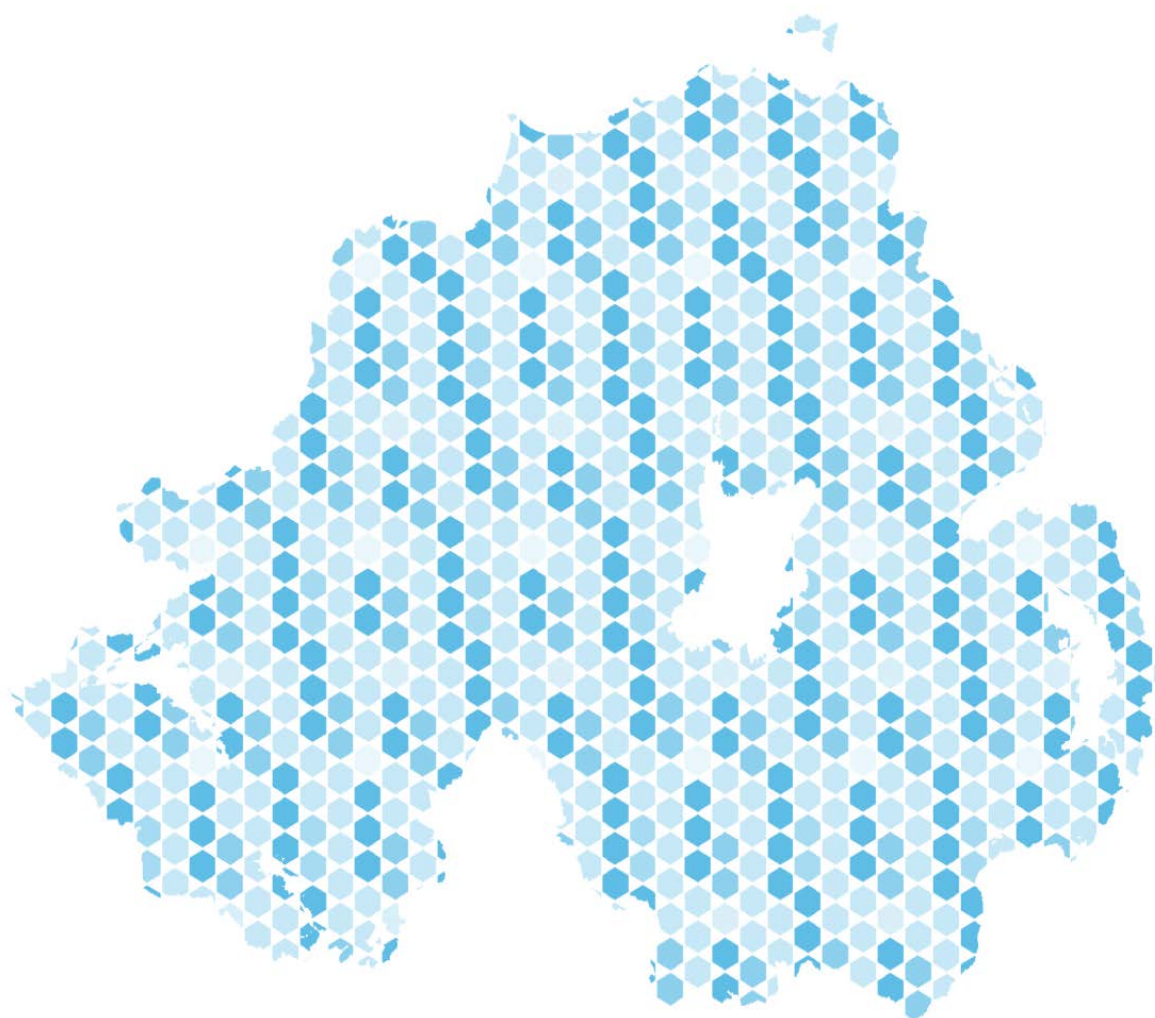


PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Lisnasharragh Primary School,
Belfast

Report of an Inspection in
May 2014

Quantitative terms

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 in reports:

DESCRIPTOR
Outstanding
Very Good
Good
Satisfactory
Inadequate
Unsatisfactory

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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 Inspectorate's 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 teaching and learning, 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.

