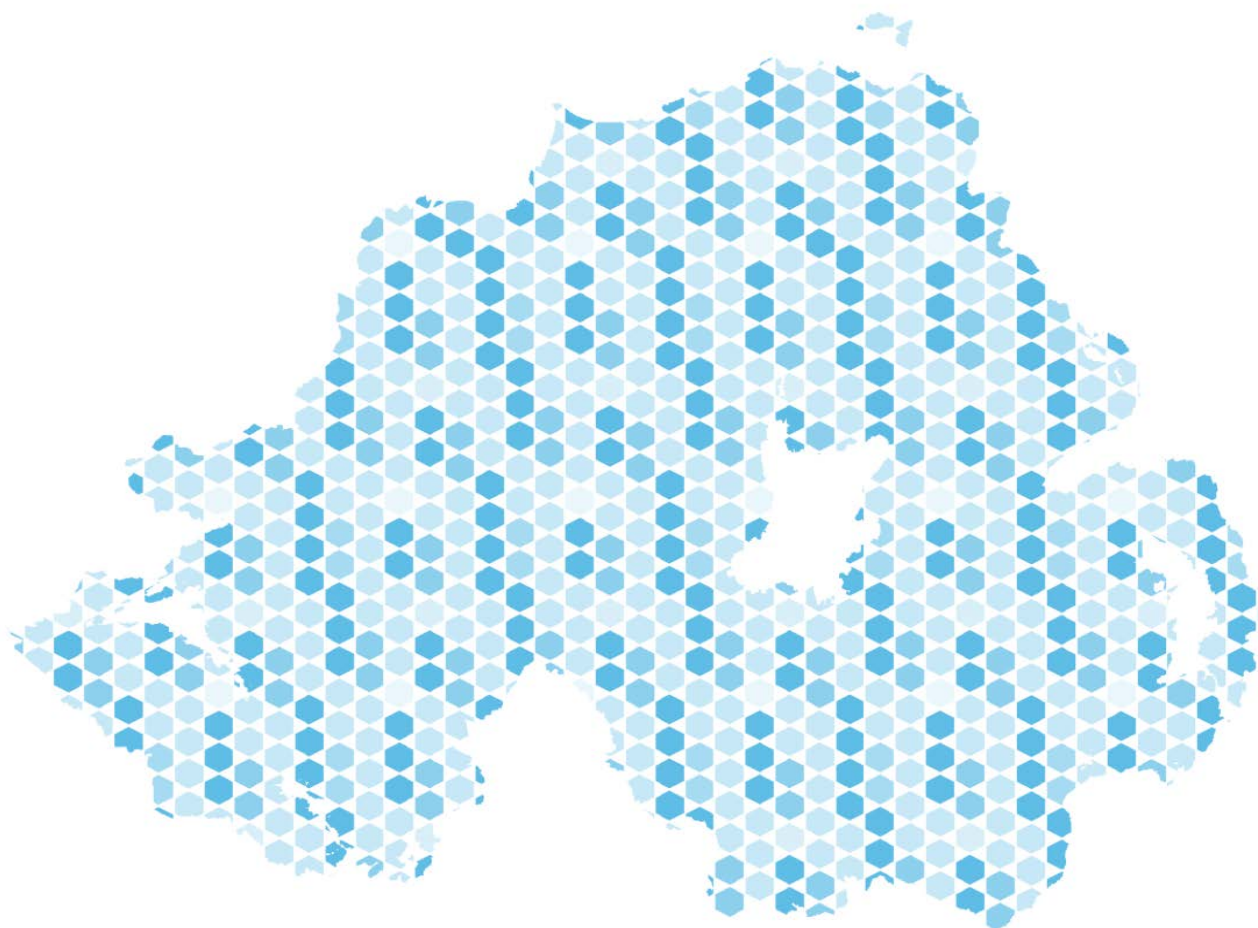


PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Termoncanice Primary School,
Limavady, County Derry

Report of an Inspection in
May 2016



The Education and Training Inspectorate
Promoting Improvement

Providing Inspection Services for:

Department of Education
Department for the Economy
Department for Communities

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. |

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

Eight percent of parents and 42 percent of staff responded to the confidential questionnaires. The responses to the parental questionnaire indicated that the parents were happy with the learning experiences provided for their child at school. In particular, they highlighted that their child was making good progress and expressed their appreciation for the attention given by staff to support their child's care, dignity and well-being. A significant minority of the staff completed the confidential questionnaire. Their responses emphasised: the high standards they set for the children's learning and their commitment to the children's progress; the collaborative approach to planning and evaluating the children's learning; and, how they prepare well the children for their next stage of learning. The ETI has reported to the principal and a representative of the board of governors the main findings emerging from the parental and staff confidential questionnaires.

