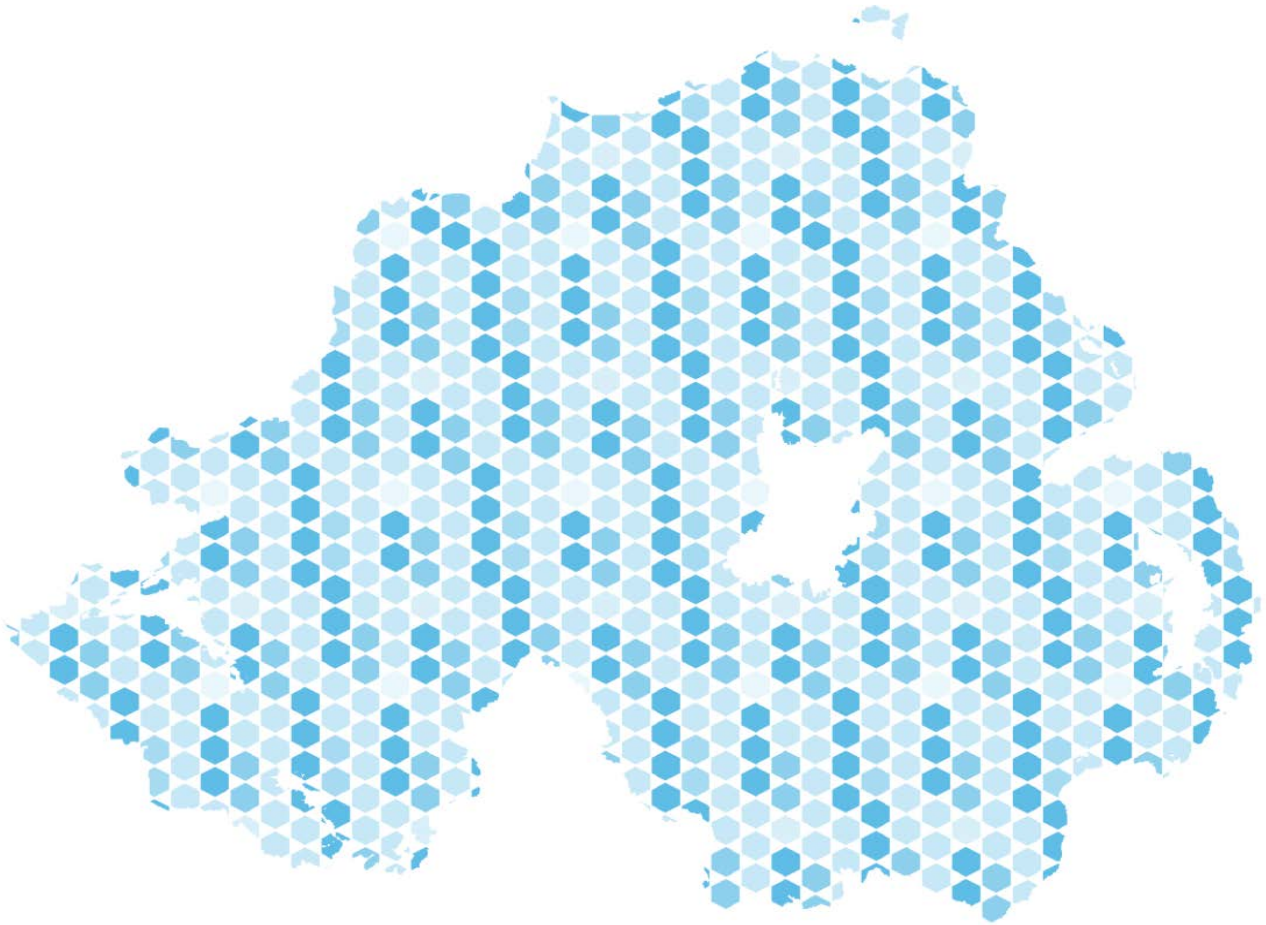


PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Dromore Primary School,
Dromore, County Tyrone

Controlled, co-educational

Report of an Inspection in
November 2016



The Education and Training Inspectorate
Promoting Improvement

Providing inspection services for:

Department of Education
Department for the Economy
and other commissioning Departments

CUSTOMER
SERVICE
EXCELLENCE



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 Achievements 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 representatives from the governors;
- meetings with groups of children; and
- the opportunity for the parents, teaching and support staff to complete a confidential questionnaire.

Fourteen percent of the parents responded to the confidential questionnaire. The responses to the questionnaire were almost all positive and the written comment indicated a high level of satisfaction with the life and work of the school. The responses to the staff questionnaire reflected a strong commitment to the children and a collegial approach to whole-school issues. The ETI has reported to the principal and representatives of the board of governors the emergent findings of the questionnaires and the discussions.

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 with a particular focus on literacy; (including how the school is addressing low attainment and underachievement where applicable);
- quality of provision for learning with a particular focus on literacy; and
- quality of leadership and management.

3. Context

Dromore Primary School is situated on the outskirts of the village of Dromore, County Tyrone. All of the children come from the village and surrounding rural community. The school's enrolment of 47 children has remained consistent over the past four years; consequently, they are taught in three composite classrooms of two or more year-groups. The number of children entitled to free school meals and the proportion requiring additional help with aspects of their learning have almost doubled over the past four years. The principal has been acting in a temporary capacity since 2012 and has been appointed to the permanent position in June 2016.

