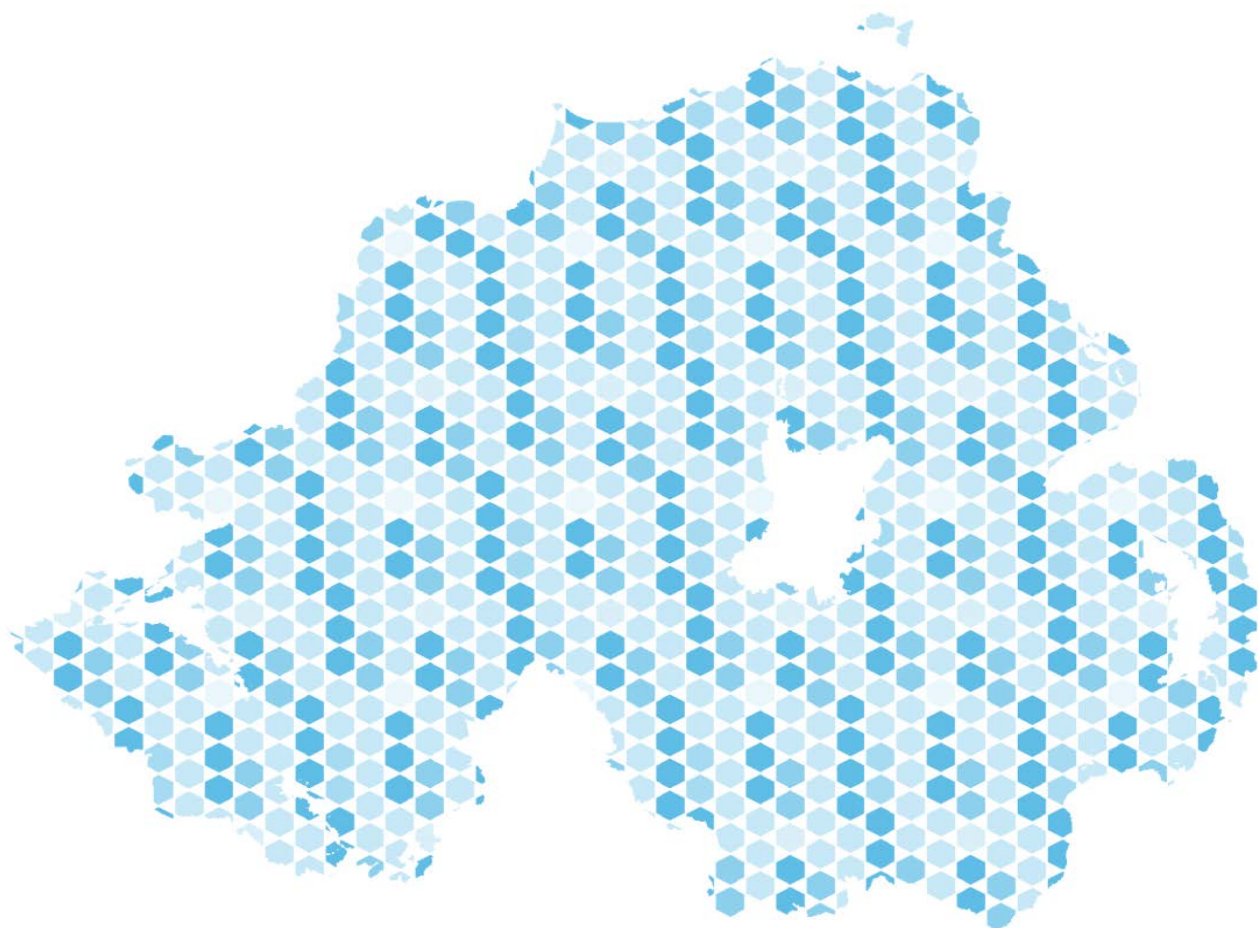


# PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training  
Inspectorate

Ballylifford Primary School,  
Cookstown, County Tyrone

Maintained, co-educational

Report of an Inspection in  
October 2016

## 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.

Sixty-five percent of parents and 80% of the staff responded to the confidential questionnaires. The responses to the parental questionnaire were positive and the written comments indicated high levels of satisfaction with the life and work of the school. The responses to the staff questionnaire endorsed the effective working relationships within the school and the support of the parents and community. The ETI has communicated to the principal and the chair of the board of governors the main findings, and any individual issues arising, 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**

Ballylifford Primary School is a maintained primary school situated in the village of Ballylifford, County Tyrone. The children who attend the school come from the village and the surrounding rural areas. The percentage of children entitled to free school meals has risen significantly over the past four years. The proportion of children requiring additional help with aspects of their learning has decreased.

Ballylifford Primary School	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
Enrolment	58	60	67	65
% School attendance	97.4	97.2	97.2	N/A
% NI Primary school average	95.6	95.4	N/A	N/A
FSME Percentage <sup>1</sup>	5	20	24	26
No. of children on SEN register	9	7	7	6
% of children on SEN register	15	11	10	9
No. of children with statements of educational need	*	*	*	*
No. of newcomers	0	0	0	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 to identify and bring about 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

- Across all key stages, the standards in mathematics are very good. The children in the foundation stage have a secure understanding of early mathematical concepts including number, ordering, weights and measures and shape and space. As the children progress through the school, most, including those with special educational needs, use, apply and explain a wide range of mathematical strategies with accuracy. The children's mathematical language is very well developed, and they use confidently a range of resources, including information and communication technology (ICT), to carry out investigations and solve problems.
- From an early age, the children are curious and keen to share their learning with one another. Across the school, the children display confidently their thinking skills and personal capabilities. They take pride in their achievements and their work is well organised and presented.

#### 6. Provision for learning

- The quality of the planning, learning, teaching and assessment for learning is consistently very good. The planning and assessment for learning is comprehensive and focused well on the needs of individual children, including those with additional needs. As a result, the teachers and the children are clear about the intended learning. The teachers provide appropriate support for all the children and they use effective questioning to extend the children's thinking.

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

- The whole-school programme for numeracy is well-balanced and provides for progression in all areas of the mathematics curriculum. The positive impact of the current agreed areas for further development is evident in the planning and practice. The children who require additional support in their numeracy benefit from well-targeted intervention strategies and the numeracy 'booster' sessions are suitably flexible and tailored to the children's individual needs. The classroom assistants make a valuable contribution to the children's learning.
- The quality of the pastoral care provision is very good. The children from years 6 and 7 explained maturely how the school's values guide their learning and their behaviour. The children are increasingly involved, through the school council, in decision-making about matters which affect their learning experiences and their life in school. The staff provide a stimulating, supportive and caring environment for the children.

## **7. Leadership and management**

- The school development planning process is very effective and has led to improvements in the quality of planning, learning, teaching and assessment. Meticulous analysis of performance data and a wide range of other first-hand evidence ensure that the action plans are focused acutely on raising further the standards the children achieve. A common and coherent approach to school improvement means that all of the staff have a clear understanding of how to bring about further improvement.
- Based on the evidence available at the time of inspection, the ETI's evaluation is that there can be a high level of confidence in the aspects of governance evaluated. The board of governors supports and challenges appropriately the school in taking forward the agreed priorities for development.
- 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.
- 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 years 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.

## **8. Overall effectiveness**

Ballylifford Primary School has a high level of capacity for sustained improvement in the interest of all learners. The ETI will monitor how the school sustains improvement.

**Health and safety**

1. There is a need for an urgent review by the employing authority, board of governors and principal of the children's safety at drop off and pick up times due to children having to cross a very busy road.

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