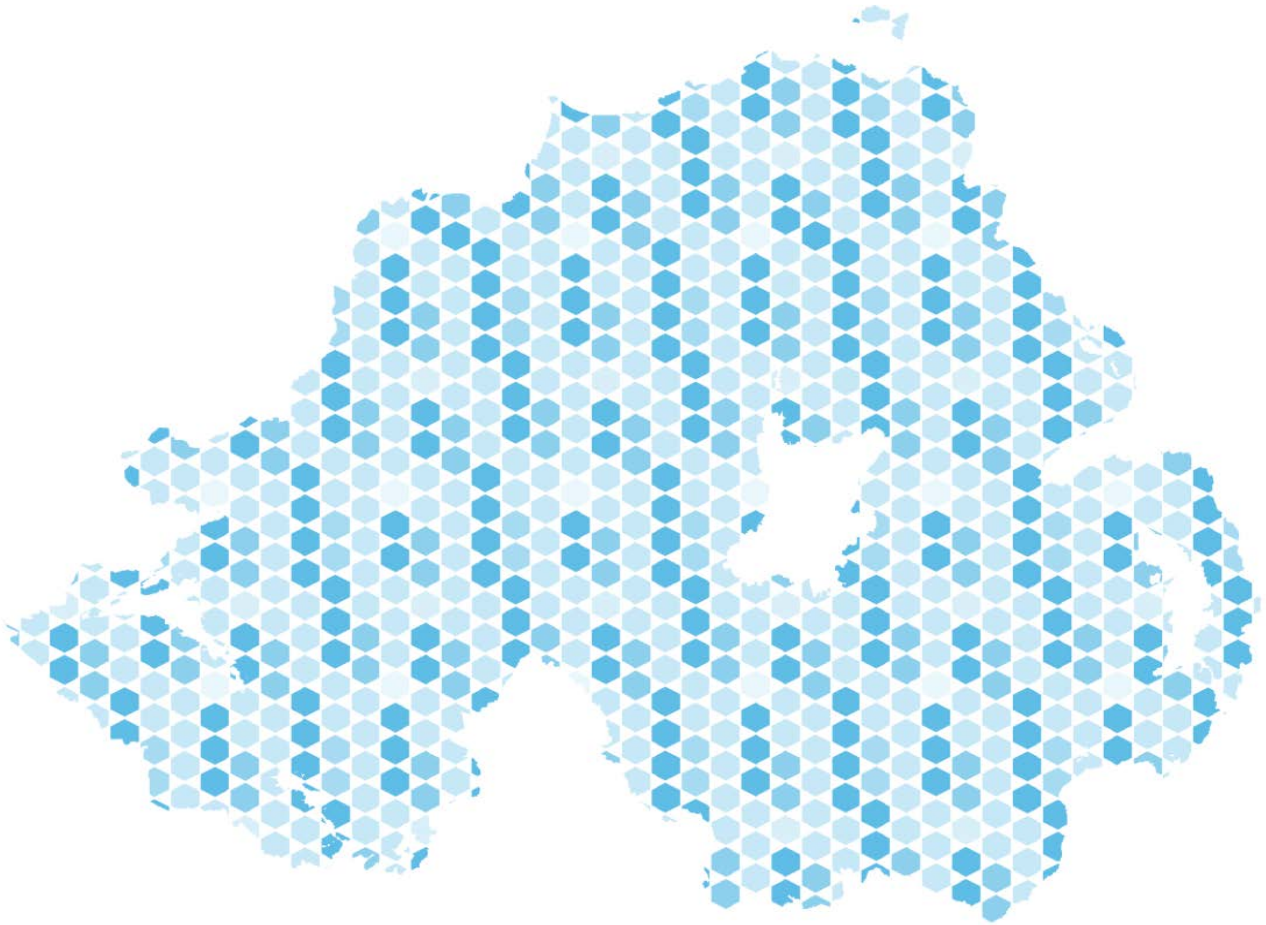


# PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training  
Inspectorate

St Ciaran's Primary School,  
Cushendun, County Antrim

Maintained, co-educational

Report of an Inspection in  
December 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.

# Contents

<b>Section</b>	<b>Page</b>
1. Inspection method and evidence base	1
2. Focus of inspection	1
3. Context	1
4. Overall findings of the inspection	2
5. Achievements and standards	2
6. Provision for learning	2
7. Leadership and management	3
8. Overall effectiveness	4

## **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: [Together Towards Improvement Primary | Education and Training Inspectorate](#).

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

Thirty-three percent of the parents and 25% of the staff responded to the confidential questionnaires. The staff responses were wholly positive. The parental replies indicated that the school was regarded well in the local community and that their child enjoyed learning at school. Additional written comments affirmed the work of the staff and the ethos of care established in the school. The ETI has reported to the principal and a representative 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 with a particular focus on numeracy (including how the school is addressing low attainment and underachievement where applicable);
- quality of provision for learning with a particular focus on numeracy; and
- quality of leadership and management.

## **3. Context**

St Ciaran's Primary School is a maintained primary school situated in the village of Knocknacarry on the outskirts of Cushendun. Nearly all of the children attending the school come from the surrounding rural area. The enrolment has declined over the past three years. The percentage of children entitled to free school meals has increased in the past four years while the proportion requiring additional help with aspects of their learning has decreased steadily. At the time of the inspection, no permanent teachers were employed at the school and the staffing structure consisted of two temporary teachers and an acting principal of two years.

