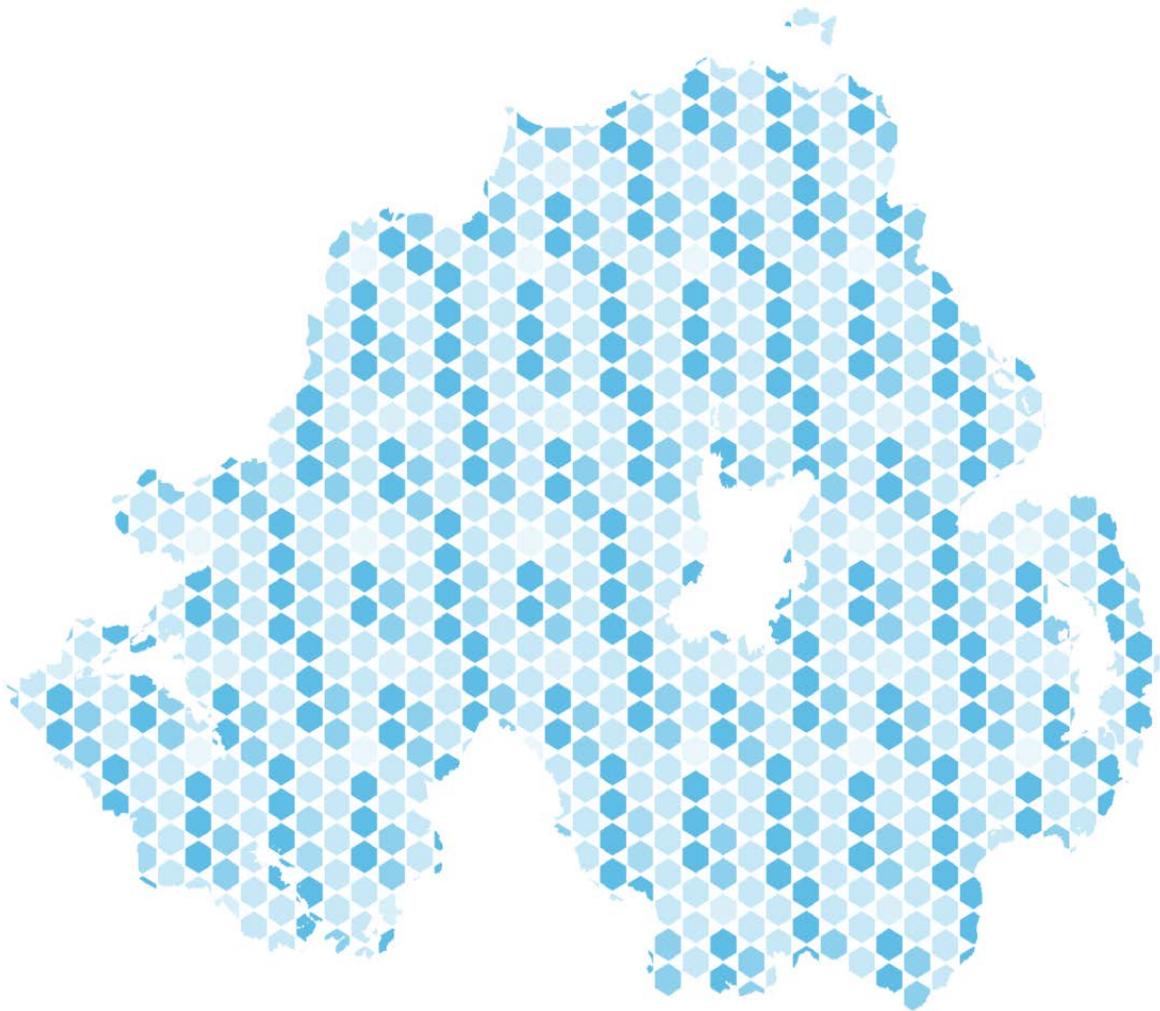


PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Gaelscoil Neachtain, Dungiven

