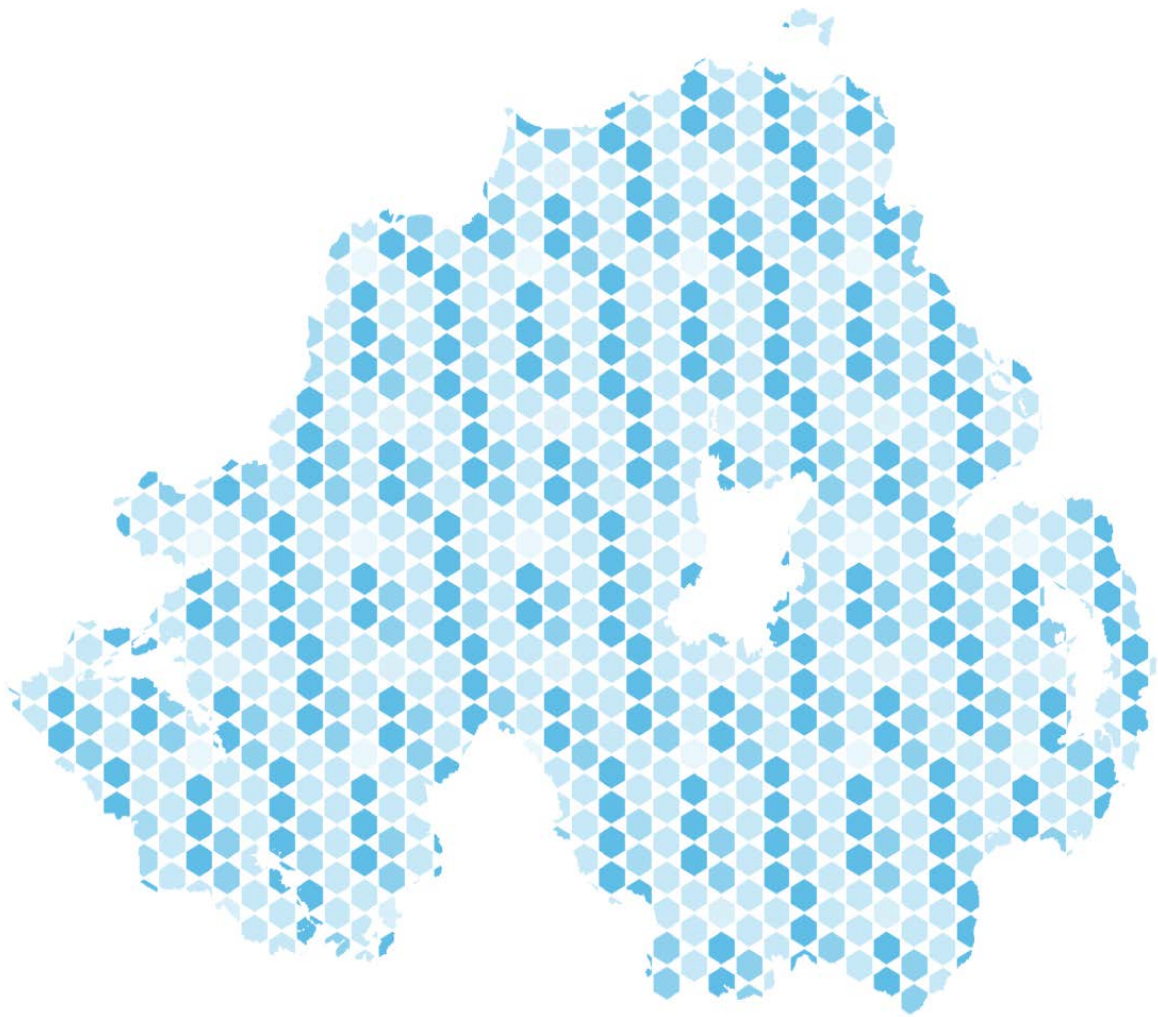


PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Antrim Primary School

Report of an Inspection
in May 2013



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

CUSTOMER
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Inspection methods and evidence base

The inspection evaluations are based on evidence gained from lesson observations, from scrutiny of the children's completed written work and from a range of documentation including the school's internal performance data. In addition, the inspection team held discussions with groups of the children, with teaching and non-teaching staff and with representatives from the Board of Governors.

The views of the parents, teaching and non-teaching staff were sought through a confidential questionnaire prior to the inspection. The reporting inspector discussed any issues raised through the questionnaires with the principal and the governors. A summary of the outcomes from the questionnaires is included in section 6 of the report.

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%

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

1. School context

Antrim Primary School is situated in the town and almost all of the children come from the immediate area. The enrolment has remained steady over the last four years, and currently stands at 596. The school has identified 15% of the children as requiring additional support with aspects of their learning; 17% of the children are entitled to free school meals. At the time of the inspection, the Principal had been in post for less than a year.