St Ciaran's Primary School	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
Enrolment	58	53	53	44
% School attendance	96.7	97.1	97.5	N/A
% NI Primary school average	95.6	95.4	N/A	N/A
FSME Percentage <sup>1</sup>	16	15	15	20
No. of children on SEN register	10	5	7	5
% of children on SEN register	22	14	18	13
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	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

#### 5. Achievements and standards

- The standards the children attain in mathematics have important areas for improvement. Across the key stages, the children's use of mathematical language is underdeveloped and there is variation in their application of key mathematical concepts, particularly measure. In almost all of the classes, the children work well with one another and most present their work to a high standard. While they are becoming more confident in their use of number, by the end of key stage (KS) 2, the children do not use a sufficient variety of mental mathematics strategies.
- The children are friendly, courteous and engage positively with their teacher and their learning. They work effectively in group and paired activities and make positive contributions, which develops well their talking and listening skills. They are, however, less confident when completing more challenging tasks.

#### 6. Provision for learning

- The quality of the planning, learning, teaching and assessment for learning has important areas for improvement. The medium-term planning is not sufficiently detailed to inform progression in the learning. In the best practice observed, evaluations of the children's learning are used effectively to inform the planning and next stage of learning.

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

- One-half of the lessons observed were effective and were characterised by: the teachers' effective questioning; activities that were interesting and relevant; and the skilful support provided by the classroom assistants to help the children with their learning. In the less effective practice: there was insufficient differentiation of the learning tasks to meet effectively the needs of all of the children; and there was variation in the opportunities provided for the children to evaluate their work.
- The quality of the provision for special educational needs is good. There are appropriate links with external agencies to support the children in their learning. The use of assessment information to identify children who require support with their learning is particularly effective.
- While the teachers encourage the children to explain their mathematical thinking there is a need to strengthen this further in the teaching of mental mathematics. There is variation across the school in the opportunities for the children to develop their problem-solving and investigative skills through contextualised learning experiences across the curriculum. In the foundation stage, the children develop well their understanding of number; however, further opportunities are required to explore numeracy through play-based learning.
- The quality of the pastoral care provision is good. There is an effective whole school approach to rewarding positive behaviour. The children are provided with the opportunity to assume positions of leadership through, for example, their roles as playground peer mediators and as members of the Eco-Council. The school promotes positive lifestyles which are demonstrated through healthy breaks and participation in competitions promoting walking or cycling to school. The children are supported well at key transition points particularly in the arrangements with a local post-primary school.

## **7. Leadership and management**

- The leadership and management and governance have important areas for improvement. The acting teaching principal has put in place a rigorous consultation process with relevant stakeholders to inform the process of school development planning and improvement. Although appropriate and relevant priorities have been identified, the associated action plans include too many targets. There has not been consistent evaluation of the priority areas which has resulted in variation in the quality of the children's learning experiences. The co-ordinator roles are not shared equitably across all members of staff.
- The school has formed highly effective links with the parent support group who are proactively involved in the life and work of the school. They have funded successfully significant school resources to improve the learning experiences for the children.
- Based on the evidence available at the time of inspection, the ETI's evaluation is that there can be limited confidence in the aspects of governance evaluated. There is an aspect of governance to review, namely to:
  - review the key curricular co-ordinators' roles with a view to distributing them equitably across the school and to build their capacity to evaluate rigorously the quality of learning.

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's arrangements for safeguarding children are unsatisfactory and do not reflect adequately the guidance issued by the Department of Education. In particular, the school needs to:
  - ensure that the recently appointed deputy designated teacher for child protection and the chair of the board of governors receive the appropriate training; and
  - review and update the pastoral and child protection policies and, staff training to reflect clearly the statutory requirements.

In discussions with the inspectors, the children in years 5, 6 and 7 reported that they feel happy and safe in school and know what to do if they have any concerns about their well-being.

## **8. Overall effectiveness**

St Ciaran's Primary School needs to address important areas for improvement in the interest of all the learners.

The areas for improvement are to:

- to improve the unsatisfactory safeguarding and, in particular, ensure that all relevant staff and governors receive child protection and safeguarding training in order to carry out effectively their roles in accordance with the Department of Education's guidance;
- review the medium-term planning, particularly in numeracy, to ensure consistent progression in the children's knowledge, skills and understanding; and
- develop a more systematic approach to evaluating key curricular areas to impact positively on the children's learning outcomes.

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 in 12 to 18 months.

The ETI will also return to the school within six weeks to monitor and report on progress in addressing the safeguarding issues.

## **ADDENDUM TO THE REPORT ON THE INSPECTION OF ST CIARAN'S PRIMARY SCHOOL**

### **SAFEGUARDING**

In line with its child protection/safeguarding procedures, the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) returned to St Ciaran's Primary School on 30 January 2017 as a follow-up to the inspection which took place on 6 and 7 December 2016; the purpose of the visit was to ensure that safeguarding issues, evaluated as unsatisfactory in the inspection, had been addressed.

On the basis of the evidence available, the revised arrangements are evaluated as reflecting broadly the guidance from the Department of Education.

During the interim period, the school received support from the Child Protection School Support Service of the Education Authority.

The safeguarding follow-up inspection has identified that the school still needs to:

- continue to embed the safeguarding procedures and key messages for the board of governors, staff and children;
- monitor and evaluate the impact of the revised policies, and
- ensure that all future training needs are anticipated, completed and recorded in a timely way.

The ETI will continue to monitor and report on safeguarding, as part of the follow-up inspection process.



© CROWN COPYRIGHT 2017

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part, except for commercial purposes or in connection with a prospectus or advertisement, provided that the source and date thereof are stated.

Copies of this report are available on the ETI website: [www.etini.gov.uk](http://www.etini.gov.uk)