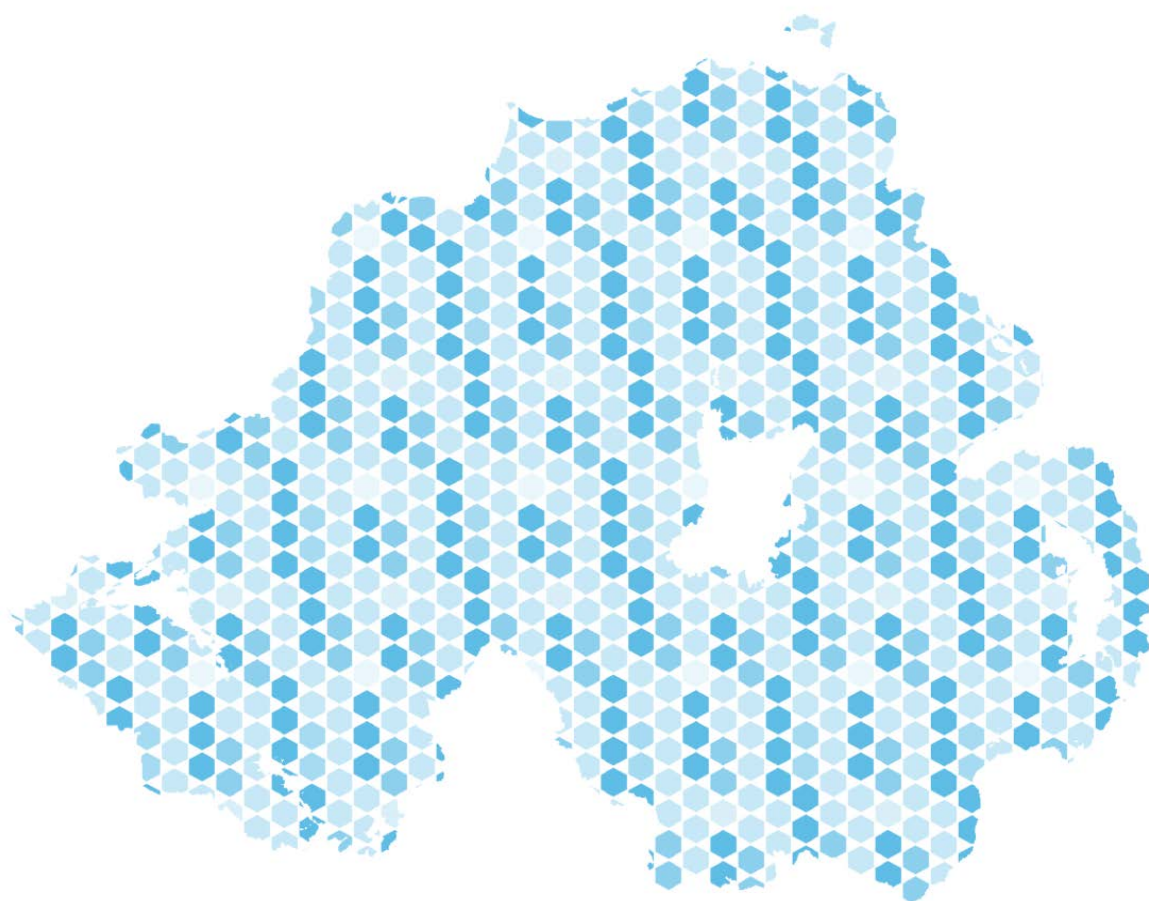


PRIMARY INSPECTION 2015-16



Education and Training
Inspectorate

St Canice Primary School
and Nursery Unit, Dungiven,
County Derry

Report of an Inspection in
September 2015

eti

*The Education and Training Inspectorate -
Promoting Improvement*

Providing Inspection Services for

Department of Education
Department for Employment and Learning
Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure

CUSTOMER
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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 Achievement 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.

Five percent of parents and all staff responded to the questionnaires. The responses to the parental questionnaires indicated satisfaction with the life and work of the school. In particular, the parents highlighted their appreciation of the staff's care of the children and the opportunities for their child to benefit from activities and visits outside the classroom, including after-school clubs. All of the staff completed questionnaires and their responses were very positive; they emphasised the quality of the working relationships across the school, the links with the parents and wider community and the improving working conditions. The ETI has reported to the principal and representatives of the board of governors the main issues emerging from 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 in literacy and numeracy, including how the school is addressing low attainment and underachievement where applicable;
- quality of provision for learning in the school, including the nursery unit; and
- quality of leadership and management.

