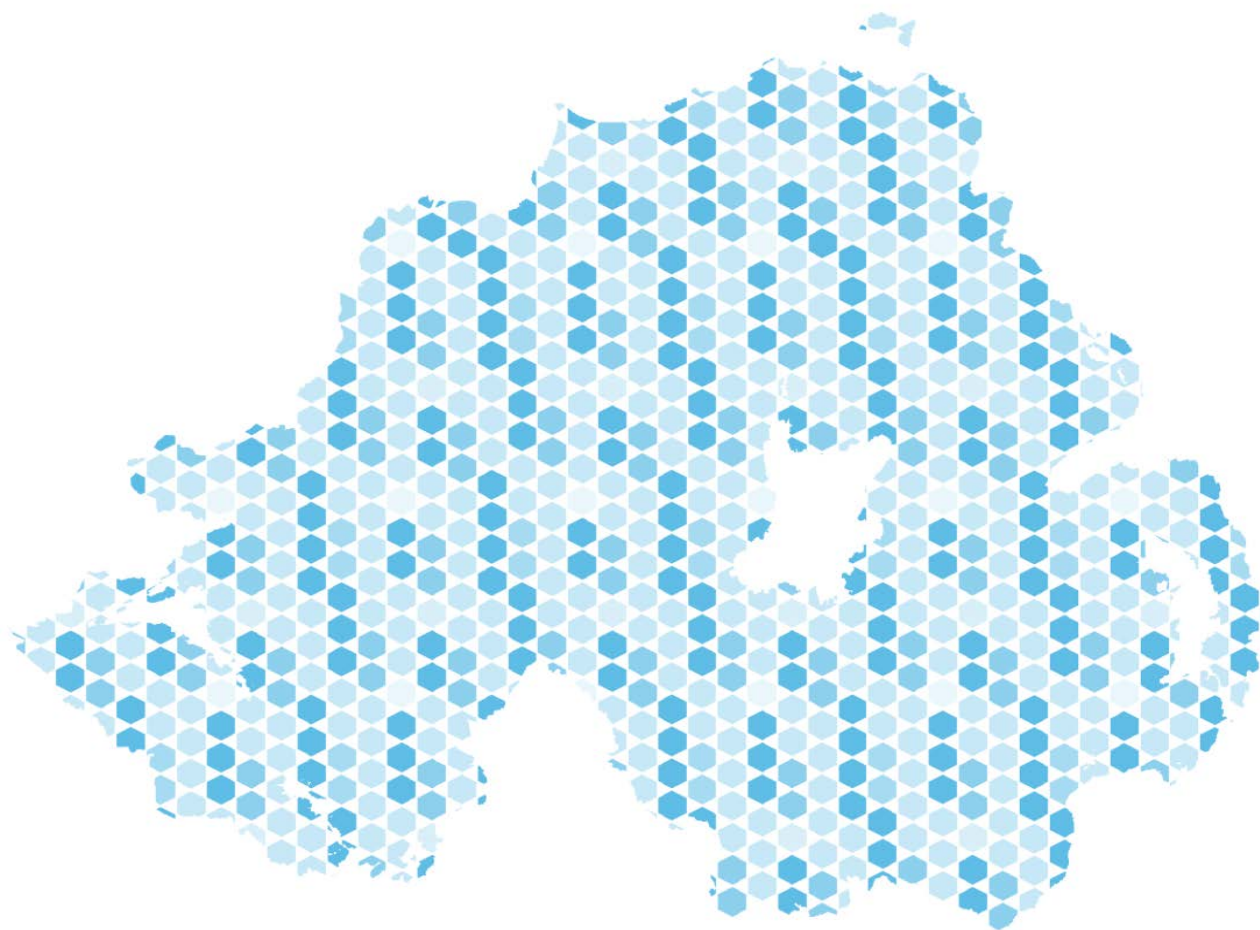


# PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training  
Inspectorate

St Joseph's Primary School and  
Ederney Community Nursery,  
Ederney, County Fermanagh

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.

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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.

Sixty-four percent of parents and 100% of staff responded to the confidential questionnaire. The responses to both the staff and parental questionnaire expressed very high levels of satisfaction with all aspects of the life and work of the school. In particular, parents praised the welcoming, inclusive ethos of the school, the strong links with the community, and the efforts of the teachers to develop the children academically, socially, morally and spiritually. The staff responses were wholly positive highlighting the very effective working relationships, the high level of support from parents and the value placed by the leadership and management on the parents' contributions to the school community. The ETI has reported to the principal and a representative of the board of governors the main messages emerging from the staff and parental questionnaire and the discussions; no significant issues were raised.