The school is involved in a Shared Education Project with a local primary and a post primary school.

Dromore Primary School	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
Enrolment	40	41	44	47
% School attendance	96.2	95.9	96.5	N/A
% NI Primary school average	95.6	95.4	N/A	N/A
FSME Percentage ¹	9	8	7	15
No. of children on SEN register	8	9	11	20
% of children on SEN register	20%	23%	26%	42%
No. of children with statements of educational need	*	*	*	*
No. of newcomer children	*	*	*	*

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

5. Achievements and standards

- The children's literacy standards are good. Almost all of the children demonstrate very positive attitudes towards literacy. In the foundation stage, the children acquire appropriate early literacy skills and develop very good reading and writing strategies. As the children progress through the school, they use effectively the conventions of reading across the curriculum for a range of purposes and audiences. By key stage (KS) 2, they have a good understanding of the purpose of spoken language and are developing well an appropriate range of higher order comprehension skills. The children's writing across the curriculum is underdeveloped; they need to apply more creatively their knowledge of writing forms across the areas of learning.
- The children identified as requiring additional support with aspects of their learning make good progress in literacy and benefit through their involvement in school assemblies and dramatic productions. Information and communication technology (ICT) is integrated effectively into the children's learning, a range of basic applications are used to enhance their writing and communication skills and during presentations of their work to audiences.

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

- The children's application of thinking skills and personal capabilities is good; in particular, their self-management during play-based learning and group work. When working with others, they express confidently and with courtesy their ideas demonstrating very good personal and social skills. The children persevere with their work and engage in collaborative and sustained learning, taking pride in their achievements.

6. Provision for learning

- Overall, the quality of planning, assessment, learning and teaching is good. In all of the lessons observed the quality of learning and teaching was good or better; in two-thirds it was good. In the very good practice, in a significant minority of lessons, the teachers and classroom assistants engage the children in their learning through skilful questioning. The teachers involve the children in using self-help strategies and self-assessment thereby developing effectively further their language and literacy skills. In the foundation stage, purposeful play utilises well the interests of the children and consolidates effectively the acquisition of their early literacy skills and development. Across the school, the children are encouraged to ask questions and to present information; however, there is a need to develop further their opportunities to apply talking and listening skills, extend answers and to engage in more stimulating opportunities for creative writing. The children requiring additional help with aspects of their learning are integrated fully in the classes and are supported effectively by the teachers and the classroom assistants.
- The recently developed policy for literacy guides effectively the collaborative, whole-school approach to learning and teaching. The medium-term programme for literacy is underdeveloped; it needs to include specific strategies to promote further the progression in talking and listening across the curriculum in order to raise further the standards in using communication.
- The quality of the pastoral care provision is very good. The school motto, 'believe and achieve', reflects a caring, supportive and nurturing learning environment for all of the children. The rewards system is effective in building the children's self esteem and promoting positive contributions to lessons. During the discussions with the children from years 5, 6 and 7, they spoke positively about their learning environment and involvement in the School- and Eco- councils and when creating their own classroom rules.

7. Leadership and management

- The school leadership team members have multiple curricular and pastoral co-ordinator responsibilities and share a clear strategic vision for school improvement. They are committed highly to addressing the range of learning needs and have prioritised appropriately talking and listening to raise further and improve the children's confidence and use of the spoken language. The school is embedding appropriately and developing further the whole school focus on literacy, consequently, the impact of their work is at an early stage. There is an appropriate emphasis on embedding the work regarding writing across the curriculum and in developing further the monitoring and evaluating roles of the co-ordinators in assessing the quality of the children's learning experiences.

- The school development plan is of good quality and is well-informed through consultation with stakeholders and analysis of a range of data. The action plans are aligned appropriately to the priorities within the school development plan and progress the school improvement agenda at an appropriate pace. It will be important to embed further the self-evaluation processes and include the children's views during the ongoing improvement process.
- The parental and community links contribute significantly to the life and work of the school in support of the children and their learning. The purposeful, collaborative partnership with local schools is used effectively to promote inclusion and enrich the learning experiences for the children whilst accessing appropriate resources.
- 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 provide effective support and challenge for the staff and utilise their broad range of relevant skills. The recent focus by the governors on developing further their role in monitoring and evaluating the quality of the learning experiences and the standards attained by the children is an appropriate area for development.
- It will be important that the employing authority, school governors and the staff plan for, and manage, issues related to the sustainability of the school provision and school budget, in order to address the current and future needs of the children and the staff.
- 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 years 5, 6 and 7 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

Dromore Primary School demonstrates the capacity to identify and bring about improvement in the interest of all the learners. There is an area for improvement that the school has demonstrated the capacity to address.

The area for improvement is:

- to develop further the learning opportunities for the children to use and apply their talking and listening skills and to write more creatively across the curriculum.

The ETI will monitor how the school sustains improvement.

Health and Safety / Accommodation / Resources

1. The perimeter fence of the school grounds, particularly to the rear of the school building, is too low to ensure the safety of the children.
2. The unreliable and restricted broadband connectivity is limiting the educational opportunities for the children.

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