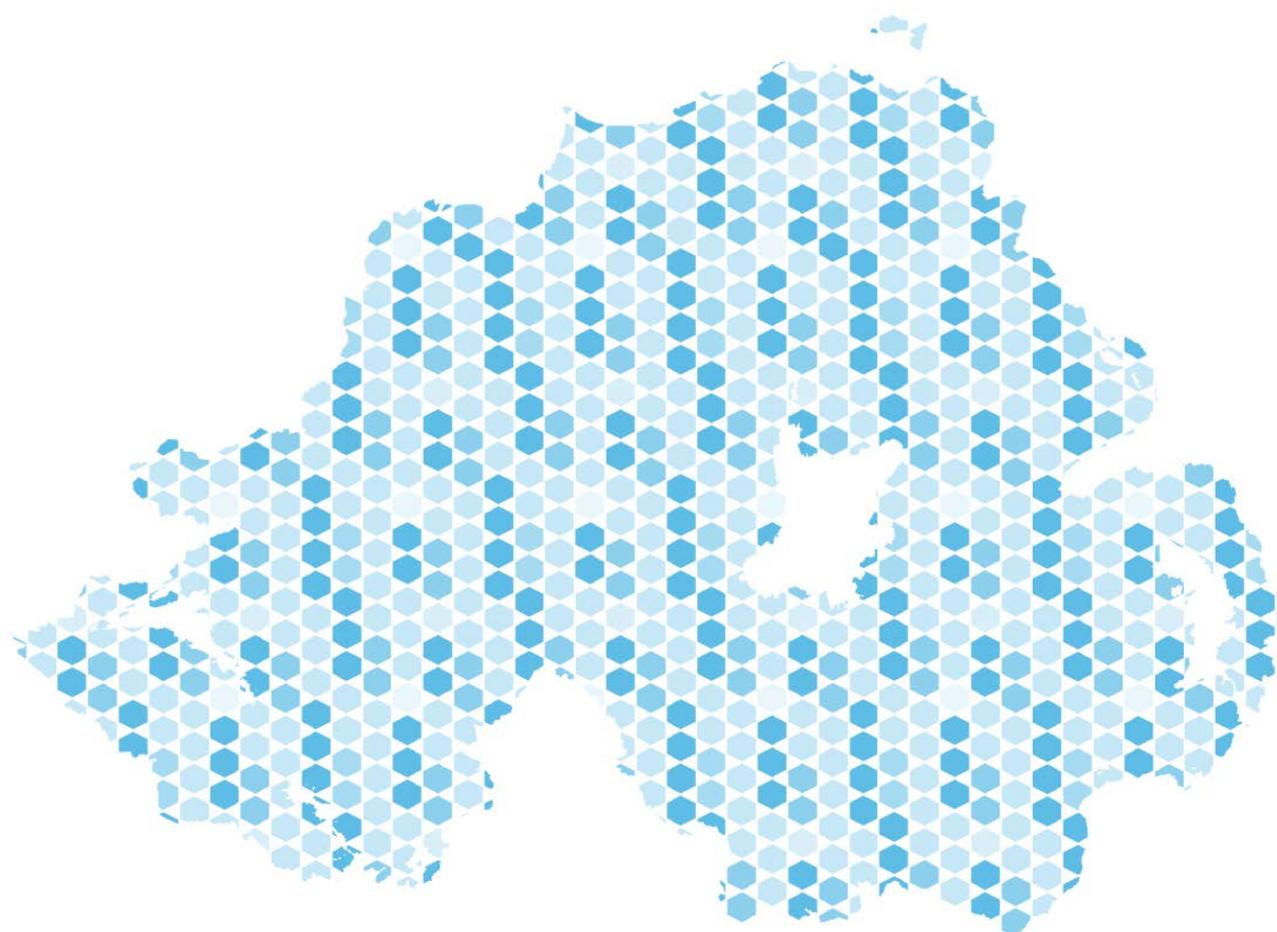


# PRIMARY INSPECTION 2015-16



Education and Training  
Inspectorate

St Mary's Primary School,  
Fivemiletown, County Tyrone

Report of an Inspection in  
December 2015

*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.

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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 a confidential questionnaire.