Questionnaire	Number issued	Number returned	Percentage returned	Number with comments
Parents	211	32	15%	15
Teaching staff	11	10	91%	5
Teaching support staff	10	*	20%	*
Support staff	*	*	100%	*

* fewer than 5.

The ETI is trialling a range of methods to collect the views of parents/carers and, as a result, the response rate may be low.

The parent and staff questionnaire responses were highly supportive of the work of the school. In the written comments, the parents expressed satisfaction with their children's progress and praised the staff's approachability and commitment to providing a wide range of additional learning experiences. The staff commented that they feel valued and supported in their work. The governors conveyed their pride in the children's various skills and achievements and their confidence in all aspects of school life, including the hard-working, dedicated staff. The comments in the questionnaires were shared with the principal and the governors.

2. Context

Lisnasharragh Primary School is situated close to the Upper Knockbreda Road in south-east Belfast. The school enrolment has risen significantly over the past 4 years and is currently 253. Most of the children attend from the local area. Approximately 33% of the children are entitled to free school meals and 26% require additional help with aspects of their learning. At the time of the inspection, the school had recently completed a programme of major refurbishment.

Lisnasharragh Primary School	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
Enrolment	200	209	239	253
% Attendance (NI Average)	95.5%	95.4%	95.0%	93.8%
FSME Percentage ¹	21.0%	27.3%	32.2%	32.8%
% (No) of children on SEN register	30.0%	32.0%	26.0%	26.4%
No. of children with statements of educational needs	7	7	6	10
No. of newcomers	0	0	*	*

Source: data as held by the school.

*fewer than 5

3. Focus of inspection

The inspection focused on:

- the children's achievements and standards in literacy and numeracy, in particular, how the school is addressing low attainment and under-achievement where applicable;
- the quality of provision in the school; and,
- the quality of leadership and management.

4. Overall finding

Overall Performance Level	Very Good
Achievements and Standards	Very Good
Provision	Very Good
Leadership and Management	Outstanding

5. Achievements and standards

- The children, whose behaviour is exemplary, are happy and relaxed in their stimulating learning environment. They are keen to share and discuss their learning. They interact positively with one another and adults, listening to and taking into account the thoughts and feelings of others and co-operating maturely when working in groups and pairs.
- An analysis of the key stage (KS) 2 assessment data, in three² of the past four years, shows that the school's performance is above the Northern Ireland (NI) average in English and mathematics in two of the years and below in one year. Compared with schools in the same free school meals category (FSM), the levels of attainment in English and mathematics are also above the average in

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

² Due to the current transition period in the arrangements for statutory assessment, this analysis of the end of KS2 performance data is based on the outcomes up to but not including the 2012/13 school year.

two years and below in one. The school's internal performance data indicates that most of the children, including those who require additional support with aspects of their learning, make good progress in English and mathematics and are achieving standards in line with their ability or above expectation.

- Across the key stages, most of the children attain well in literacy. By year 7, most demonstrate very good levels of understanding of different forms of text, reading with competence and fluency. In the foundation stage (FS) the children are developing excellent reading and writing strategies, including their confidence to attempt and write an expanding range of words and sentences independently. As the children progress through the school, their writing skills would benefit from more frequent opportunities to develop further their extended writing. Mental mathematics, which has been a recent focus, is now successfully embedded across the key stages, and as a consequence, most of the children are assured in their understanding of key concepts in mathematics. Most are able to discuss and explain clearly and accurately their reasoning using appropriate mathematical vocabulary. In all classes, the children have a positive disposition to and enjoy their learning in mathematics.
- The children who require additional support with aspects of their learning are making good progress in line with their ability. They are included and supported fully in the various learning activities and as a consequence, participate securely with their peers.
- Across the school, the teachers and children use a very good variety of information and communication technology (ICT) software and devices with ease to support and extend their learning in all areas of the curriculum.

