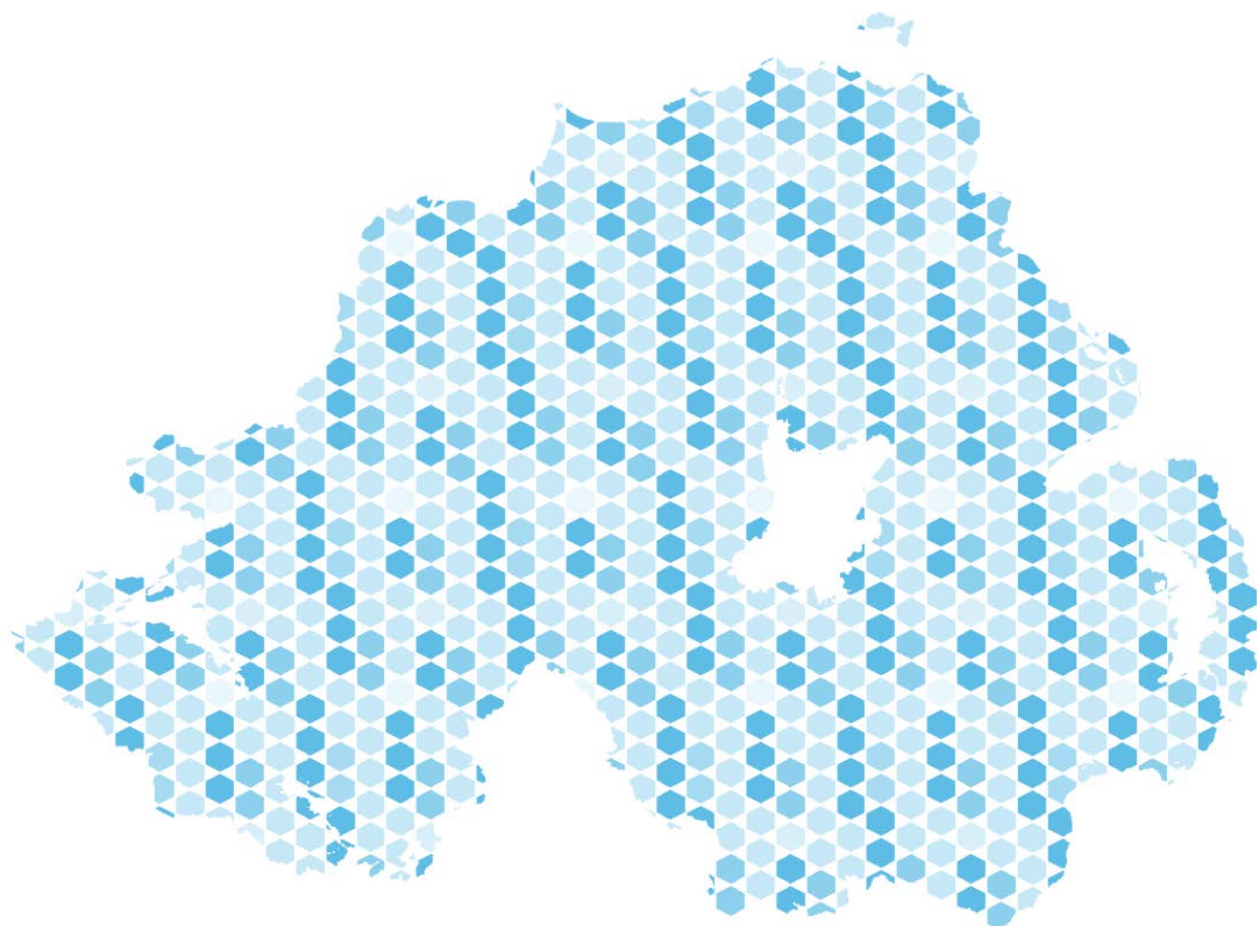


PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Culmore Primary School,
Londonderry

Controlled, co-educational

Report of a Follow-up Inspection
in December 2017

eti

The Education and Training Inspectorate
Promoting Improvement

Providing inspection services for:

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FOLLOW-UP TO THE INSPECTION OF CULMORE PRIMARY SCHOOL, LONDONDERRY, BT48 8JH (201-2052)

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

The areas for improvement were to:

- review urgently the arrangements for safeguarding children and update them in line with the guidance issued by the Department of Education; and
- implement more systematic and rigorous processes for monitoring and evaluating provision, in order to inform the school development planning process and raise further the standards attained by the children.