2. Focus of inspection and overall finding

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.

In addition, the use of information and communication technology (ICT) to support learning, and the school's arrangements for pastoral care, including child protection, were evaluated.

OVERALL FINDING OF THE INSPECTION

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

Summary of key findings

Achievements and standards	Very Good
Quality of provision	Very Good
Leadership and management	Good

KEY FINDINGS OF THE INSPECTION

3. Achievements and standards

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

- The children are confident, articulate and keen to talk about, and engage with, their learning. They are well motivated to learn, do so effectively in pairs and groups, and demonstrate very good levels of independent learning. The children's behaviour is exemplary.
- An analysis of the end of key stage (KS) 2 assessment data shows that the school's performance in English and mathematics has been consistently above the Northern Ireland average over the past four years. When compared to schools in the same free school meals category, the school's performance in English and mathematics has been above the average in three out of the past four years.

- By the end of year 7, most of children attain very good standards in literacy. They read with interest and proficiency and convey their thinking confidently and competently in class and small group discussions. Throughout the school, most of the children express their opinions and creative ideas well in a good variety of written genres; the most able children produce writing of a high standard. In numeracy, most of the children attain very good standards, with a significant proportion attaining very high standards. They use mental processes well and have flexibility in their thinking. Their computational skills are well-developed and they can apply these competently when problem solving and undertaking investigations. They are developing an early awareness of the importance of basic financial capability and appreciate the place of mathematics in real life contexts.
- The majority of the children who have been identified with special educational needs are making satisfactory progress in their learning.
- The children attain very good standards in ICT. As they progress through the school, the children make good year on year progress in most aspects of ICT capability. Over the last three years, almost all of the children who were entered in the Council for the Curriculum Examinations and Assessment (CCEA) ICT Accreditation Scheme attained the expected level at KS 1 and KS 2.

4. **Provision for learning**

The quality of the provision for learning is very good.

- Most of the teaching observed during the inspection was good or very good. In the most effective practice, the teachers hold very high expectations of what the children can achieve and the learning activities are challenging and engaging. The children benefit from being involved fully in the creation of learning intentions and success criteria, and from reflecting on the learning that has taken place. In the minority of the teaching that requires improvement, the learning needs to be matched more sufficiently to the needs of the individual children within the class.
- The teachers have worked hard to develop their planning, and throughout the school, the quality of the planning is good. However, the evaluations of the planning do not focus sufficiently on the learning that has taken place. The teachers mark the children's work regularly and supportively. In the best practice, clear guidance is given to the children about how to improve their work further; this needs to be undertaken more consistently within and across key stages. A more strategic approach to the systematic analysis of assessment data is needed to inform planning and to target support so that all children achieve to their full potential.
- Overall, the children have very good opportunities to talk and listen, read and write across the curriculum and in the best practice, core language skills are taught in meaningful contexts. In this teaching, the teachers use an effective blend of interactive strategies including drama and well-planned group activities; these approaches extend well the children's thinking and increase their active participation. The school has recently revised the planned programme for writing: the teachers now need to embed and evaluate the impact of this important work. In the most effective practice within the Foundation Stage, the teachers develop further the children's communication and numeracy skills through the play-based learning and make skilful use of routines and incidental opportunities to extend their learning.

- The programme for mathematics provides the children with a suitably broad range of experiences across the seven years. The current review and development being undertaken is helping to ensure that the children's mathematical competence is developed systematically year on year. The science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) work undertaken by the school complements well the mathematics provision, enhancing the children's experiences and enjoyment, while raising their awareness of the importance of these areas of learning in everyday life.
- Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is integrated well across the school to enhance teaching and support learning. The children make regular use of the computers and portable ICT devices to enhance their work and to extend their learning. The school has an informative website that provides the parents with useful information, celebrates the life and work of the school, and offers the children additional learning opportunities through an appropriate range of interactive on-line learning resources.
- The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care in the school is very good. There is an inclusive, welcoming ethos in which each child is valued and nurtured; the children's work and achievements are celebrated across the school. The Personal Development and Mutual Understanding programme is well conceived and the children benefit from the effective use of circle time, which supports well the development of their positive attitudes and dispositions. The whole-school approach to rewarding positive behaviour and the provision of a very good range of extra-curricular activities, sports competitions and educational visits encourage the children to develop their talents, extend their learning and raise their self esteem.
- The quality of the provision for special educational needs is satisfactory. The children receive in-class support and attend regular withdrawal classes for literacy and the classroom assistants provide very good support. The school has recognised the need to develop further the provision for children who require additional support for numeracy and to develop the individual education plans to focus more clearly on the children's learning and include strategies to guide and support learning. It is timely and appropriate that the school is reviewing the overall special educational needs provision.
- The school gives very good attention to promoting healthy eating and physical activity through, for example, the emphasis placed on healthy breaks, the provision for, and effective organisation of, playground games, and the very good programme of physical education available to all of the children.