Report of an Inspection
in April 2013



Providing Inspection Services for
Department of Education
Department for Employment and Learning
Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure

CUSTOMER
SERVICE
EXCELLENCE



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%

In assessing the various features of the provision, Inspectors relate their evaluations to six descriptors as set out below:

DESCRIPTOR
Outstanding
Very Good
Good
Satisfactory
Inadequate
Unsatisfactory

SCHOOL CONTEXT

Gaelscoil Neachtain is an Irish-medium primary school situated in the town of Dungiven. The school opened in September 2012 with an enrolment of 63 children in years 1-7. The children attending the school come from the town itself and the immediate surrounding area. At the time of the inspection, approximately 37% of the children in the school were entitled to free school meals. The school has identified 30% of the children as requiring additional support with aspects of their learning.

FOCUS

The inspection focused on:

- the children's achievements and standards in literacy and numeracy;
- the quality of provision for learning; and
- the quality of leadership and management, including the school's processes for self-evaluation leading to improvement.

OVERALL FINDING OF THE INSPECTION

In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by the school is good. The school has important strengths in most of its educational and pastoral provision. The inspection has identified an area for improvement which the school has demonstrated the capacity to address. The Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) will monitor the school's progress on the area for improvement.

KEY FINDINGS OF THE INSPECTION

Achievements and Standards

The quality of the children's achievements and standards is good.

- The majority of the children across the school achieve good **standards** in literacy and mathematics. They have a good understanding of spoken Irish and speak Irish with confidence and competence. The children can write for a range of purposes across the curriculum and the quality of presentation of their written work is of a good standard. The children enjoy mathematics, particularly mental mathematics, and are making good progress across all areas of the mathematics curriculum.
- The children identified as having **special educational needs** (SEN) make good progress in their learning and contribute fully to all aspects of school life.

Provision for Learning

The provision for learning is very good.

- The **children's** behaviour is exemplary; they are respectful to one another and to adults. They settle well into their work and remain on task throughout the lesson. They work well independently and, when given meaningful opportunities, collaborate effectively during group tasks.

- The quality of the **teaching** observed during the inspection ranged from satisfactory to very good; in the majority it was good or very good. In the best practice, the teachers use immersion techniques effectively and develop language learning across the curriculum; they are good language role models for the children; the learning is well structured, suitably challenging and well paced; effective resources, including information and communication technology (ICT), are used to support learning and teaching. There is a strong emphasis placed on the development of the children's thinking skills.
- The provision for **SEN** is very good. A robust system is in place to identify those children who require additional support with aspects of their learning and suitable intervention strategies have been implemented. The individual education plans (IEP) contain specific and measurable targets for each child; these are developed in partnership with the parents, children, teachers and the SEN co-ordinator, and they are reviewed and monitored regularly.
- The quality of the arrangements for **pastoral care** is very good. This is evidenced through, for example, the excellent working relationships at all levels, the strong and supportive family atmosphere, and the pride and respect that all members of the wider school community have for Gaelscoil Neachtain.
- The school gives very good attention to the promotion of **healthy eating and physical activity**, through the promotion of healthy breaks and lunches, the attention given to healthy food and lifestyles through the taught curriculum, and the opportunities for physical activity throughout the school.

Leadership and Management

The quality of leadership and management is good.