## **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**

St Joseph's Primary School is a maintained primary school situated in the village of Ederney. Most of the children attending the school come from the surrounding village. The enrolment is steady and the school operates just below capacity. The school operates a nursery unit, Ederney Community Nursery, which enrolls 26 children in a part-time morning session. Over the past four years, there has been a reduction in the number of children on the special needs register. The school has been awarded recently a green flag in the Eco-schools

programme and were participants in the Northern Ireland finals of last year's Sentinus STEM<sup>1</sup> challenge. There are effective shared education links between St Joseph's and the two local controlled primary schools. At the time of the inspection, two of the teachers were employed on a temporary basis.

St Joseph's Primary School	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Enrolment	117	127	128	128
% School attendance	95.1	95.5	95.1	N/A
% NI Primary school average	94.9	95.6	95.4	N/A
FSME Percentage <sup>2</sup>	33	29	26	31.3
No. of children on SEN register	41	47	39	35
% of children on SEN register	35	36.7	30.4	23
No. of children with statements of educational need	6	7	8	7
No. of newcomer children	*	*	*	0

**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>	Outstanding
<b>Provision for learning</b>	Outstanding
<b>Leadership and management</b>	Outstanding
<b>Nursery Unit</b>	Very good

#### 5. Achievements and standards

- The children engage confidently and respectfully with their peers and with adults and are well motivated to achieve the highest standards. They have well-developed creative and critical thinking skills, show high levels of self-management and are very effective at working collaboratively, making informed choices about their learning. Their behaviour is exemplary.
- The school's internal performance data shows that in key stage (KS) 2, most of the children, including those who require additional support with aspects of their learning, are achieving in line with their ability or above expectation in English and mathematics.
- Throughout the school, the children are articulate and confident in their interactions in paired and group discussions. By the end of KS2, the children use a wide range of technical and more complex vocabulary to communicate clearly their ideas. The most able year 7 children read with fluency and expression and they read independently for enjoyment from a wide range of authors. They exhibit a clear understanding of character and plot and of the

<sup>1</sup> STEM education refers to Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics.

<sup>2</sup> The term 'FSME Percentage' refers to the percentage of children entitled to free school meals.

writer's intended meaning. From the foundation stage, the children can write well independently and in a variety of contexts. By year 7, the children are creating texts that express ideas and feelings about issues outside their own experience with a high degree of accuracy using more sophisticated sentence structures.

- The most able children in year 7 achieve outstanding standards in mathematics and have a high level of flexibility and confidence in their mathematical reasoning. A particular strength is that, by the end of KS2, the children have developed high capability to estimate and to express accurately their mathematical reasoning. The children develop progressively their knowledge of mathematical concepts through frequent and engaging practical activities; these well-planned sessions enable the children to approach unfamiliar investigative and problem-solving tasks with a high level of competence and success.
- The children who require additional help with aspects of their learning are included well in all aspects of school life to become confident, enthusiastic learners who make continuous improvement in their learning and all-round development to a high standard.
- In the nursery unit, the children are confident and engage readily in the activities provided by the staff. Their personal and social skills are very good; they can play collaboratively, make choices independently and have acquired good self-management skills. The children listen with enthusiasm and engage well with stories and rhymes. They are developing a growing vocabulary and are able to express their thoughts and ideas with confidence.
- The children achieve outstanding standards in information and communication technology (ICT). They use a range of programs and devices to produce an excellent standard of work in digital presentations and exchanges, and in animation.

## **6. Provision for learning**

- In the primary school, the teachers' long-term planning is based on rigorous analysis of data and detailed evaluations and builds on the prior learning and interests of the children. A range of learning and teaching strategies and assessment processes are planned for and are used well to extend the children's learning. In the best practice, the thematic approach to learning provides the children with highly effective opportunities for the further development of their literacy and numeracy skills.
- A majority of the lessons observed were outstanding. The teachers use imaginatively a range of strategies including skilful questioning and share their high expectations to ensure that children are successful in all aspects of their learning. The whole school environment is vibrant and extremely well resourced, therefore, contributes to high levels of engagement and extends the children's thinking skills and creative responses. Almost all of the teachers use the agreed marking for improvement approaches to guide precisely the children in how to improve the quality of their written work. The well-planned plenary sessions assess appropriately the children's understanding of the concepts taught in the lessons. The use of ICT enhances further the opportunities for children to self- and peer-assess aspects of their knowledge and understanding.