6. Provision

- The quality of the learning and teaching observed was always good or better and the majority was very good or outstanding. The teachers convey frequently their high expectations for the children, promoting a 'have a go' learning ethos which encourages the children to take responsibility, make decisions as learners and try out their ideas. They give the children appropriate thinking time and make effective use of their responses to build the children's understanding further through well-focused open-ended questions.
- The teachers put much effort into providing a stimulating and broad variety of well-connected learning experiences and ensuring that the planning and assessment arrangements guide closely the work with all of the children. Overall, most of the teachers' evaluations focus sharply on the quality and extent of the children's learning and inform well the future planning to match the children's varying needs. In the best practice, the teachers indicate clearly to the children how to make further improvements to their work; this good practice should be shared more consistently across the school.
- The literacy co-ordinator has put in place a number of high-quality initiatives, such as the planning for progression across the key stages to ensure a coherent and consistent approach to the acquisition and development of literacy skills and to exploit effectively the many opportunities across the curriculum which extend the children's literacy proficiency. The well-planned play-based learning sessions and routines provide the younger children with valuable and fun opportunities to be self-reliant and apply their developing skills in both literacy

and mathematics. The numeracy co-ordinator has been working effectively to raise the profile of numeracy across the school through, for example, well-targeted and carefully planned staff development and parent workshop sessions. The teachers integrate ICT well into the classroom activities to support, enrich and extend the children's learning.

- The children who require additional support with aspects of their learning benefit from a balanced combination of highly effective withdrawal sessions and carefully planned in-class support from their teachers and classroom assistants. The children's individual education plans include detailed and specific learning targets and associated teaching strategies which match and support their needs closely. The school's tracking and evaluation of the additional support interventions for addressing underachievement provide clear evidence of the children making further progress in their work in literacy and numeracy.
- The quality of the provision for pastoral care is outstanding. This is evident in the inclusive, child-centred ethos and the very high quality of the working relationships amongst all members of the school community. The staff provide a wide range of extra-curricular opportunities which enhances the quality and range of the children's overall learning experiences and contributes significantly to the personal development of all of the children. The school gives a high priority to promoting a healthy lifestyle through the curriculum and through the varied range of extra-curricular physical activities on offer. As a consequence, the children enjoy and understand the benefits of healthy food choices and being active and involved in games and sports.

7. Leadership and management

- The principal provides highly skilled strategic leadership in taking forward the school's agreed vision for meeting the pastoral and learning needs of all of the children. The vice-principal, the senior leadership team and the co-ordinators assist him very effectively in this; they focus diligently and enthusiastically on the continuous improvement of all aspects of the school's provision. Together, the entire staff team is highly committed to bringing about the children's fullest all-round development and to improving further the standards which they attain.
- Robust self-evaluation and meaningful consultation and review involving the staff, children and parents underpin the well-embedded school improvement processes. The school's key priorities and the associated action plans include rigorous procedures for monitoring and evaluating the quality and impact of the children's learning experiences. The teachers are using the internal performance data increasingly well to evaluate and make appropriate responses to outcomes and trends in the children's attainments and to prioritise future areas for improvement.
- The school has developed a wide range of purposeful and beneficial partnerships with the local and wider community; these links, together with the parents' fundraising efforts, enhance and enrich further the quality and range of the children's learning opportunities and resources. The staff value and support the parents as partners in promoting the children's learning and encourage their involvement in school events and programmes. The parents are given regular and detailed information about their children's progress and all aspects of school life.

- The governors are very well-informed and exercise their challenge function thoughtfully and conscientiously in supporting the principal and staff in the implementation of the school development plan (SDP). Based on the evidence presented at the time of inspection, the parents, staff and school community can have a high degree of confidence in the aspects of governance evaluated.
- 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. During the inspection, the inspectors met with a group of children from year 6. The children spoke confidently and positively about all aspects of school life in Lisnasharragh. They conveyed that they enjoy and feel safe in school and know who to speak to if they have any worries or concerns.

8. Conclusion

In the areas inspected the quality of education provided by this school is very good; the quality of pastoral care is outstanding. The school has demonstrated its capacity for sustained self- improvement.

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