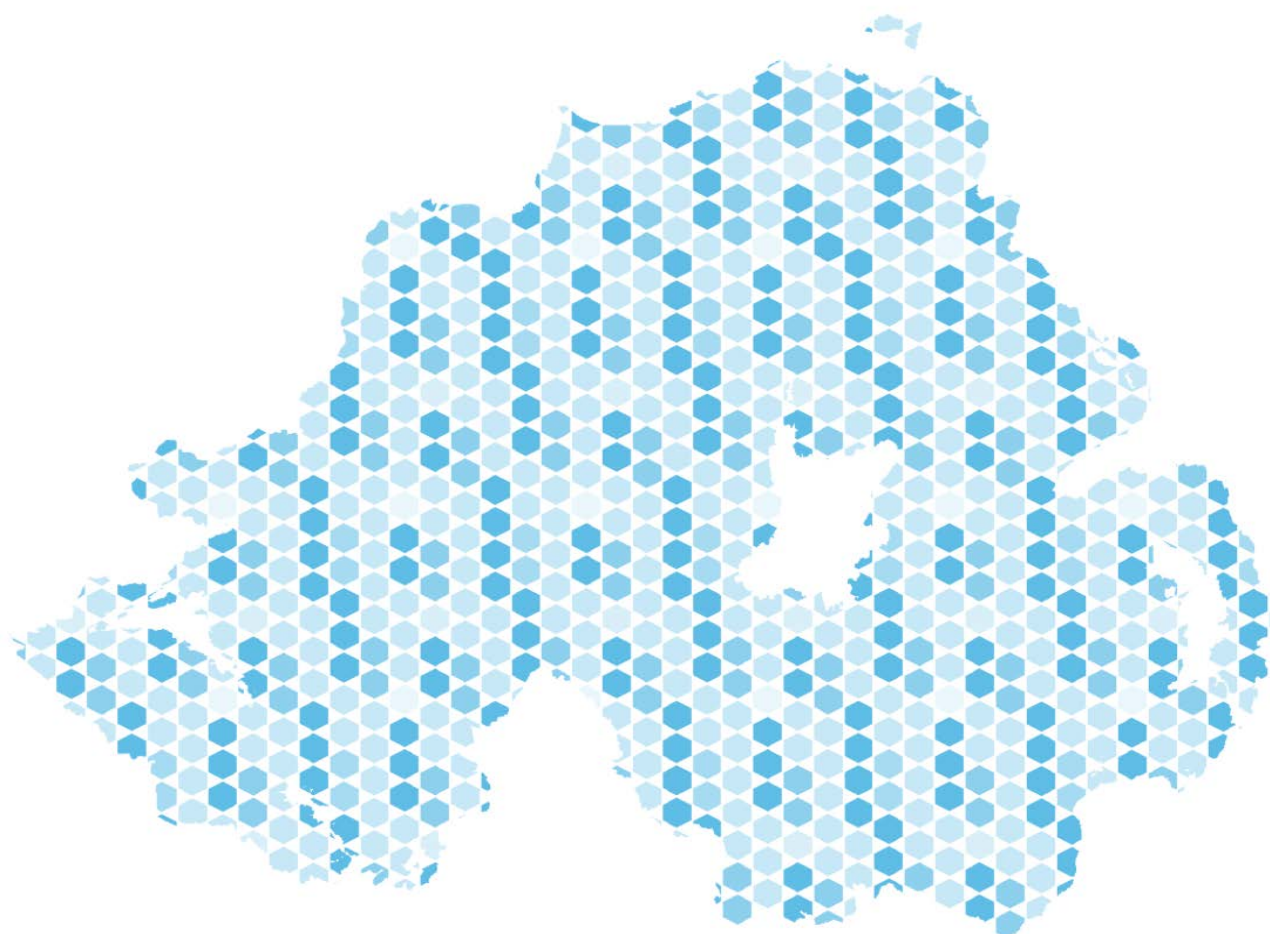


# PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training  
Inspectorate

St Patrick's Primary School,  
Gortin, County Tyrone

Report of an Inspection in  
February 2016

*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  
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 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.

# 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	3
7. Leadership and management	4
8. Overall effectiveness	5
Appendix	

## **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.

Forty nine percent of parents and 91% of staff responded to the questionnaires. Almost all of the responses to the parental questionnaire indicated high levels of satisfaction with the life and work of the school. In particular the parents highlighted: the high degree of care and support shown to the children by all of the staff; the effective communication with home; and, the fact that children are happy at school. The staff commented positively on the child-centred ethos of the school and emphasised how the whole school community works together to ensure the holistic development of the children. The ETI has reported to the principal and a representative of the board of governors the 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 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**

St Patrick's Primary School is a maintained primary school situated in the village of Gortin, approximately 10 miles from Omagh. All of the children attending the school come from the village and the local surrounding area. The enrolment has fluctuated slightly in the past four years and the school is undersubscribed. 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 remained more or less the same.

The school has well established links with the local controlled primary school and is part of a recently formed cluster of ten primary schools.