- The provision for children requiring additional support in their learning is outstanding. The complementary blend of tailored literacy and numeracy interventions and the thoughtfully developed inclusive learning environment meets very effectively the children's needs. The skilled classroom assistants provide high levels of support for the children and are involved meaningfully in delivering important aspects of the provision. The ongoing improvement of the highly effective withdrawal sessions for literacy and numeracy, which align closely and effectively with the class teaching and are monitored and evaluated systematically, enhance the children's outcomes and enable them to progress successfully to the next stage of their learning.
- The integration of talking and listening, reading and writing across the curriculum is well developed. It will be important to plan for the tracking of the progression the children make in these key areas. Reading has a high priority in the school and the recent focus on guided reading gives the children a variety of challenging reading-related activities that raise the standard of their inferential and predictive skills. The attractive school library is used effectively to promote reading for pleasure. In the highly effective practice, other aspects of the curriculum are used skilfully to create opportunities for writing in a range of diverse contexts. The teachers make skilled use of contemporary, meaningful issues, including the children's involvement with Eco-schools, to provide the children with engaging extended writing tasks. The children's writing arising from real-life contexts is of a very good quality.
- The school places a high priority on the development of numeracy and mathematics across the curriculum. The children experience a well-balanced and progressive mathematics programme; the teachers build skilfully and incrementally the children's mathematical knowledge and understanding across the key stages. As they progress from the foundation stage to KS2, the children are provided with appropriately challenging learning activities which clarify and extend further their mathematical thinking in a variety of meaningful real-life contexts. Information and communication technology is used very well in all classes to extend and support the children's learning in all aspects of their mathematical learning.
- The quality of the provision in the nursery unit is very good. The planning is clear and guides well the work of the staff with the children. It is well informed through observing the children at play and assessing the progress in their learning. The staff's interactions with the children in the nursery unit are of a consistently good quality; their discussions and open-ended questioning assist the development of the children's language and thinking. The staff need to extend the children's opportunities to develop their early mathematical concepts through play with greater consistency.
- The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care in the school is outstanding and in the nursery unit is very good. There are excellent working relationships at every level and every aspect of the school community is permeated by an inclusive, nurturing ethos. There is a significant commitment on the part of all staff to care for the academic, emotional and social needs of the children, all of which is underpinned by the close links with the community. The children have a highly developed sense of social responsibility through their involvement with Eco-schools and with local charitable organisations, such as, St Vincent de Paul.

The awareness of social responsibility begins in the playground with the “Positive Playground Rules” and with the care and support shown by the children to those members of the school community with complex needs. The children have regular opportunities to engage in energetic physical activity outdoors.

- The school and the nursery unit are highly effective in promoting healthy eating and physical activity thereby encouraging the children to adopt healthy lifestyles.

## **7. Leadership and management**

- The highly effective and innovative senior leadership team has a complementary set of skills and is well supported by governors, staff and parents in developing a clear strategic vision for continuous improvement through the well-embedded culture of self-evaluation. Staff development days are used effectively to expand the teachers’ professional knowledge and to sustain and improve high quality learning and teaching experiences. The co-ordinators are highly skilled and use their specialist knowledge to ensure their curricular areas are planned to a high standard by all staff.
- The school development plan<sup>3</sup> is coming towards the end of its cycle and work is already underway in the consultative process with all stakeholders to inform the next stage. The targets identified for improvement are based on an informative range of qualitative and quantitative data and are monitored and evaluated closely. The associated action plans are aligned to the school development plan and they detail the processes for raising further the children’s attainment.
- The school fosters effective links with the parents and the community. The parents are fully engaged in the education of their children and they are kept informed of all aspects of school life. The well-established links with other schools have improved the children’s experience of the curriculum, particularly in the area of STEM.
- 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 essential members of the school community who attend regularly school functions and use their individual skills and aptitudes to enhance the learning experiences of the children.
- On the basis of the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the school and nursery unit have 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 who to contact if they have any concerns about their well-being.

## **8. Overall effectiveness**

St Joseph’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.

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<sup>3</sup> The school development plan meets the requirements of the School Development Planning Regulations (NI) 2010.



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