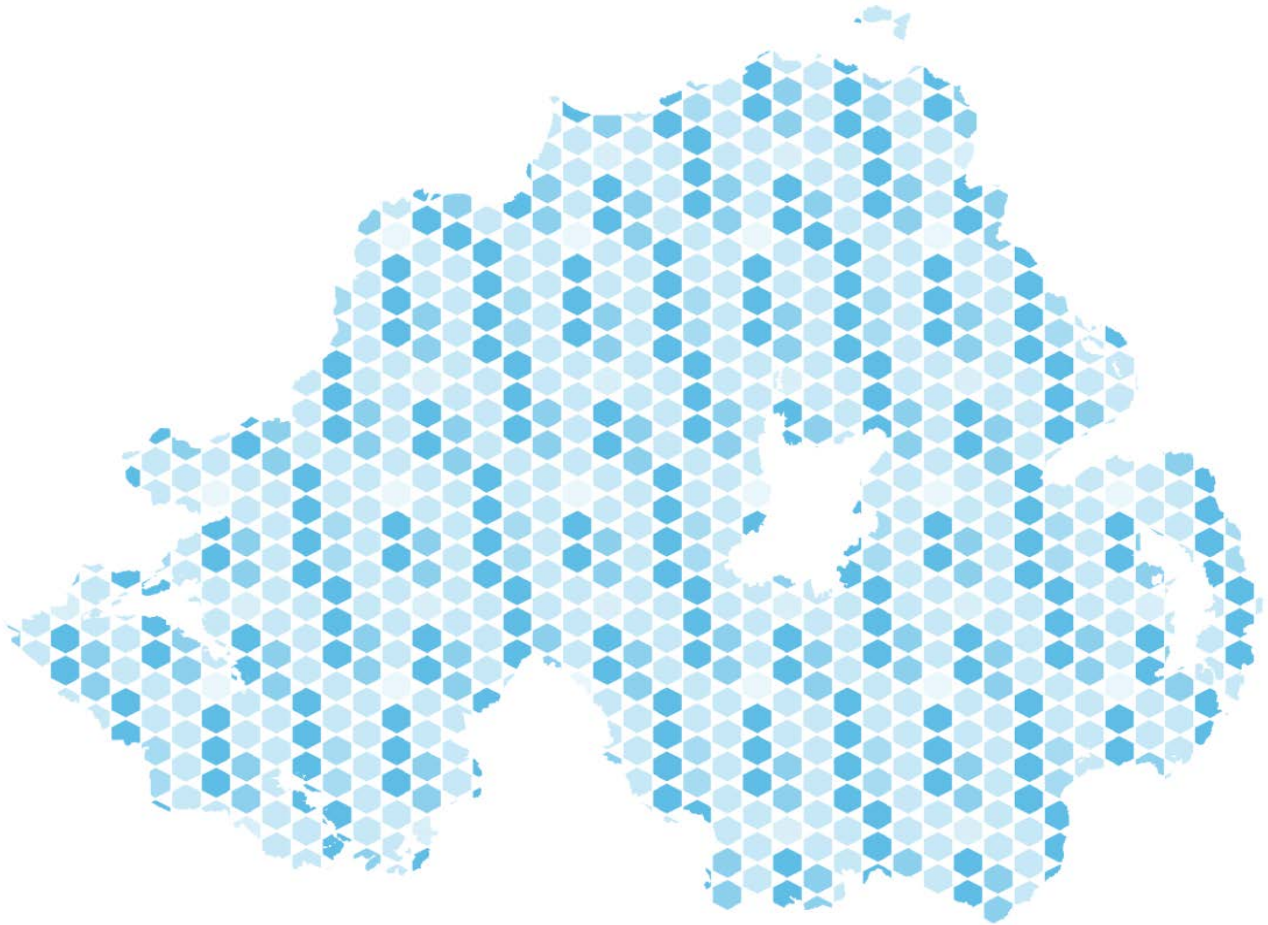


PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Brooklands Primary School
and Nursery Unit, Dundonald,
Belfast

Controlled, co-educational

Report of a Follow-up Inspection
in October 2018



The Education and Training Inspectorate
Promoting Improvement

Providing inspection services for:

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CUSTOMER
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FOLLOW-UP TO THE INSPECTION OF BROOKLANDS PRIMARY SCHOOL AND NURSERY UNIT, DUNDONALD BT16 2PA (401-6503)

The Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) carried out an inspection of Brooklands Primary School and Nursery Unit in January 2017¹ which concluded that the school needed to address urgently the significant areas for improvement in the interest of all the learners.