St Patrick's Primary School	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Enrolment	75	72	73	77
% School attendance	95.2	96.1	98.9	98.3
% NI Primary school average	94.9	95.6	94.5	N/A
FSME Percentage <sup>1</sup>	21	27	26	32
No. of children on SEN register	17	19	19	18
% of children on SEN register	22	22	26	22
No. of children with statements of educational need	*	*	*	*

**Source:** data as held by the school.

\* fewer than 5

N/A not available

#### 4. Overall findings of the inspection

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

#### 5. Achievements and standards

- The children show high levels of engagement in their learning, are resourceful and resilient learners and have good interpersonal skills. They are respectful to their peers and to adults and show a keen sense of pride in their school and its place in the community. In group work, the children manage information very effectively, demonstrate the ability to think creatively and show good levels of self-management. They are confident and articulate when expressing opinion and can explain clearly their processes of thinking. The children make very good independent use of ICT to research and exhibit information in a number of forms.
- The school's internal performance data shows that in key stage 2 most of the children make progress in English and mathematics in line with their ability or above expectation. A majority of the children identified with special and additional learning needs make progress at or above expectation.
- From foundation stage the children communicate ideas and feelings with confidence, using an expanding vocabulary. As they progress through the school, the children can write independently and creatively using different forms and for a variety of purposes and audiences. They can plan and edit their written work to ensure it is of a high standard of accuracy. By year 7 the most able children read with fluency and expression and can offer thoughtful, reasoned opinion on character, plot and setting. The children show ability to infer meaning and can discuss confidently language choices of authors and the layout of different texts.

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

## 6. Provision for learning

- In the most effective practice, the teachers' planning is detailed and comprehensive, is informed by the children's prior learning and guides well the children's progression in learning. Most of the lessons observed were good or better in developing the children's knowledge, understanding and skills in all areas of the curriculum. A majority of the lessons were very good or outstanding where teachers included well-conceived activities with good pace and challenge, built on the children's prior learning, using differentiated tasks to meet the wide range of learning needs and used effective questioning to deepen the children's understanding of key concepts. The teachers use a range of assessment for learning strategies to enable the children to increase further their independence and ability to take responsibility for their own learning. In the less effective practice, in a minority of lessons, teachers did not provide enough thinking time for the children and the tasks did not match the learning needs of all of the children. Greater consistency in the marking for improvement is identified appropriately as an area to take forward to raise further the standards of the children's written work.
- The provision for the children with special educational needs is underpinned by effective early identification of specific needs, is informed by very good communication with a feeder pre-school and with a local learning support unit and is supplemented well by withdrawal sessions and speech and language programmes. There is clear communication and consultation with the parents, and when necessary, specialist support is sought from external agencies to help the children to overcome barriers to their learning. The children are supported effectively by the teachers and the classroom assistants through child-centred individual educational plans which identify the children's strengths and areas for development and include a range of strategies for learning and personal development.
- The children have access to a broad and balanced programme in literacy and regular exposure to the Irish language through song and rhyme enriches further their listening skills and their competence and confidence in oral communication. The recent focus on talking and listening provides a wide range of opportunities for children to develop presentation skills and to engage in drama related activities. Teachers make effective use of contemporary issues and situations to give the children opportunities to write in a variety of forms and for a wide range of audiences. It will be important to extend further the opportunities for children to write creatively and independently across the curricular areas. The school has a very effective systematic approach to the teaching of reading and guided reading is consolidated well. The literacy rich environment, well stocked class libraries and online reading initiatives contribute to the children's love of reading.
- The quality of pastoral care in the school is outstanding. There is a caring, family ethos which is inclusive and recognises the unique potential of each child. In the classroom, the excellent working relationships are built on mutual respect and tolerance and an atmosphere of calm and support pervades the school community. The PATHS<sup>2</sup> programme is used to sustain the children's emotional health and well-being and the children are adept at self-regulating their feelings and at conflict resolution. The children are clear on the rationale for and

---

<sup>2</sup> The PATHS® Programme is a programme for educators and counsellors designed to facilitate the development of self-control, emotional awareness and interpersonal problem-solving skills.

contribute to the development of the school rules and take responsibility for their behaviour and the care of the school environment. They are involved in decision-making through their active participation in the school and the Eco councils. The children have very good opportunities to engage in extended school activities to enhance their learning. The children and their parents have developed good links with the neighbouring primary school through shared education. The children's participation in a range of educational, sporting and social events is developing well the children's ability to work in groups and to make decisions.

## **7. Leadership and management**

- The leadership and management of the school are highly effective providing clear direction and vision for the school improvement agenda, and are responsive to the needs of children and their families. The recent establishment of a before and after-school service and the signposting of access to external agencies, supports the needs of parents in a rural community. Although the teaching principal has multiple co-ordination roles, there is an effective culture of self-evaluation, underpinned by the systematic use of data to inform teaching and learning and a highly collegial, consultative approach to whole-school improvement. The senior leadership is committed to developing further the capacity of the co-ordinators to promote continuous improvement.
- The school development plan<sup>3</sup> is informed appropriately by consultation with all stakeholders and action plans are in place to address whole-school targets. There are appropriate mechanisms established for monitoring and reviewing the quality of the teachers' planning and the quality of the learning and teaching.
- Based on the evidence available at the time of inspection, ETI's evaluation is that there can be a high degree of confidence in the aspects of governance evaluated. The governors are committed fully to working within the financial parameters to maintain staffing levels and the links with the neighbouring primary schools. They have a clear focus on raising further the children's standards and quality of their learning experiences by investing in continuous professional development for the teachers. The governors are fully informed about the life and work of the school and have made good contribution to the extensive work undertaken with the local community.
- 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 year 6 reported that they are happy and secure in school and know what to do if they have any concerns about their well-being.
- 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.

---

<sup>3</sup> The school development plan is partially compliant with the requirements of the School Development Planning Regulations (NI) 2010

## **8. Overall effectiveness**

St. Patrick'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.



© CROWN COPYRIGHT 2016

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)