3. Context

St Canice Primary School, Dungiven is a maintained co-educational primary school. All of the children attending the school come from Dungiven and the surrounding area. The enrolment has increased steadily and currently stands at 288 with an additional 27 children attending the nursery unit; the latter is oversubscribed and approximately half of the applicants for places are enrolled. The principal took up his position in January 2014.

St Canice Primary School	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
Enrolment (yrs 1 – 7)	277	283	283	288
Nursery unit children	24	26	26	27
% School attendance	94.1	95.9	N/A	N/A
% NI Primary school average	94.9	95.6	95.6	N/A
FSME Percentage ¹	42	40	42	37
No. of children on SEN register	53	62	62	46
% of children on SEN register	19	22	22	16
No. of children with statements of educational need	6	7	8	12
No. of newcomer children	*	*	*	0

Source: data as held by the school N/A = not available

* fewer than 5

4. Overall findings of the inspection

Overall effectiveness	Address important areas for improvement
Achievements and standards	Important areas for improvement
Provision for learning	Important areas for improvement
Leadership and management	Important areas for improvement
Nursery Unit	Good

5. Achievements and standards

- The children are confident within the school environment; they are welcoming and mannerly to visitors and their behaviour is excellent. In all of the classes, including the nursery unit, they are settled and co-operate well with their teachers. When given the opportunities, they engage purposefully in their learning and interact well with one another in paired and group activities.
- The school's performance data shows that most of the children, including those who require additional support with aspects of their learning, make progress in English and mathematics in line with their ability or above expectation. However, the overall standards and achievements of the children in literacy and numeracy have important areas for improvement. In particular, the progression of the children's understanding and skills in both literacy and numeracy, as they proceed from the nursery unit, through foundation stage to key stages (KS) 1 and 2, was not sufficiently consistent.
- By KS 2, in literacy, the children have had opportunities to write for a widening range of audiences and purposes. The more able children in year 7 read fluently and discuss their favourite books and authors with enthusiasm.
- By KS 2, the children have gained appropriate knowledge and understanding of key mathematical concepts and can apply their mathematical skills in areas across the curriculum. During the inspection, the more able year 7 children showed a positive attitude to mathematics and had a good understanding of place value. This was not matched by their readiness to use the full range of mental mathematics strategies.

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

- Across the key stages, the children have good opportunities to work with a range of information and communication technology (ICT) devices in support of their learning. By KS 2, the children have developed a range of ICT skills and are well able to apply these skills to progress their own and younger children's learning.

6. Provision for learning

- The quality of the teaching observed ranged from very good to requiring significant improvement: in a significant minority of the lessons, there were important and significant areas for improvement. In the most effective practice, the teachers had high expectations for all the children by including appropriate levels of challenge in the children's follow-on activities. They used effective questioning to develop and extend all the children's learning and promoted thinking skills; and, there were productive opportunities to build on the children's previous learning through working in pairs, groups and independently. In the less effective practice, the pace of the lessons was too slow; the work was over-directed by the teachers; there were insufficient challenge in the activities and missed opportunities to develop more fully the children's thinking skills through open-ended questioning.
- The teachers have detailed knowledge of the learning needs of the children in their classes and have changed recently their arrangements for planning for lessons; appropriately, there is ongoing review and development of the planning. The inspection has identified the need for the teachers to develop further the use of performance data and ongoing assessment for learning to inform better medium- and short-term planning, with a clear focus on meeting and progressing the individual learning needs of all of the children.
- The needs of the children who require additional help with their learning are appropriately identified at an early stage through teacher observation and assessment and suitable interventions are put in place. The classroom assistants work skilfully with the teachers in supporting the children's learning and personal development. The school has reviewed recently the individual education plans to involve appropriately the parents in the writing, implementation and evaluation of the children's personal targets.
- In the foundation stage, there are a range of interesting activities with further potential for learning; the activities are planned to engage the children in cross-curricular learning. Aspects of the planning, teaching and assessment require urgent review and development in order to ensure that the children have a progressive, broad and balanced foundation stage programme designed to meet their varied needs, ages and stages of development. The teachers need to identify and share the good practice in the nursery unit and foundation stage play-based learning provision and to develop further a shared understanding and systematic procedures to evaluate and record the children's progress in learning and development.
- There is a clear emphasis placed on the importance of developing a reading culture throughout the school with regular visits to the local library and the extension of the Accelerated Reader programme throughout KS 1 and KS 2. It will be important to have ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the impact of this initiative, and that of the linguistics phonics programme, on the standards and outcomes achieved by the children. During the inspection, the children's

listening skills were well developed and they were able to express opinions and ideas. However, the lessons need to provide appropriately differentiated and challenging opportunities for the individual children to develop further their literacy skills in talking and listening, reading and writing. The teachers need to ensure that the teaching of these skills is inter-connected.

