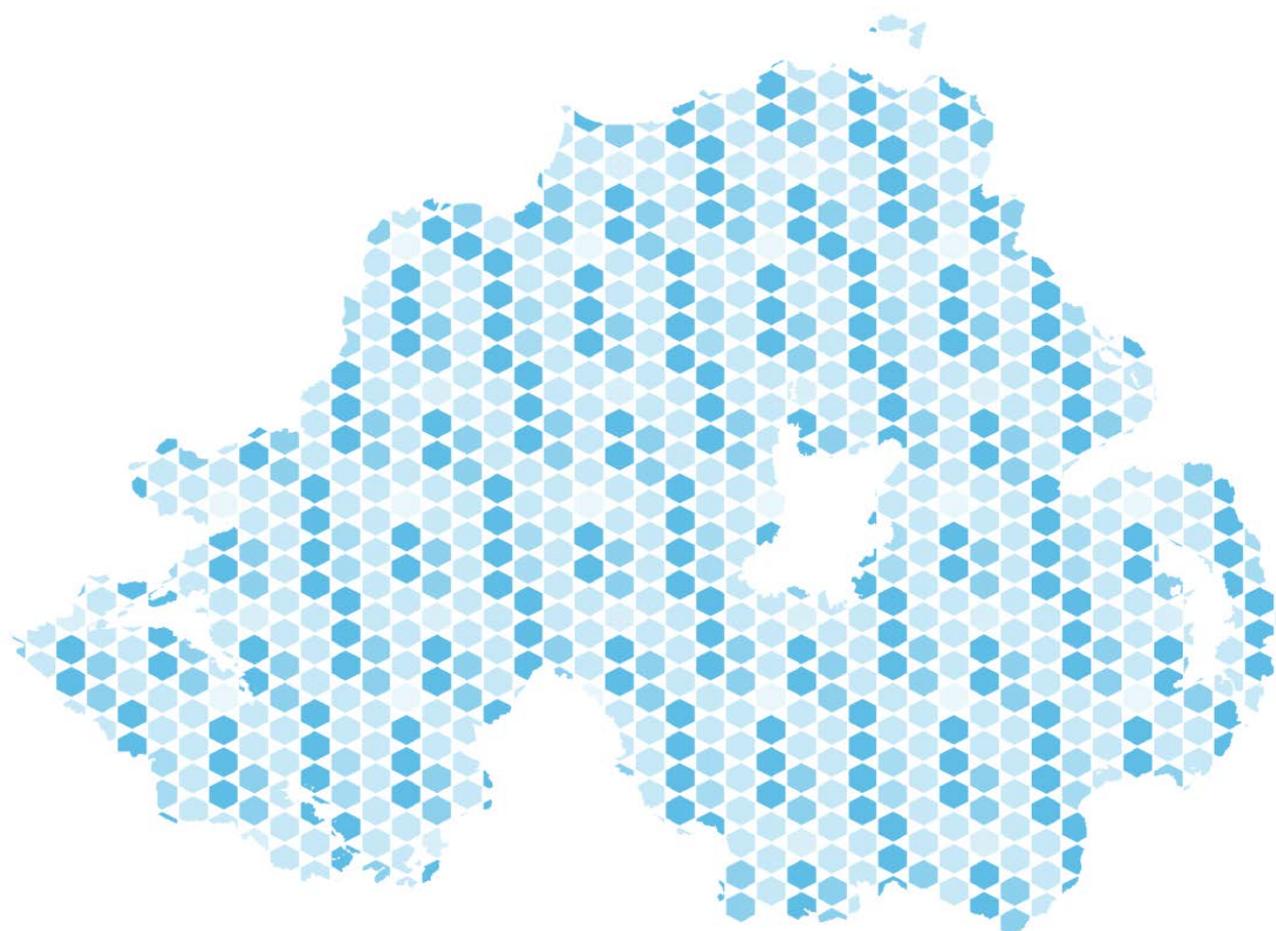


PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

St Joseph's Primary School,
Madden, County Armagh

Report of an Inspection in
January 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

Section	Page
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	4

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.

Fifty-nine percent of parents and 100% of staff responded to the questionnaires. The responses to the parental questionnaires indicated very high levels of satisfaction with the life and work of the school. In particular, the parents highlighted their appreciation of the staff's commitment and dedication to the education of their children, the high expectations of the school for the children's learning and the strong leadership. The staff responses were all very positive; they emphasised the quality of the working relationships across the school and the links with the parents and wider community. The ETI has reported to the principal and chairperson of the board of governors the very few issues 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, including the reception provision; and
- quality of leadership and management.

