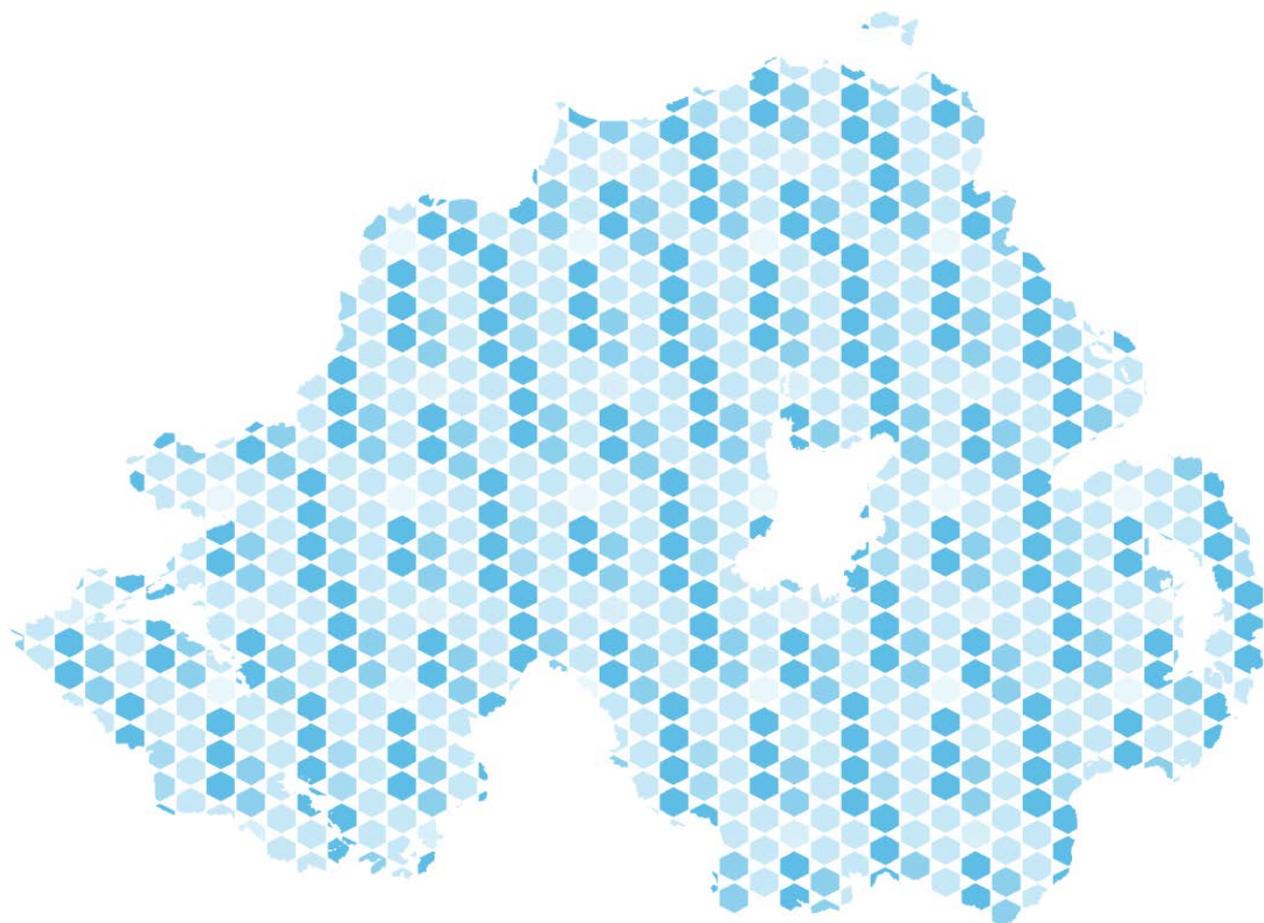


PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

St Mary's Primary School,
Killyleagh, County Down

Maintained, co-educational

Report of a Follow-up Inspection
in October 2016

FOLLOW-UP TO THE INSPECTION OF ST MARY'S PRIMARY SCHOOL, KILLYLEAGH, COUNTY DOWN, BT30 9RB (403-3036)

The Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) carried out an inspection of St Mary's Primary School Killyleagh in November 2014¹ which concluded that the school needed to address urgently the significant areas for improvement identified in the interest of all the learners². The areas for improvement were the need to:

- raise the low standards in literacy and numeracy attained by the children;
- develop further planning, teaching and assessment for learning in order to meet more appropriately the needs of all learners; and
- review the roles and responsibilities of all staff.

As a consequence, the Department of Education entered the school into the Formal Intervention Process under the Every School a Good School policy in January 2015³.

The school's action plans were of a good quality and were adjusted appropriately in light of the feedback given by the ETI. The school's development plan was adjusted in light of the inspection findings.

The ETI carried out an interim follow-up visit in September 2015, and a follow-up inspection in October 2016.

In the interval since the initial inspection, the actions or changes which affect the work of the school include:

- a significant change in staffing, including the appointment of a vice-principal in January 2015 and the review and redistribution of roles and responsibilities throughout the school;
- the creation and updating of key policies and procedures by leadership and management, in consultation with the children and parents;
- the very good support received from the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools (CCMS) and the Education Authority (EA); and
- the appointment of four new governors with a review of their roles and responsibilities.

Key Findings

- The standards and achievements are now very good. There has been a significant reduction in underachievement in the last two years; almost all of the children are achieving in line with or above expectation. Noteworthy is the enthusiasm the children now display for literacy, their increasing confidence and ability to articulate their thinking and their specific technical use of mathematical language. The children engage effectively with each other and the adults supporting their learning. The presentation of children's books is of a high standard and the children display an enhanced interest and responsibility for their learning.

¹ <https://www.eti.gov.uk/publications/primary-inspection-st-mary%E2%80%99s-primary-school-killyleagh-co-down>

² From September 2015, the overall effectiveness of a school previously evaluated as inadequate has been reported as address urgently the significant areas for improvement.

³ <https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/de/ESAGS%20Policy%20for%20School%20Improvement%20-%20Final%20Version%2005-05-2009.pdf>

- The quality of learning and teaching is now very good. A whole-school review of the teachers' planning has ensured there is a consistent and progressive approach to the teaching of literacy and numeracy. Lessons are now creative, stimulating and well-differentiated to meet the wide range of needs within the composite classes. Regular opportunities for the children to engage in self- and peer- assessment, coupled with highly effective teachers' marking, has resulted in children who are confident in articulating their strengths and areas for improvement. Of particular significance, is the very effective withdrawal support for children who are experiencing difficulty with aspects of their learning.
- The quality and effectiveness of leadership, management and action to promote improvement is now outstanding. The determined, strategic leadership, supported by the highly effective governance, has transformed learning and teaching within the school. This has resulted in a significant improvement of the children's achievements and standards in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology. The rapid pace of change, and sustained improvement, is attributed to: well-targeted staff development opportunities; the sharing of best practice through regular meetings and cluster groups; a close partnership between link governors and learning co-ordinators; and rigorous monitoring and evaluation of the work of the school.

Overall Effectiveness

St Mary'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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