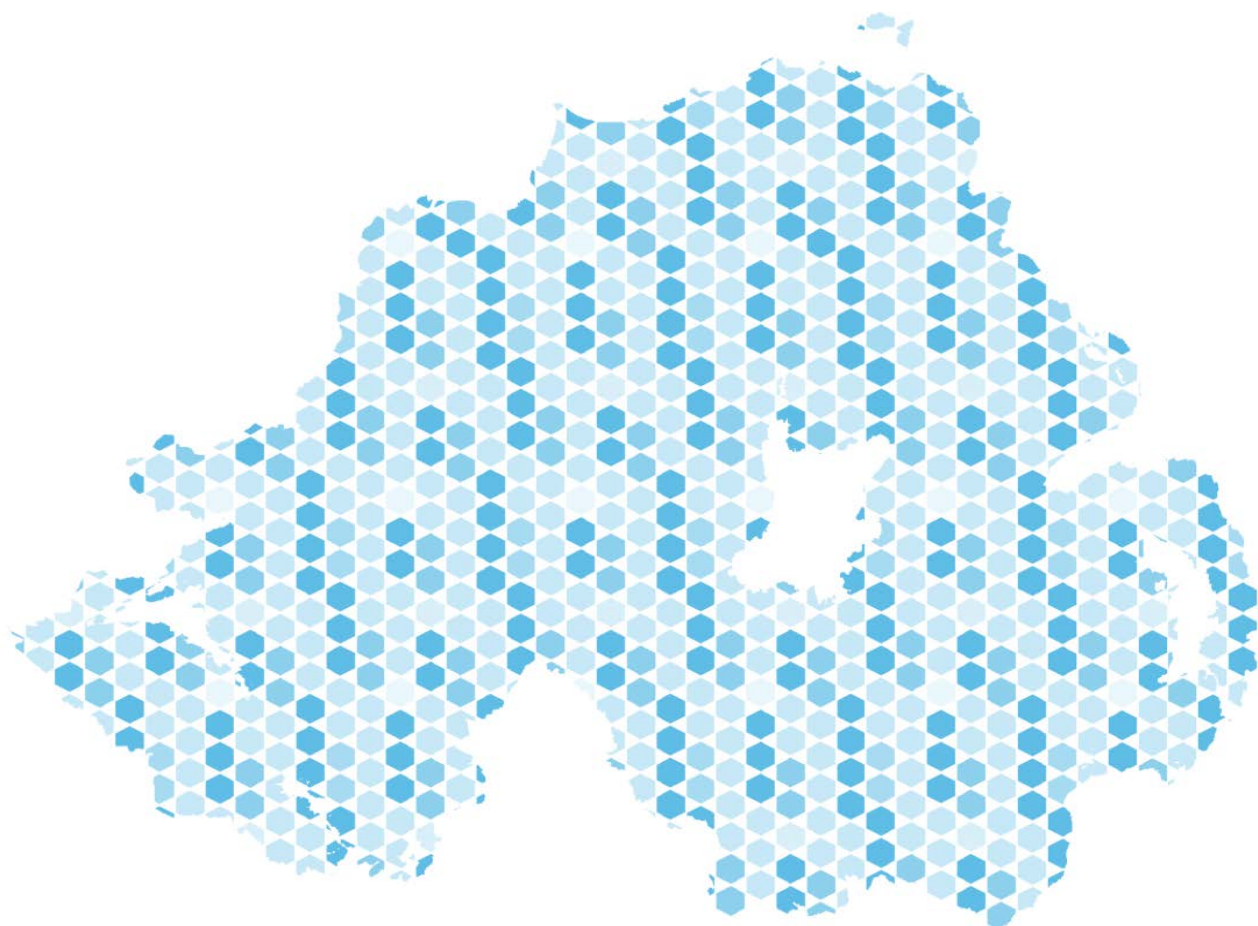


PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

St Mary's Primary School,
Newtownbutler, County
Fermanagh

Maintained, co-educational

Report of an Inspection in
September 2016

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 confidential questionnaires.

Nine percent of parents responded to the confidential questionnaire. Nearly all of the responses, including the written comments, were highly affirmative of the work of the school, highlighting, for example, the hard-working and approachable staff and the leadership of the principal. Similarly, all of the staff who completed the questionnaires, were wholly positive about the work of the school including the harmonious working relations that exist. In discussions with the governors, they praised the principal and the staff of the school for their commitment and dedication to the children. The ETI has reported to the principal and a representative of the board of governors the main findings 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 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

Saint Mary's Primary School is located in the Parish of Galloon, in the village of Newtownbutler. The enrolment has increased steadily over the past four years. The percentage of children entitled to free school meals and the percentage of children requiring additional help with aspects of their learning have remained generally steady over the past four years. The school maintains purposeful links with neighbouring controlled and maintained primary and post-primary schools. Two long-serving members of the teaching staff left the school at the end of the last academic year; consequently, leading to a realignment of co-ordinator roles.