3. Context

St Joseph's Primary School is a maintained co-educational primary school situated in the hamlet of Madden about 5 miles from the city of Armagh. The majority of the children attending the school come from the surrounding rural area; the remainder come from the greater Armagh area. The enrolment, which had generally remained steady in recent years, increased slightly this year. At the time of the inspection there were 14 children enrolled in reception provision.

St Joseph's Primary School	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Enrolment	127	130	127	134
% School attendance	96.5	96.5	97.7	N/A
% NI Primary school average	94.9	95.6	N/A	N/A
FSME Percentage ¹	28	32	33	29
No. of children on SEN register	17	21	14	17
% of children on SEN register	13	16	11	13
No. of children with statements of educational need	*	*	6	6
No. of newcomer children	*	5	*	*

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	Outstanding
Provision for learning	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Outstanding

5. Achievements and standards

- The children are highly-motivated, enthusiastic learners who aspire to achieve the highest standards possible in all aspects of school life. Across the school, the children have very good levels of independence and manage their learning very effectively; they evaluate their learning and suggest ways to improve the quality of their own work and that of their peers. The children communicate a deep sense of pride in their school.
- The school's performance data shows that almost all of the children, including those who require additional support with aspects of their learning, make progress in English and mathematics in line with their ability or above expectation.
- By year 7, the most able children attain high levels of mathematical knowledge and understanding. Across the school the children are quick to make connections and apply their numeracy skills to other areas of the curriculum; they use a range of mental mathematics strategies proficiently in problem-solving and investigative tasks.
- Throughout the school, the children use information and communication technology (ICT) very competently to extend their learning and as a result, their skills are highly developed.

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

6. Provision for learning

- Overall, the quality of the planning, learning, teaching and assessment is outstanding. The teachers continuously reflect on, evaluate and improve the planning and assessment to meet the needs of all of the children. The learning and teaching observed was always very good or better, and outstanding in the majority of lessons. The strengths in the learning and teaching include: the very positive learning environment; the excellent working relationships between the children and the adults in the classes; the high expectations that the teachers set for themselves and for the children; the differentiated resources and learning activities which reflect the needs of the children in the composite classes; the innovative ICT and practical resources employed; and the continuous formative feedback that the children receive on their learning.
- The provision for children with additional educational needs is outstanding. The staff use a range of internal assessment data and teacher observations very well to identify those children who require additional support. The individual education plans guide very effectively the work of the teachers and the classroom assistants. The targets are appropriate and the children benefit from effective strategies to support them in their learning.
- The provision for mathematics is outstanding. The teachers make very effective use of a wide range of innovative, practical and ICT resources to develop the children's numerical skills and to instil a positive attitude to mathematics. In all of the mathematics lessons observed, the children engaged positively and worked enthusiastically with their peers to complete well-planned problem solving and investigative tasks. In the foundation stage, the younger children's mathematical knowledge and understanding is developed through very effective play-based learning. The teachers' commitment to helping parents to support their children's learning in mathematics in the early years is a strength of the provision.
- The quality of the provision for pastoral care is outstanding. All of the staff are highly committed to the care and well-being of the children and of each other; they work together to create a positive, supportive learning environment in which each child can reach their full potential. The children's work is celebrated through creative displays in the classrooms and the corridors. The effective school and eco-councils develop very well the children's communication, decision making and leadership skills. The school motto, '*In Christ we live, love and learn*', is reflected in the ethos of mutual respect which permeates all aspects of school life, in particular, the exemplary behaviour of the children.
- The children in the reception class are very well settled and engage in sustained periods of purposeful play. They are respectful of staff and co-operate well with their peers, often helping each other and sharing resources. The staff's interactions with the children are of a consistently high quality; skilful questioning extends the children's learning and supports the children to solve problems through further investigation and discovery. Particular strengths of the reception provision include the opportunities for the children to use a wide range of early mathematical language and to develop confidence in asking and answering questions related to their play activities. The learning environment is stimulating and well resourced; routines are well established and used effectively for learning.

- 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 senior and middle leadership teams provide outstanding strategic leadership focused sharply on the continuous improvement of learning, teaching and standards. The school development planning process is rigorous and inclusive. It uses effectively a wide range of quantitative data, classroom observations and evaluations by staff, parents, governors and children to identify areas for further development, set realistic targets, track progress and evaluate the impact on provision and standards.
- 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 very well informed about the life and work of the school and carry out their support and challenge functions effectively.
- 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 said that they feel safe and happy in school and know what to do if they have any concerns about their well-being.

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.

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