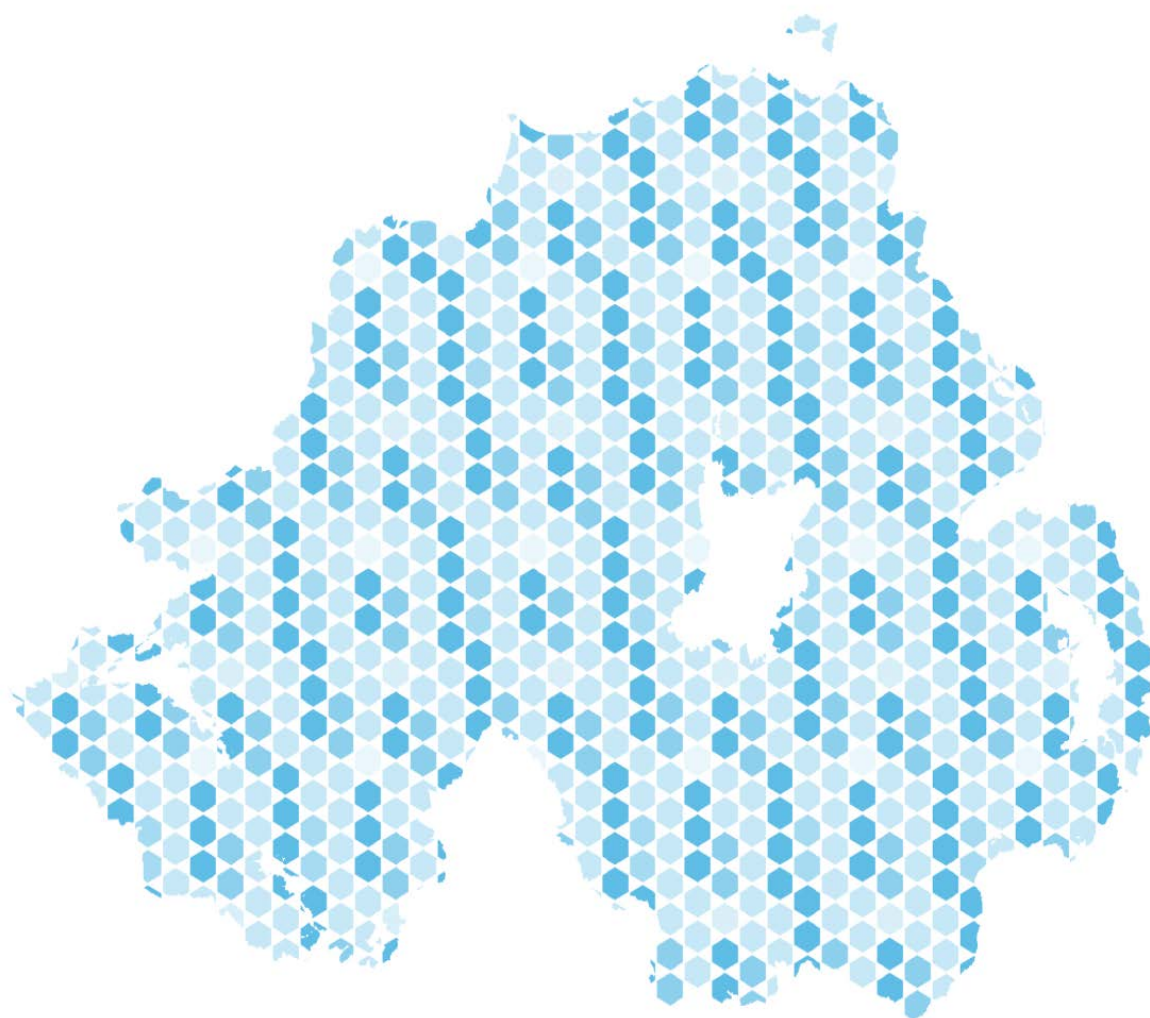


PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Scoil na Fuisseoige, Belfast

Report of an Inspection in
June 2014

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
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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 Education and Training Inspectorate's (ETI) publication *Together Towards Improvement: a process for self-evaluation* at: <http://www.eti.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 (total number in the school per category)	Number returned	Percentage returned	Number with comments
Parents	86	7	8%	*
Teaching staff	7	6	86%	*
Support staff	10	0	0	*

* fewer than 5

The Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) is trialling a range of methods for collecting the views of parents about the life and work of the school. As a result, the response rate to the parental questionnaire may be low.

The responses to the parental questionnaires indicated high levels of support for the life and work of the school. The parents commented on their appreciation of the work of all the staff and the high regard held for the school in the local community. An analysis of the findings and the written comments, along with a small number of issues arising, were discussed with the principal and representatives of the board of governors. All of the teachers completed questionnaires and their responses were wholly positive.

