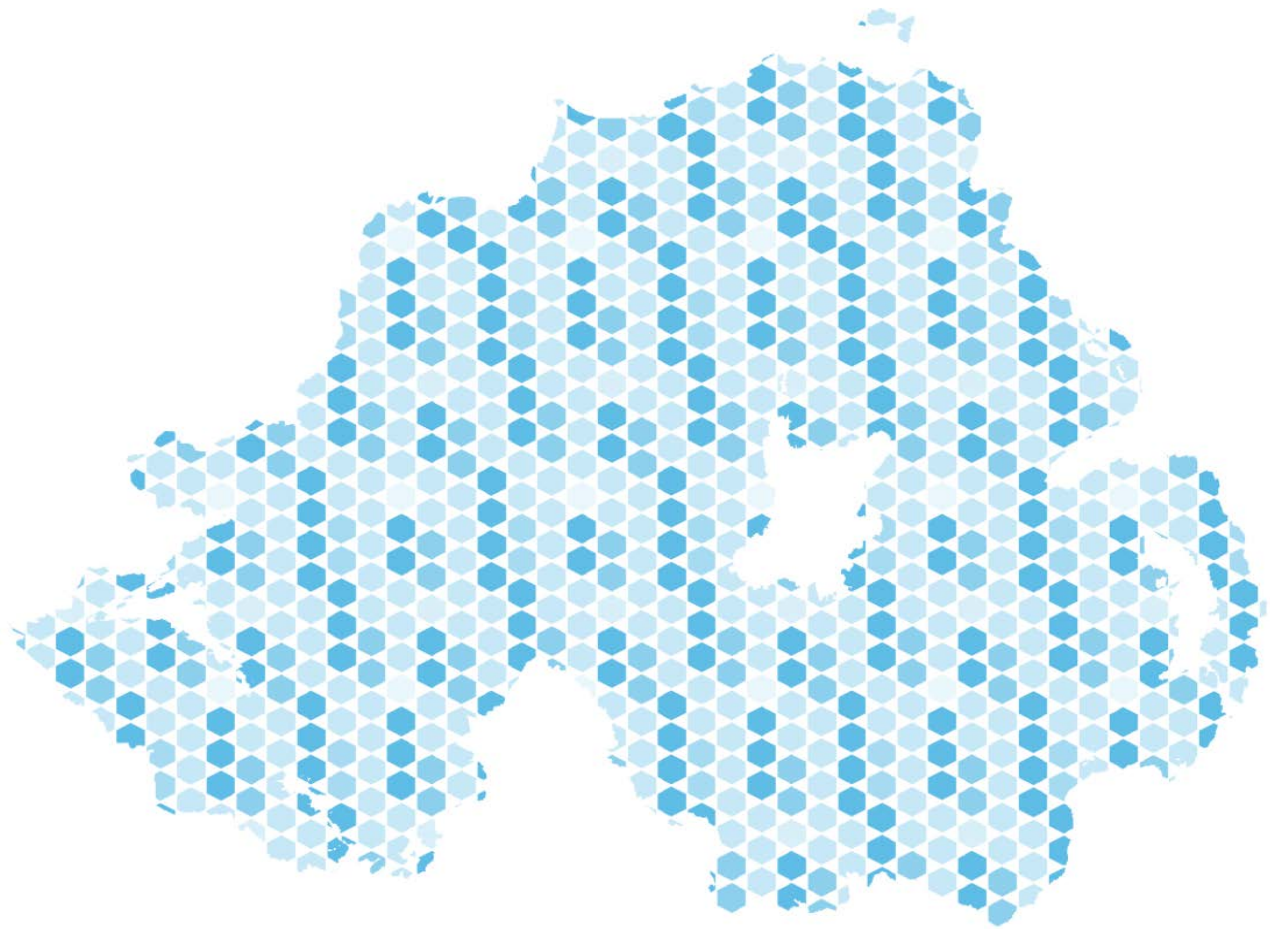


PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Cloughoge Primary School and
Nursery Unit, Newry,
County Down

Report of an Inspection in
April 2016



The Education and Training Inspectorate
Promoting Improvement

Providing Inspection Services for:

Department of Education
Department for the Economy
Department for Communities

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 confidential questionnaires.