St Mary's Primary School	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
Enrolment	153	168	175	180
% School attendance	94.9	94.5	94.9	N/A
% NI Primary school average	95.6	95.4	N/A	N/A
FSME Percentage ¹	38	39	36	36
No. of children on SEN register	40	37	41	39
% of children on SEN register	22	19	22	22
No. of children with statements of educational need	7	8	8	7
No. of newcomer children	*	10	7	*

Source: data as held by the school.

* fewer than 5

N/A not available

4. Overall findings of the inspection

Overall effectiveness	High level of capacity for sustained improvement
Achievements and standards	Very good
Provision for learning	Very good
Leadership and management	Very good

5. Achievements and standards

- The overall standards in English are very good for almost all children including those who require support with aspects of their learning. In the foundation stage, all of the children develop well their communication and self-management skills, and their early marking and writing skills. The quality of the children's written work is of a very good standard. Almost all of the children respond positively and with enthusiasm to the rich cross-curricular opportunities to write in extended, creative and well-researched ways. By the end of key stage (KS) 2, the children read with accuracy confidence and with an intonation that reflects empathetic understanding of the text. The children achieve very good standards in information and communication technology (ICT); as is exemplified by the level of work available in the e-portfolios.
- The children are very well-behaved and are respectful of each other, their teachers and visitors. Nearly all settle quickly to their learning and they respond very well to the positive ethos in all of the classrooms including willing participation in the many problem solving opportunities, both planned for and incidental, that arose in the course of the majority of the lessons observed. They interact effectively with their peers during paired and group work and support each other well in their learning.

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

6. Provision for learning

- There is a comprehensive approach to assessment, planning, learning and teaching across the school. The teachers' detailed evaluation of planning is focused appropriately on gauging the children's needs and abilities at this early stage of the school year. The good practice, in a majority of the lessons observed, included well-planned opportunities for the children to work together and to learn from one another. The school is currently focused on the development of higher order comprehension skills and this was evident through, for example, the effective questioning which encouraged the children to supply extended and reasoned responses. The teachers correct regularly the children's work and in the most effective practice, the teachers provide supportive written and oral feedback which includes suggestions as to how the children can improve further their work. The children who require additional support with aspects of their learning benefit from a wide range of external programmes and initiatives. The classroom assistants work closely with the class teachers to provide well-targeted support for the children.
- The school has an agreed approach to the children's acquisition and development of literacy skills. In the foundation stage, the children are developing communication skills through both the well-planned opportunities in the play-based learning and teacher initiated activities. As they progress, the children experience a wide range of cross-curricular opportunities for extended writing. The school has invested in a computer-based reading programme which supplements well the reading schemes already in place and which comprise part of the wide range of resources available for the promotion of literacy. Information and communication technology (ICT) is also used effectively for research and editing purposes and the children also took part in video conferencing with a well-known author.
- The pastoral care is outstanding, a key characteristic of which is the ethos of inclusivity that permeates the school. The children contribute to the life and work of the school through, for example, the school council and participation in the playground 'buddy' scheme. The school forges strong links with parents and the local and wider community.

7. Leadership and management

- The senior leadership has worked unstintingly to promote and develop the school in the local community, evident in the continued increase in the enrolment. There is a clear, agreed vision for the strategic direction of the school which is informed by an in-depth professional knowledge and understanding of educational developments. The leadership value highly and actively encourage the training needs and requests of all staff members.
- Effective self-evaluation and purposeful consultation and review involving the staff, children and parents underpin the well-embedded school improvement processes. The school's key priorities and the associated action plans include appropriate procedures for monitoring and evaluating the quality and impact of the children's learning experiences.

- As a consequence of staff changes, the leadership has appointed three new co-ordinators in the key roles of literacy, numeracy and ICT. The co-ordinators are working closely with the leadership to review current practice and identify appropriate priorities linked to the continued advancement of the children's standards and achievement.
- Based on the evidence available at the time of inspection, the ETI's evaluation is that there can be a high degree of confidence in the aspects of governance evaluated. The governors carry out their roles supportively and conscientiously and understand well the challenges and opportunities faced by the school. In discussions with the governors, they praised the principal and the staff of the school for their commitment and dedication to the children.
- 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 selected from year 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 safety or well-being.

8. Overall effectiveness

St Mary's Primary 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.

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