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

Termoncanice Catholic Maintained Primary School and Nursery Unit is situated in the centre of Limavady in County Derry. Almost all of the children come from the Parish of Limavady. The school's overall enrolment and the percentage of children entitled to free school meals have decreased slightly in recent years. The proportion of children requiring additional help with aspects of their learning has increased in the last year.

The school has been involved recently in a shared education project with a local controlled school to complete a digital literacy project on their town.

| Termoncanice Primary School | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 |
|---|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Enrolment | 559 | 550 | 543 | 542 |
| % School attendance | 94.6 | 95 | 95.2 | N/A |
| % NI Primary school average | 94.9 | 95.6 | 95.4 | N/A |
| FSME Percentage ¹ | 38 | 38 | 37 | 35 |
| No. of children on SEN register | 65 | 56 | 59 | 85 |
| % of children on SEN register | 12 | 10 | 11 | 16 |
| No. of children with statements of educational need | 5 | 10 | 10 | 11 |
| No. of newcomer children | 23 | 23 | 24 | 23 |

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

4. Overall findings of the inspection

| Overall effectiveness | Capacity to identify and bring about improvement |
|----------------------------|--|
| Achievements and standards | Very good |
| Provision for learning | Good |
| Leadership and management | Good |
| Nursery Unit | Very good |

5. Achievements and standards

- Throughout the school, the children are happy, highly motivated and demonstrate very good levels of engagement and enjoyment in their learning. They interact confidently with their teachers and through group and paired work respect and respond sensitively to the contributions of their peers. This collaborative approach to learning supports effectively the children's sense of personal responsibility and self-management, resulting in confident and polite children who show consideration for the needs of others. The children have enjoyed recently success at a local science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) competition in which they were able to demonstrate their skills for collaborative and cross-curricular learning.
- The school's performance data shows that most of the children make progress in English in line or above expectation. A majority of the children make progress in mathematics. A majority of the children who require additional support with aspects of their learning make progress in mathematics and in English in line or above expectation.

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

- Most of the children can express themselves in an articulate and confident manner; a variety of well-planned opportunities for the children to engage and interact with others promotes very good thinking, talking and listening skills. In the nursery unit and across all key stages, the children are keen to talk about their work. The standard of the children's written work is of a high quality and the classroom displays, which celebrate the children's work, help create a literacy-rich learning environment. By the end of key stage (KS) 1, almost all the children are reading at a level in line with their ability. Throughout the school, the children experience a wide variety of approaches to reading including shared, guided and independent reading and have regular opportunities to read for research, personal interest and pleasure. By the end of KS 2, the children read with accuracy, confidence and understanding.
- The children are developing well their skills and confidence in applying mental mathematics strategies to solve problems and complete investigations. In the foundation stage, the children use purposefully practical resources to broaden their early understanding of mathematical concepts. At KS 1, the children demonstrate a growing ability to work independently and engage meaningfully with investigative activities. By the end of KS 2, the most able children demonstrate a good knowledge and understanding of important numerical concepts and are able to explain the strategies employed to solve problems by using the appropriate mathematical language. The children's books are generally well presented.
- The majority of the children who have been identified as having special educational needs are making good progress. An analysis of their progress is informed by meetings between the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) and the class teachers each term, an analysis of the results from standardised and diagnostic assessments and the detailed observations recorded by classroom assistants.
- The children in the nursery unit are very well settled and spend sustained periods concentrating on play activities with confidence. They have developed very good levels of independence and show imagination and creativity in their role play and use of materials at the art and construction play areas. The children communicate effectively with each other, staff and visitors and show a keen interest in books and early mark making. They use appropriately mathematical language as they count, sort, match and make comparisons as part of their play. The children make very good use of the well-developed outdoor area to investigate and explore the world around us and to develop their physical skills.
- The children achieve very good standards in information and communication technology (ICT). They use ICT to enhance and enrich their learning experiences and showcase confidently their work. The children have been involved in electronic partnerships with other schools and have experienced success in an external ICT competition.