As a consequence, the Department of Education entered the school into the Formal Intervention Process under the Every School a Good School² policy in February 2016.

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 October 2016 and a follow-up inspection in December 2017.

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

- the arrangements for safeguarding children have been updated in line with the guidance from the Department of Education;
- the co-ordinators' roles and responsibilities have been reviewed;
- the leadership, in consultation with the children, parents and governors, have updated the school development plan, key policies and practices; and
- the school leaders, including the restructured board of governors, have undertaken training from representatives of the Education Authority in areas of leadership including key aspects of governance, school development planning, safeguarding and the co-ordination of literacy and numeracy.

Views of parents and staff

As part of the follow-up inspection, there was an opportunity for parents and staff to complete a confidential, online questionnaire. Eighteen percent of parents and 73% of staff responded to the questionnaire with a small number providing additional written comments. The responses to the parental questionnaires indicated high levels of satisfaction with the life and work of the school. The written comments affirmed, in particular, the school's welcoming and inclusive ethos, the children's enjoyment of the curricular and extra-curricular activities, the approachable and caring staff, and improved communication between the school and home. The responses to the staff questionnaires were wholly positive, highlighting the positive impact of the new principal, the collegial approach to the improvement work and the good opportunities available to the staff for further professional development.

¹ [Primary Inspection - Culmore Primary School, Londonderry | Education Training Inspectorate](#)

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

Key findings

- The outcomes for learners continue to be good. The children are highly motivated, engage enthusiastically in their learning and explain clearly their thinking during whole-class activities. In discussions with inspectors, the year 7 children read with evident enjoyment and fluency. Their understanding of complex language and empathy with characters is highly developed. The most able children in year 7 have a very good knowledge of key mathematical concepts, they use appropriate mathematical language and are confident in applying a range of mental mathematical strategies. The school's internal data indicates that most of the children achieve the expected outcomes in literacy and numeracy. Since the original inspection, there has been a reduction in the number of children underachieving in literacy in key stage (KS) 2.
- The quality of provision is now good. Significant work has been undertaken to improve the planning in order to meet effectively the needs of individual children. The teachers' thoughtful evaluations of their planning and lessons inform the next stage of the children's learning. All of the lessons observed during the follow-up process were good or better; just under one-third were very good. These lessons were characterised by positive working relationships, engaging activities matched well to the children's needs and abilities and investigative approaches set within real-life contexts. Verbal and written assessment strategies are evident in the lessons and the children's written work; however, they are not used to full effect. The school has developed systems for tracking closely the children's progress, in particular, those children who require additional help with their learning.
- The quality and effectiveness of leadership, management and action to promote improvement are now good. There have been significant changes to the management structure of the school and the consequent actions to promote improvement have impacted positively on both the quality of the provision and the outcomes for the children. The principal and co-ordinators work collegially and share a clear strategic vision for ongoing school development. This work is supported very well by the professional development of staff, which underpins the implementation of systematic and effective processes for monitoring and evaluation. There can be confidence in the aspects of governance evaluated. The governors have developed significantly their roles, notably by engaging at first-hand with co-ordinators to monitor the progress and impact of the action plans. Communication and consultation at all levels have improved greatly; the senior leaders seek, and act upon, the views of the children, parents, staff and governors.
- During the inspection, the school provided evidence that the arrangements for safeguarding children reflect the guidance from the Department of Education. In discussions with the inspectors, the children reported that they feel safe and happy in school and know what to do if they have any concerns about their well-being.
- 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/school's provision and budget in order to address the current and future needs of the children and the staff.

Overall effectiveness

Culmore Primary 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 in the further development of high quality learning and teaching, in particular, through the effective use of assessment for learning strategies to raise further the outcomes attained by the children.

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