- The **Principal** works hard and is wholly committed to the ongoing development of Gaelscoil Neachtain. She has prioritised the professional development of her co-ordinators which has enabled them to take forward key priorities in numeracy and SEN. The co-ordinators provide competent leadership in their areas of responsibility and have implemented effective systems for planning and monitoring the quality of provision in numeracy and SEN.
- The school is at an early stage of development and has made good progress in addressing the key priorities identified. The **school development plan** (SDP) has been informed through relevant consultation with a number of stakeholders and is supported by appropriate action plans for literacy, numeracy and SEN. It will now be important to develop a more formal system for planning, recording and evaluating provision in all areas across the school.
- Strong links have been established with the local naíscoil and post-primary school, which support the smooth transition of the children as they progress through their education. Useful partnerships have been formed with other schools, from both the Irish-medium and English-medium sectors, and with the Western Education and Library Board (WELB), in order to develop capacity

within Gaelscoil Neachtain. The parents play an active role and they are kept informed fully about the life and work of the school through, for example, monthly newsletters and regular curriculum meetings. The school has formed strong partnerships with and contributes well to the vibrant, Irish-language community in Dungiven.

- The **governors** are very pro-active and well informed about all aspects of the life and work of the school. They provide both a challenge function and effective support to the Principal and are committed to the improvement of the school.
- On the basis of the evidence 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.
- 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.

CONCLUSION

In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by the school is good. The school has important strengths in most of its educational and pastoral provision. The inspection has identified an area for improvement which the school has demonstrated the capacity to address. The area for improvement for the school is:

- to develop a more systematic approach to planning, recording and evaluating provision and outcomes in all areas across the school.

The Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) will monitor the school's progress on the area for improvement.

BASIC INFORMATION SHEET (BIS) - PRIMARY SCHOOLS

- A. i. **School: Gaelscoil Neachtain** iii. **Date of Inspection: W/B 22/04/13**
 ii. **School Reference Number: 201-6700** iv. **Nature of Inspection: Short**

B.

School Year	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
Year 1 Intake	-	-	-	-	14
Enrolments					
Primary	-	-	-	-	63
Reception	-	-	-	-	
Nursery Unit	-	-	-	-	
Special Unit	-	-	-	-	
Irish Medium Unit	-	-	-	-	

The enrolment for the current year is the figure on the day of notification of inspection. For previous years it is the figure in the annual return to the Department of Education.

The calculations at C and D should be based on the total of the primary and reception enrolments only.

- C. Average Attendance for the Previous School Year (expressed as a percentage): N/A **NI Avg Att: 94.7%**

Average Attendance for those children on the Special Educational Needs Register:

N/A

Primary & Reception Nursery Unit Special Unit Irish Medium Unit

- D. i. Number of Teachers (including the principal and part-time teachers): 4 0 0 0
 (Full-time equivalent = 25 teaching hours)
- ii. PTR (Pupil/Teacher Ratio): 1:21 NI PTR: 20.2
- iii. Average Class Size: 21
- iv. Class Size (Range): 20 to 21
- v. Ancillary Support:
 Number of Hours **Per Week**:
 i. Clerical support: 12
 ii. Foundation Stage Classroom Assistant Support: 22.5
 iii. Additional hours of other classroom assistant support: 50
- vi. Percentage of children with statements of special educational needs: 2%
- vii. Total percentage of children on the Special Needs Register: 30%
- viii. Number of children who are **not** of statutory school age: 0
- ix. Percentage of children entitled to free school meals: 37%
- x. Percentage of children at the end of Key Stage 2 for 2010/11 who attained level 4 and above in English and mathematics, and Irish (in Irish-medium schools): **English** N/A **Mathematics** N/A **Irish** N/A

THE VIEWS OF THE PARENTS, TEACHERS, SUPPORT STAFF AND CHILDREN

The arrangements for the inspection included the opportunity for the parents, the teaching and support staff to complete a confidential questionnaire prior to the inspection.

Forty-two questionnaires were issued to the parents; 17 (40%) were returned to Inspection Services Branch and eight contained additional written comments. The parents expressed their total satisfaction with all aspects of the school and commented positively on the supportive family atmosphere in the school.

Six teachers and support staff completed confidential questionnaires; the responses were wholly positive.

The inspectors also met with a group of year 6 children. The children spoke about their love of school and their enjoyment of the range of both curricular and extra-curricular activities available to them. The children are aware of what to do if they have worries about their safety and well-being.

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