Seventy percent of parents and all of the staff responded to the questionnaires. The responses to the parental and staff questionnaires were wholly positive. In particular, the parents highlighted the caring and welcoming school which is child-centred and well thought of in the community, the very good leadership of the principal in all aspects of school life and the high quality teaching across the school. The staff commented positively on the child-centred ethos, the very good team spirit and the highly effective leadership of the principal. The ETI has reported to the principal and representatives of the board of governors the main findings emerging from the 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 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 Mary's Primary School is a maintained primary school situated in Fivemiletown, County Tyrone. All of the children attending the school come from the town and the surrounding rural area. The enrolment has remained between 30 and 40 over the last five years. The percentage of children entitled to free school meals has fluctuated between 16 and 25 in the past four years while the proportion requiring additional help with aspects of their learning has ranged from 16% to 21%.

The school is continuing to build on a long-established shared education programme, with the local controlled primary school. In addition, the school is part of a cluster of schools in the Clogher Valley area.

St Mary's Primary School	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Enrolment	38	32	36	31
% School attendance	94.6	94.8	94.1	N/A
% NI Primary school average	94.9	95.6	N/A	N/A
FSME Percentage <sup>1</sup>	16	25	25	23
No. of children on SEN register	8	6	6	5
% of children on SEN register	21	19	17	16
No. of children with statements of educational need	*	*	*	0
No. of newcomer children	*	*	*	*

**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 are very well motivated and settle quickly to their learning. They respond positively to the high expectations of their teachers and aspire to achieve the highest standards possible in all aspects of school life. The children's independence is well-developed; they evaluate their learning and suggest ways to improve the quality of their own work and that of their peers.
- The school's internal performance data shows that almost all of the children, including those who require additional support with aspects of their learning, make progress in mathematics and English in line with their ability.
- By year 7, the most able children demonstrate very good mathematical knowledge and understanding and can apply their numeracy skills in other areas of the curriculum. They are flexible in their thinking and enjoy solving problems and completing investigations. Across the school, the children complete their mental and written calculations in mathematics with very good levels of accuracy.
- The children use information and communication technology (ICT) effectively to support and extend their learning across the curriculum.

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

## **6. Provision for learning**

- The teachers' planning is comprehensive and rigorous with evaluations of the children's learning which are used very effectively to inform future plans. Overall, the learning and teaching observed was of a high quality with respectful interactions between the teachers and the children contributing significantly to the positive learning environment. The teachers use skilful questioning to challenge the children to think appropriately, reason out their responses and listen to others in order to plan and develop further their learning. The teachers mark the children's work regularly and provide constructive feedback which directs the children well on how to improve further their work.
- In mathematics, the children access a wide range of activities with an increasing emphasis on problem-solving and investigation. Well-planned tasks, delivered through effective play-based learning, develop the younger children's mathematical knowledge and understanding. The school has placed an important focus on developing the children's mathematical language which is benefiting the development of their problem-solving skills. The teachers are making very good use of practical resources and well-planned mental mathematics opportunities to develop the children's mathematical thinking, and to consolidate and extend their knowledge. The staff's commitment to working with parents to support their children's learning in mathematics is an important and effective feature of the provision.
- The provision for the children with additional needs is very good. The staff identify, at an early stage, the children with additional learning needs and they implement well-planned strategies, through for example, very effective differentiation in-class and through the recently established withdrawal sessions. The classroom assistants support very well the children's learning.
- The quality of the provision for pastoral care is very good. The staff know the children well and respond appropriately to their interests and learning needs. A particular strength of the school is the involvement of the children in the effective class- and Eco- councils, which develops the children's confidence, decision making and leadership skills. There is an ethos of mutual respect in the classrooms and play areas; consequently, the children's behaviour is exemplary.
- The school gives very good attention to promoting healthy eating and physical activity, thereby encouraging the children to adopt healthy lifestyles.

## **7. Leadership and management**

- The leadership and management of the school is highly effective in promoting and effecting improvement. School improvement planning uses, very effectively, rigorous self-evaluation which is underpinned by appropriate analysis of quantitative data, teacher observations and consultation with the whole school community.
- The school has shared education initiatives with the local controlled primary school and has held joint curricular and pastoral events including local studies and the cross community Carol Service.

- 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 are well-informed about the life and work of the school and carry out effectively their support and challenge functions.
- 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 and 7 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.

## **8. Overall effectiveness**

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.

**Health and Safety**

1. The two internal classrooms require viewing panels in the doors.

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