2. Context

Scoil na Faiseoige is situated in Twinbrook, Dunmurry, on the outskirts of West Belfast. Almost all of the children attending the school come from the surrounding residential area of Colin. The enrolment of the school has remained steady over the past four years and currently stands at 113 children. At the time of the inspection, approximately 65% of the children were entitled to receive free school meals and 43% of the children were identified as requiring additional support with aspects of their learning.

Scoil na Faiseoige	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
Enrolment	103	107	113	113
% Attendance	92.6	91.7	90.8	93.4
FSME Percentage ¹	58	68	72	65
% of children on SEN register	25.8	36.4	27.8	42.9
No. of children with statements of educational needs	*	*	*	*
No. of newcomers	0	0	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 underachievement where applicable;
- the quality of provision in the school; and
- the quality of leadership and management.

4. Overall finding

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

Key findings of the inspection

5. Achievements and standards

- All of the children are highly motivated and are developing very positive attitudes to their learning; they take great pride in all of their work and display perseverance in completing the range of tasks set by their teachers. They engage confidently with staff, their peers and visitors and talk enthusiastically about their learning, using both Irish and English with ease. Their behaviour is exemplary.
- An analysis of the end of key stage (KS) 2 performance data², in three of the past four years, shows that in English and mathematics the school's performance is consistently well above the Northern Ireland (NI) average and is also above average when compared with schools in the same free school meals (FSM)

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.

category. An analysis of the end of key stage (KS) 2 performance data³, in two of the past four years, shows that in Irish the school's performance is also well above the Northern Ireland (NI) average. The school's internal performance data shows that most of the children in English and a majority in mathematics make very good progress, in line with their ability or above expectation. The children who require additional support with aspects of their learning make very good progress in their learning.

- The children communicate well orally and they are flexible in using both Irish and English, depending on the situation they are in or the person with whom they are speaking. They write and present their work to a consistently high standard in a variety of forms for a range of purposes and audiences. A majority of the children have a very good knowledge of important mathematical concepts and are able to apply their numeracy skills within meaningful contexts.
- The children's achievements and standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are very good. They use ICT confidently and appropriately during their learning activities.

6. Provision

- The quality of the learning and teaching ranged from satisfactory to outstanding, with three-quarters of the lessons being very good or outstanding. The teachers show an awareness and understanding of immersion techniques and second-language strategies through: providing a stimulating, multi-sensory, language-rich learning environment; structuring well the children's acquisition and use of Irish; using effective questioning and modelling to extend further the children's knowledge and to develop both their language and thinking skills. Almost all of the lessons are well paced and provide appropriate challenge to meet the individual needs of all the children. The teachers' planning is comprehensive and rigorous and is well informed by their knowledge of the children they teach. In the best practice, the teachers' planning integrates effectively both the specific content of the curriculum and the associated Irish language. The school makes effective use of internal data and teacher observation to identify underachievement and to implement appropriate strategies to effect improvement. In the effective practice, the children's work is marked consistently and positively with good examples of effective marking for improvement.
- The staff have developed a coherent and connected framework for the development of literacy and numeracy skills across the key stages. The programme for the development of the children's reading, writing and oral skills, in both Irish and English, is thorough and ensures that all aspects of literacy are taught in a coherent way. The consistent use of mental mathematics in daily numeracy lessons is effective and provides good opportunities for the children to apply their mathematical thinking.
- The quality of the provision for special educational needs is outstanding. The staff identify, at an early stage, the children who require additional support with aspects of their learning and outstanding support is provided through a range of effective withdrawal and in-class teaching. The work of the staff is guided well by the clearly focused individual education plans.

³ Benchmarking data has only been available for two years for end of KS2 performance in Irish.

- The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care is outstanding. There is a welcoming and inclusive ethos throughout the school. This is evident through the very good range of after-school provision, the outstanding working relationships at all levels and the support mechanisms in place for the children and their families.
- The school gives very good attention to promoting healthy eating and physical activity through the range of extra-curricular activities available to the children and the promotion of healthy breaks.

7. Leadership and management

- The principal is highly effective and has a clear vision for the future development of the school. She had led and managed very effectively the transition to the new school building and has ensured that it is a child-centred learning environment. The leadership and management of the school are wholly focused on meeting the learning, personal, social and emotional needs of all the children within a calm and caring learning environment. The links and partnerships made with the local community, including parents, are impacting positively on the life and work of the school and on the learning experiences of the children. The school has established a robust culture of self-evaluation that is focused on addressing low and underachievement. There is a comprehensive school development plan which had been well informed by consultation and self-evaluation at all levels.
- 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. The governors are well informed about the school and carry out effectively their support and challenge functions.
- 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 year 6 children reported that they felt secure in school and knew what to do if they had any concerns about their well-being.

8. Conclusion

In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by this school is outstanding. The school is meeting very effectively the educational and pastoral needs of the children; and has demonstrated its capacity for sustained self-improvement.

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