The areas for improvement were for:

- the teachers to adopt a more rigorous and collaborative approach to planning, learning and teaching, and assessment in order to meet the needs of individual children and improve the outcomes for all of the children;
- the senior leadership team and learning co-ordinators to monitor and evaluate more rigorously the impact of the actions to promote improvement within their areas of responsibility; and
- the governors to ensure a school development plan is in place to guide strategically the work of the school.

In the nursery unit, the areas for improvement were:

- to review the organisation of the day to ensure the children have opportunity to develop their independence, attention and concentration and engage in sustained, purposeful play; and
- to review the processes of observation, assessment and planning to ensure appropriate progression across all areas of learning in order to meet the needs of all the children.

As a consequence, the Department of Education (DE) entered the school into the Formal Intervention Process under the Every School a Good School² policy on 28 February 2017.

The school's action plans were of a good quality and were adjusted appropriately in light of the feedback given by the ETI. The school's development plan was adjusted in light of the inspection findings.

The ETI carried out an interim follow-up visit in February 2018 and a follow-up inspection on 22 and 23 October 2018.

In the interval since the initial inspection, the school has received external support provided by the Education Authority (EA), in relation to: leadership and management, governance and numeracy. Consequently, there has been improvement in the quality of education as reported in the key findings below.

During this period, other actions or changes which affect the work of the school include:

- the appointment of four governors, including a new chair;
- the appointment of a quality learning and teaching co-ordinator;

¹ <https://www.etini.gov.uk/sites/etini.gov.uk/files/publications/primary-inspection-brooklands-primary-and-community-nursery-school-dundonald.pdf>

² <https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/publications/every-school-good-school-policy-school-improvement>

- a strategic change to the school day to facilitate planning;
- the development and implementation of a revised marking policy;
- the development and implementation of a Relationships and Sexuality Education policy;
- wide consultation to inform the current school development planning process;
- training for six classroom assistants in 'Better Reading Partnership';
- the implementation of reciprocal reading strategies across the key stages to support the guided reading activities;
- the school funded support from external consultants for literacy; and
- the establishment of link governors for curricular areas.

Key findings

- The outcomes for the learners are now good. By the end of key stage (KS) 2, the children are confident to write across a growing range of genres and improve the quality of their work through the editing and re-drafting process. The effective integration of thinking skills and problem solving activities into lessons enable the children to talk about their learning and work together confidently, in authentic group and paired activities, in both numeracy and literacy. In the lessons observed, the children are increasingly confident in providing extended verbal answers in response to the teachers' more effective style of questioning. In discussions with a group of year 7 children, they shared enthusiastically their reading preferences and read with confidence and fluency. Most of the children use a wide range of mental mathematics strategies to solve a range of problems and draw on an increasingly expanding mathematical vocabulary to explain their thinking.
- The quality of the provision is now good. Medium- and short-term planning is focused more on the children's needs and interests; it ensures progression and differentiation, in particular for those identified as requiring support with aspects of their learning. There remains, however, a need to include greater challenge for the more able, which the school has identified appropriately. During the follow-up inspection, most of the lessons observed were good or better; the children's contributions and opinions were actively and purposefully sought through the teachers' effective questioning. Effective training and support from the EA and actions taken by the school have resulted in significant improvement to the provision for mathematics and numeracy. This is evidenced by the increased opportunities for the children to engage in practical and problem solving activities set in real-life contexts coupled with an increased understanding of the relevance of their mathematical learning. The individual education plans have been re-formatted to include greater input from the children and the parents; they identify appropriate short- and long- term targets for the children along with clear teaching strategies. The teachers reflect collegially on their practice and use evaluations to inform appropriately future learning and teaching.

- The quality of the provision for the children in the nursery unit is now very good. The staff plan a progressive programme for the children that takes account of age, stage of development and individual need. The children are very well-settled and engage confidently with each other and with the staff. Through a thorough system of observation and assessment, the staff are building up appropriate information about all aspects of the children's development and are using this very well to inform the practice and provision. Under the direction of the head of the nursery unit, the staff work very closely as a team and are reflective in their work.
- The quality and effectiveness of leadership and management, and action to promote improvement are now good. The leadership team has overseen a strategic and clearly communicated improvement process aided in its progress by a collegiate, team-spirit from the staff. The learning co-ordinators have implemented a more rigorous process of monitoring and evaluating the quality of the learning, teaching and outcomes of the children which has resulted in improvements in the standard of reading, writing, mental mathematics and children's ability to solve problems. The board of governors have a clearer understanding of the life and work of the school and exercise their challenge function more effectively regarding the children's outcomes. The support provided by the EA in literacy was more limited.

Overall effectiveness

Brooklands Primary School and Nursery Unit 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 in:

- embedding further the planning for differentiation with a particular focus on extending the learning of the more able children; and
- in the nursery unit, to review the dinner routine so that the learning opportunities are maximised.

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