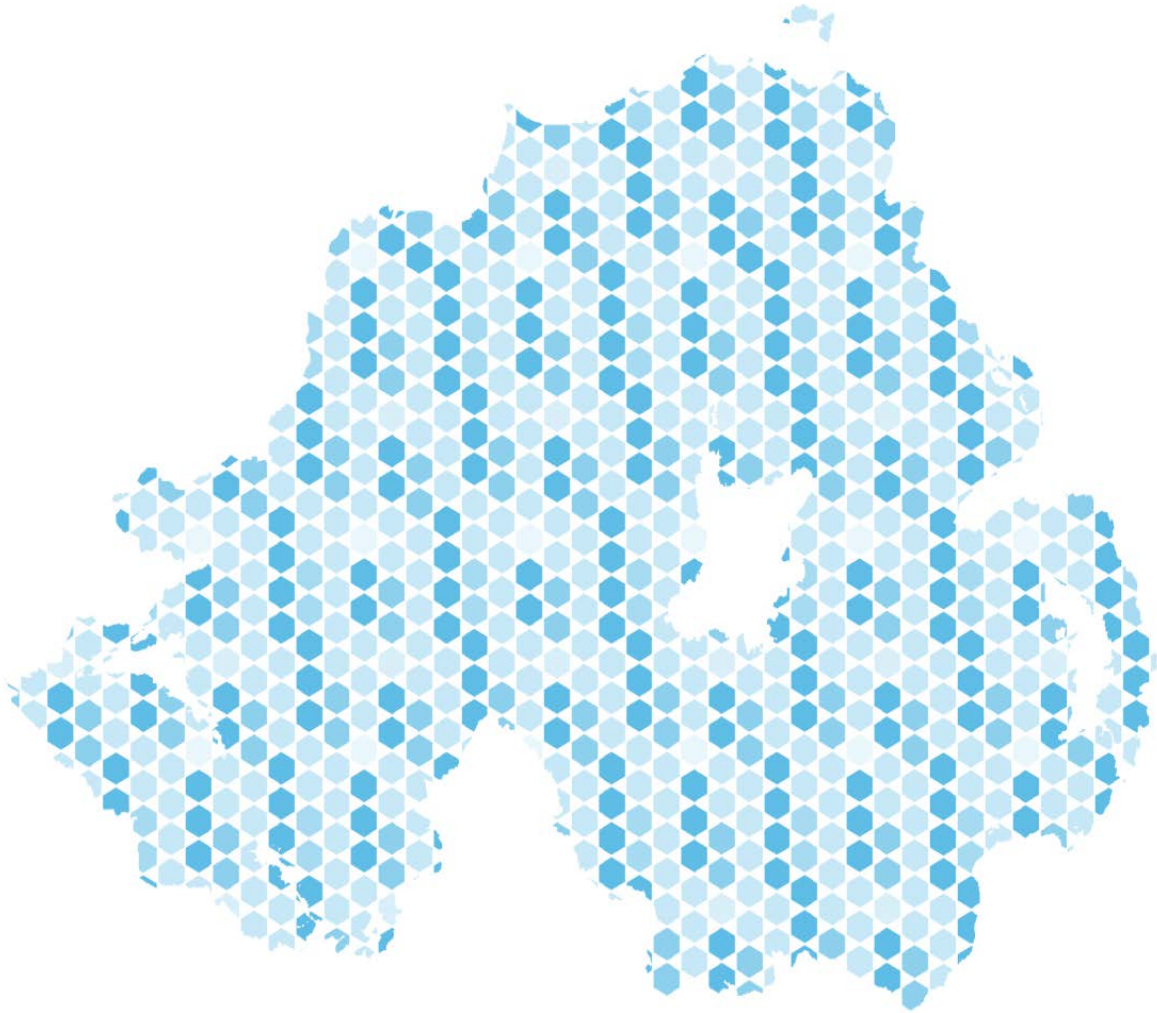


PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

St Mary's Primary School and
Nursery Unit, Strabane,
County Tyrone

Maintained, co-educational

Report of a Sustaining Improvement
Inspection in June 2017



The Education and Training Inspectorate
Promoting Improvement

Providing inspection services for:

Department of Education
Department for the Economy
and other commissioning Departments



Sustaining Improvement Inspection of St Mary's Primary School and Nursery Unit, Strabane, County Tyrone (203-6696)

Introduction

The previous inspection in January 2014 evaluated the overall effectiveness of St Mary's Primary School and Nursery Unit as very good¹. A sustaining improvement inspection (SII) was conducted on 14 June 2017. Since the original inspection, the enrolment has increased steadily and there are currently 745 children enrolled in the school including 106 children in the nursery unit. The school was awarded Rights Respecting status in 2015.

Focus of the inspection

The inspection focused on evaluating the extent to which the school is capable of demonstrating its capacity to effect improvement through self-evaluation and effective school development planning. The school also provided evidence of provision for safeguarding as part of the inspection.

The lines of inquiry during the SII were:

- to raise further the quality of the children's attainment across the curriculum through the extension of a thematic, cross-curricular and activity-based approach to the World Around Us; and
- to improve further the quality of learning and teaching through the cross-curricular use of Using Information and Communication Technology (UICT).

Key findings

- A new World Around Us co-ordinator was appointed in 2015 and following extensive self-evaluation has introduced a revised whole school scheme of work for the World Around Us where an imaginative, thematic and activity-based approach has provided opportunities for extensive cross-curricular learning and teaching. The children produce a high quality of written, diagrammatic and digital work across the curriculum. The outdoor areas in the nursery units have been extended and the new resources promote appropriately an early interest in the World Around Us. The ETI met with members of the Eco-council; the children expressed their enthusiasm for promoting awareness of eco-initiatives with families and peers in relation to recycling and energy saving schemes.
- The school's leadership and management have invested in new UICT resources and in building the professional capacity of the staff to integrate further UICT throughout the curriculum. The children transfer a range of information and technology skills across the curriculum to research, investigate, solve problems and showcase their learning using a range of digital media.

¹ From September 2015, the overall effectiveness of a school evaluated previously as outstanding or very good has been reported as a school demonstrating a high level of capacity for sustained improvement.

Safeguarding

During the inspection, the school provided evidence that arrangements for safeguarding continue to reflect² the guidance issued by the relevant Departments. The ETI team met with a small group of children from year 6; they reported that they feel safe in school and know what to do and who to talk to if they are concerned about their safety or well-being. The children spoke knowledgably about on-line safety and their responsibilities in keeping safe.

Conclusion

St Mary's Primary School and Nursery Unit continues to demonstrate a high level of capacity for sustained improvement in the interest of all the learners. The ETI will continue to monitor how the school sustains improvement.

² From January 2017, arrangements evaluated previously as comprehensive are reported as reflect the guidance.

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