- The teachers are currently embedding new long-term planning for numeracy and this is ensuring a broad and balanced coverage of key mathematical concepts. They have identified the need to develop further the opportunities for the children to problem-solve, which the inspection evidence endorses. The teachers also need to plan for the development of the children's readiness and aptitude to use important mental mathematics strategies. On occasions, in a significant minority of the numeracy lessons observed throughout the school, there were missed opportunities for the children to extend sufficiently their mathematical work and so experience appropriate challenge.
- The quality of the provision in the nursery unit is good. The children's personal, social and emotional development is promoted effectively by the staff. There is a language-rich learning environment; books are incorporated into play and the children are beginning to show enjoyment of stories read by the staff. Mathematical language and concepts are developed effectively through the routines of the day and incidental learning opportunities through play. The staff have identified appropriately the need to develop further the children's opportunities to investigate and explore in the outdoors and to plan for the progression of the children's physical skills. There are limited opportunities for the children to use digital media to enhance their learning experiences. The nursery unit demonstrates the capacity to identify and bring about improvement in the interest of all the children.
- The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care is very good. The commitment to the welfare of the children is evident in the caring, supportive and inclusive ethos which permeates the work of the school. Increasingly, the children's views are acted upon; they are benefiting from opportunities to improve their enjoyment of, and their experiences in, school. For example, the children are making a valuable contribution, through the school council, to the ongoing review of the positive behaviour policy. In response to these opportunities, the children show consideration for the needs of their peers and visitors; they take on responsibilities maturely and participate in well-planned activities with a variety of organisations, both locally and further afield. Importantly, the staff have placed an important focus on linking effectively the pastoral and curriculum provision to ensure a holistic approach to supporting the children in developing their wider skills and dispositions, and in their learning.
- The school gives very good attention to promoting healthy eating and physical activity thereby encouraging the children to adopt healthy lifestyles.

7. Leadership and management

- The school has worked diligently to maintain and develop further the provision for the children in key areas, such as, the pastoral care and the arrangements for those children requiring additional support. There is emerging evidence of ongoing improvements in the areas identified in the current school development plan (SDP). In particular, the introduction of a team approach to the leadership and management in key areas of the curriculum, for example, literacy and numeracy, has been an important development. However, the leadership at all levels need to re-focus the current SDP, and the associated action plans, on the learning experiences and outcomes of the children. In particular, it will be important that the school's action plans set clear priorities and appropriate targets, using rigorous self-evaluation based, where appropriate, on qualitative and quantitative measures of performance, in order to effect improvement. The leadership needs to monitor and evaluate systematically and rigorously in order to ensure the improvement is happening.
- The school has recently reviewed how it records and analyses the children's performance data and there are plans to extend the range of standardised tests used. The teachers need to develop further, how they track the children's progress longitudinally, including the use of this data, in order that all the children are being challenged appropriately to realise their potential.
- There are well-established links and partnerships with the wider community and the school is involved in a cluster of local primary and post-primary schools, providing a range of extra-curricular activities which benefit the children's learning and development. The parents support the school through their active involvement in the parent association.
- 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, working with the principal, have been proactive in securing funding to progress necessary improvements in the learning environment for the benefit of the children and the staff. It will be important for the governors to exercise their challenge function to monitor and evaluate rigorously the work of the school in addressing the important areas for improvement identified in the report.
- On the basis of the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the school and nursery unit have 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 year 6 reported that they are happy and secure in school and know whom to speak to if they have any concerns about their safety and well-being.

8. Overall effectiveness

The school needs to address important areas for improvement in the interest of all the learners.

The areas for improvement are for:

- the leadership at all levels to establish a more rigorous and systematic approach to self-evaluation and planning for improvement, in which action plans are focused more sharply on improving the learning experiences and the outcomes for the children; and
- the teachers to improve the quality of learning and teaching, through having higher expectations of all the children by including appropriate levels of challenge in their work.

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.

Health and safety

1. The condition of the children's toilets gives cause for concern in terms of the health and safety of the children.
2. There is a lack of appropriate car parking facilities at the school. This presents safety concerns during drop-off and collection times for the children.

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