Thirty-three percent of parents and seventy-eight percent of staff responded to the confidential questionnaires. The responses to the parental confidential questionnaire indicated very high levels of satisfaction with the life and work of the school. In particular, the parents highlighted that the children enjoyed learning at school and were making good progress; their appreciation of the teachers' approachability and support; and that the caring, supportive and nurturing environment of the school helped develop the children's personal, emotional and social skills. Most of the staff completed the confidential questionnaire and their responses were also very positive; they emphasised the support received from the leadership of the school and the team approach to developing the provision for learning. The ETI has reported to the principal and a representative of the board of governors the main findings emerging from the parental and staff confidential 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 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

Cloughoge Primary School and Nursery Unit is a maintained primary school situated on the outer urban area of Newry City within the broader catchment area of Killeavy. Almost all of the children come from the Parishes of Upper and Traditional Middle Killeavy. The school enrolment and the percentage of children entitled to free school meals have increased steadily over the last three years. The percentage of children on the special education needs register shows a decreasing trend. The number of newcomer children has fluctuated slightly over the last three years.

Cloughoge Primary School	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Enrolment	394	393	397	401
Nursery Unit	52	53	55	53
% School attendance	95.2	95.4	95.4	N/A
% NI Primary school average	94.9	95.6	95.4	N/A
FSME Percentage ¹	24.9	23.9	24.1	25.9
No. of children on SEN register	88	78	77	72
% of children on SEN register	22.3	21	19.4	17.9
No. of children with statements of educational need	14	18	14	13
No. of newcomer children	15	13	15	11

Source: data as held by the school.
N/A not available

4. Overall findings of the inspection

Overall effectiveness	High level of capacity for sustained improvement
Achievements and standards	Very good
Provision for learning	Very good
Leadership and management	Very good
Nursery Unit	Very good

5. Achievements and standards

- The behaviour of the children is exemplary and they engage with adults and peers in a respectful manner. The children are happy and well-motivated; they settle quickly to their learning and display enjoyment and enthusiasm for the work and tasks provided by their teachers. They interact very effectively with their peers during pair and group work and support each other in their learning. The children participate positively in challenging activities; demonstrating their resilience and ability to problem solve and complete investigative tasks.
- 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 in line with their ability or above expectation. Most of the children make progress in mathematics and a majority of those who require additional support with aspects of their learning make progress in mathematics in line with their ability or above expectation.
- The children achieve very good standards in literacy. Across the school, the children speak confidently, express their own opinions and ideas, and listen respectfully to those of others. The children write to a very good standard across a range of writing types and develop well their individual writing styles. By year 7, the most able children, read with very good fluency and can discuss maturely their reading preferences. They have a good understanding of the authors' use of language and the techniques employed to engage the reader.

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

- Overall, the standards achieved by the children in mathematics are very good. Across the school, the children complete calculations with good levels of accuracy and are developing flexibility in applying mental mathematics strategies to solve problems and complete investigations. By year 7, the most able children address confidently a variety of mathematical challenges; they are secure in their understanding of key mathematical concepts and are able to apply their knowledge across other areas of the curriculum. The work in the children's books is of a very good standard.
- The children in the nursery unit are developing effective social skills and friendships and interact well with their peers during play, snack and dinner times. The children listen to and engage with stories and rhymes and use and display an understanding of Makaton² to support their communication. Many of the children engage in early mark making during inside and outside play. The children can use early mathematical language to count and talk about colour, measurement and shape as part of their play. They display a keen interest in the natural world and enjoy using their senses to explore the indoor and outdoor environments and when encouraged, they engage well in imaginative role-play. The children are developing very well their gross motor skills as they engage enthusiastically in physical energetic play, demonstrating very good levels of balance and co-ordination.
- The children have high levels of competency in using information and communication technology (ICT) and use it confidently to enhance their learning. They have used successfully video -conferencing software, created their own e-books and attended coding classes to develop further their ICT skills.

6. Provision for learning

- The quality of the teachers' planning supports effectively the children's learning. The planning format is consistent between year- groups and the long- and medium-term planning provides a suitable framework for progression for all learners. The development of literacy, numeracy and ICT skills are embedded well within the planning. In most of the planning, the teachers evaluate regularly their planning; however, there is a need to ensure consistency in the quality of the evaluations to inform effectively future planning.
- During the inspection, almost all of the lessons observed were good or better; over half of the lessons were very good or outstanding. In the most effective practice, in a majority of lessons, the learning intentions and associated success criteria were identified by the children, activities were differentiated effectively to meet the needs of all learners and through effective questioning, the children were challenged to develop their thinking and understanding of key concepts. In the small number of lessons where the quality of teaching could be improved further, the teachers over-directed the learning and the plenaries were ineffective in consolidating the children's knowledge and understanding of the topic.

² Makaton is a language programme for adults or children with communication difficulties. Signs and symbols are used as the principal method of communication or to assist speech.