6. Provision for learning

- During the inspection, most of the lessons observed were good or very good; almost half of the lessons were very good. In these lessons, the teachers contextualise and connect skilfully the children's learning across the curriculum, use effective questioning to develop the children's responses and integrate effectively ICT to support and enrich learning and teaching. In the less effective practice, in a minority of lessons, there is insufficient differentiation to meet the needs of all of the children and there are few opportunities to consolidate the learning. The recently developed medium- and short-term planning guides well the work of the teachers. The planning, however, does not identify consistently the differentiated teaching approaches and evaluations that inform the future learning for the children. There is variation in the marking of the children's work throughout the school. In the best practice, in a significant minority of classes, the teachers provide helpful guidance to the children on how to improve their work.
- Most of the children who require support with aspects of their learning are assisted effectively by staff who provide appropriately challenging class work and monitor regularly their progress. In the best practice observed, the work was well differentiated to meet the needs of all the children. The recently reviewed individual education plans include appropriately the children's contribution to setting and reviewing their targets. The strategies to support the children in achieving their targets are not explicit enough in the plans. Individual staff members have participated in a variety of training opportunities which match the needs of the children in the school. The information from the training, however, is not applied consistently by all staff to impact sufficiently on the provision within classes.
- The school has a consistent approach to the children's acquisition and development of literacy skills including providing meaningful connections between the development of the writer's craft and the children's reading competencies. Reading, including for information, is taught as an explicit skill that is also transferred effectively across the curriculum. The school has invested in a computer-based reading programme which supplements well the reading schemes in place and which comprises part of the wide range of resources available for the promotion of literacy. These include effective use of ICT which further enriches the children's learning experiences. In the foundation stage, the children's letter formation, word-building skills and knowledge of the basic conventions, such as, simple sentence structure are developed effectively through shared writing activities. Across the key stages, the children experience a wide variety of writing activities in a range of forms.
- There is an appropriate school-wide emphasis on mental mathematics which is used to good effect as an introduction to numeracy lessons. In the most effective practice, in a majority of lessons, the teachers make good use of a range of practical and interactive resources which develop well the children's mathematical thinking and consolidate and extend their knowledge. The school does not support effectively those children experiencing difficulties with their learning in mathematics.

- The positive, stimulating learning environment provided in the nursery unit develops effectively the children's development, decision-making and self-management skills. The staff are caring and supportive in their approach; they listen attentively to the children and promote skilfully the children's language development. The staff plan an interesting and varied programme that reflects effectively the interests of the children and provides progression in the learning throughout the year. An appropriate range of methods is used to gather information about the children's progress and development which is used well to inform the future planning to meet the children's individual needs. The staff have worked with external agencies to develop an effective speech and language programme for 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 and inclusive ethos which permeates the work of the school and nursery unit. The children's achievements in all areas of school life are valued and celebrated and their engagement in a wide range of before- and after-school activities develops well their confidence and social skills. The views of the children are sought and valued and they make a positive contribution to areas of school life which affect them. The children are provided with the opportunity to develop their leadership skills through, for example, the student council and 'reading buddies' programme.

7. Leadership and management

- The members of the senior leadership co-ordinate purposefully their own areas of responsibility and demonstrate a growing awareness of the strategic actions and evaluations that are required to inform better the school improvement process. The senior leadership work with limited cohesion to improve further the achievements and standards of all the children.
- The school development plan² (SDP) provides a suitable framework to focus on school improvement and sets out appropriate priorities for the medium- and longer-term. The co-ordinators' action plans are limited in the identification of strategic actions and are not informed fully by the school's qualitative and quantitative data and effective analysis of baseline positions. They lack consistency with regard to clearly defined monitoring strategies and rigorous self-evaluations.
- The school communicates with parents through the school website, letters and pictorial newsletter reports. There are effective links in place with a range of statutory and voluntary agencies to support the children and their families. The school is a centre for family support and is accessed for play therapy, baby massage and yoga. There are a number of linked, learning opportunities established with the local post-primary school to strengthen connections between KS2 and KS3. There are effective transition arrangements in place for the nursery children into foundation stage and for the children leaving in year 7.

² The school development plan meets the requirements of the School Development Planning Regulations (NI) 2010.

- 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. There are aspects of governance to review, namely to:
 - improve the provision for learning with a particular focus on the mathematical and additional learning needs provision; and
 - ensure the senior leadership teamwork cohesively to establish more effective systems for monitoring and evaluating the quality of learning and teaching.
- 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.

8. Overall effectiveness

Termoncanice Primary School and Nursery Unit 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, in particular, the need to:

- ensure more robust systems of monitoring and evaluation are in place at all levels to improve the achievements and standards of the children, particularly in numeracy; and
- review the roles and responsibilities of senior leadership to build their capacity to contribute to and develop the school priorities and actions to effect improvement.

Health and Safety / Accommodation

1. The pond within the play area is not safe.
2. There are insufficient car parking facilities for all the staff.

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