- The school has an effective assessment policy and the children are provided with regular opportunities to peer-assess their own work and self-assess the work of others. The teachers mark regularly the children's work and, in the best practice, they provide meaningful guidance to the children on how they can improve further their work; this practice needs to be applied consistently across the school.
- The provision for children who require support with aspects of their learning is highly effective. The children's learning and holistic needs are given a high priority by the school and are met well in a very caring, inclusive environment where expectations are high for all learners. Early identification of the children's individual needs is prioritised and the well established focus on reducing underachievement in literacy and numeracy is a key strength of the provision. There are comprehensive assessment arrangements which inform well the individual educational plans and include highly individualised, concise targets for each child. The classroom assistants support effectively the programme of in-class and withdrawal sessions and, enable each child to fulfil their learning and social potential.
- The well-planned opportunities for the children to develop their talking and listening skills through effective paired and group work is a key strength of the literacy provision. In providing the children with these varied opportunities, the teachers ensure that the children are well prepared for subsequent written work. The very good use of ICT engages the children well and supports their learning in literacy. The teachers foster successfully an interest and enjoyment of reading and writing through the very good use of visiting authors, writing competitions and a reading partnership programme. The 'reading buddies' programme provides older, key stage (KS) 2 children with the opportunity to read alongside younger children and engage in discussions about the stories; the children spoke with great enthusiasm about this programme. There is a need for the teachers to make more use of novels in KS2 to develop writing and extend further the opportunities for the children to write across the areas of learning.
- Numeracy is promoted effectively across the curriculum and is integrated very well in other areas of learning. Across the key stages, the children show a high level of enjoyment and engagement in their mathematical activities. The programme for mathematics ensures that there is balanced coverage across the areas of mathematics and appropriate progression in the children's learning. The teachers make very good use of well structured, practical activities to motivate the children, extend their thinking and develop their mathematical language and understanding. Throughout the school, highly effective use is being made of ICT to support and enrich learning in mathematics.
- The children's educational programme in the nursery unit is well-balanced with very good opportunities for learning across all areas of the pre-school curriculum. In the best practice, staff members use effective questioning to encourage, support and challenge the children in their learning. The day is organised effectively and the routines are used well to develop the children's independence and self-management skills. Recently, the outdoor play area has been developed and provides a wide range of attractive, stimulating learning opportunities for the children.

- The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care in the school and the nursery unit is outstanding. The school's mission statement of 'learning and growing with love' permeates the work of the school. The staff know the children very well and are committed to their well-being by attaching significant importance to their personal, social and emotional development. Relaxation rooms have been established in the school to facilitate the development of the children's self-esteem. The views of the children are sought regularly and they are given opportunities to develop leadership roles through participation in the student council and the co-ordination of the newsletter. The children have opportunities to participate in extra-curricular activities which enrich their learning experiences.
- The school and nursery unit give very good attention to promoting healthy eating and physical activity thereby encouraging the children to adopt healthy lifestyles.

7. Leadership and management

- The leadership of the school are committed to school improvement and raising achievement for all. There is a well planned schedule for monitoring aspects of the provision, for example, the teachers' planning, children's progress files and the quality of marking. The teachers are provided with feedback from the monitoring exercises which identify areas of effective practice and areas requiring further improvement. A small number of the co-ordinators need to provide more strategic curricular leadership through monitoring more effectively the implementation of recommendations and evaluations to raise further the quality of the children's work. Appropriately, the senior leadership team has identified the need to review the roles and responsibilities of co-ordinators to develop a more collaborative approach to the school improvement process.
- The school development plan³ has a very clear focus on improving the learning experiences of the children and the standards achieved in literacy and numeracy. There is effective consultation with teachers, children, parents and governors in relation to development areas. Appropriate action plans are in place and the associated targets are aligned well to the staff development programmes. There is a need to develop further the quality of the evaluations of the action plans to inform strategically the school development planning process and the standards achieved by the children.
- The school has established good communication processes and links with parents through the school website, the student council newsletter and opportunities for parents to meet, both formally and informally, to discuss with teachers their child's progress. There are effective transition arrangements in place for the nursery children into foundation stage and for the children leaving in year 7. The school is currently in a partnership with a local post-primary school to plan the transition to year 8 for those children experiencing difficulties with aspects of their learning. The school has developed a range of effective links with external organisations and support agencies to enhance further the children's learning opportunities.

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

- 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 and take an active role in the work and life of the school. They are participating in a governance cluster with governors of two local primary schools to develop further the skills and knowledge required to carry out more effectively their role.
- 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 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

Cloughoge Primary School and Nursery Unit 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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