5. Leadership and management

The quality of leadership and management is good.

- The leadership of the school has a clear vision which is based on the holistic development of each child. The Principal is placing an appropriate focus on raising further the standards the children attain through the more effective analysis and use of performance data, developing leadership at all levels and securing very good working relationships with the staff, children, parents and governors. The Vice-principal demonstrates a very high level of commitment to the school and leads enthusiastically the development of ICT across the school,

with an appropriate focus on raising standards, keeping children safe on-line, and improving the quality of resources. The senior teacher is committed to the children and leads well her various areas of responsibility.

- The numeracy and literacy co-ordinators are pro-active, enthusiastic and effective in leading the staff in improving the quality of learning and teaching. Further to a review of the provision, appropriate areas for development have been identified and are being addressed in a systematic manner.
- While the School Development Plan meets the requirements of the School Development Plans (SDP) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2010, the associated action plans lack coherence. The school has identified appropriately the need to develop further its processes for self-evaluation; this is supported by well-matched staff development. The recently introduced system to measure the children's attainment against their ability is beginning to provide the teachers with important information about possible underachievement; this needs to be developed further throughout the school.
- The school maintains very good links with the wider school community and with external partners, which support well the children's learning and their personal and social development. The school has comprehensive systems in place, including the very good use of ICT, to communicate with parents. The children's learning benefits from the work of the active and valued PTA, who raise significant funds to provide additional resources.
- 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. In a meeting held with the governors, it was evident that they are very well informed about the school and carry out their roles strategically and effectively, providing challenge and support as appropriate.
- On the basis of the evidence available at the time of inspection, the school has comprehensive arrangements in place for safeguarding children. These arrangements reflect the guidance issued by the Department of Education.

CONCLUSION

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

6. Summary of questionnaire responses

PARENTAL QUESTIONNAIRES	
Number of Questionnaires Issued to the school (Based on 09/10 Enrolment)	119
Number of Questionnaires Returned	49
Percentage of Returns	41
Number of Comments	18

Almost all of the parental questionnaire responses were very positive and indicated a high level of satisfaction with the educational and pastoral provision of the school. In particular, the parents highlighted the hard work and approachability of the staff, the children's learning and progress and the friendly atmosphere within the school. The very few matters raised in the written comments have been discussed with the governors and with the Principal.

In discussions with representatives of the governors, they praised the inclusive atmosphere within the school, the hard work of the Principal and the staff, the very good standards achieved by the children, and the importance of the school within the community.

The inspectors also met with a group of the year 6 children. The children talked openly and positively about their experiences in school; they expressed enjoyment in their learning; they feel happy and safe in school and are aware of what to do if they have any concerns about their safety or well being.

TEACHERS QUESTIONNAIRES	
Number of Questionnaires Returned	27
Number of Comments	9

SUPPORT STAFF QUESTIONNAIRES	
Number of Questionnaires Returned	14
Number of Comments	*

**Denotes fewer than five*

All of the teachers and a majority of the support staff completed an online questionnaire; their responses were very positive. All of the staff indicated that they enjoyed working in the school and positive written comments were made about the friendly and supportive atmosphere.

Accommodation

- Toilet facilities for the children in the mobile classrooms are limited; access arrangements to the rear of the school and mobile classrooms need to be reviewed.
- While the school building is very well maintained, many of the classrooms are too small for the provision of the curriculum.

BASIC INFORMATION SHEET (BIS) - PRIMARY SCHOOLS

- A. i. **School: Antrim Primary** iii. **Date of Inspection: W/B 13/05/13**
 ii. **School Reference Number: 301-0829** iv. **Nature of Inspection: Focused**

B.

School Year	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
Year 1 Intake	86	88	83	90	90
Enrolments					
Primary	600	595	589	596	596
Reception	0	0	0	0	0
Nursery Unit	0	0	0	0	0
Special Unit	0	0	0	0	0
Irish Medium Unit	0	0	0	0	0

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 are based on the total of the primary and reception enrolments only.

- C. Average Attendance for the Previous School Year (expressed as a percentage): 95.8% **NI Avg Att: 94.7%**

Average Attendance for those children on the Special Educational Needs Register: 94.8%

Primary & Reception	Nursery Unit	Special Unit	Irish Medium Unit
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- D. i. Number of Teachers (including the principal and part-time teachers): 23.8 0 0 0
 (Full-time equivalent = 25 teaching hours)
- ii. PTR (Pupil/Teacher Ratio): 25 NI PTR: 20.2
- iii. Average Class Size: 28
- iv. Class Size (Range): 27 to 30
- v. Ancillary Support:
 Number of Hours **Per Week**:
- | | | | |
|---|--|-------|--|
| i. Clerical support: | | 54 | |
| ii. Foundation Stage Classroom Assistant Support: | | 100 | |
| iii. Additional hours of other classroom assistant support: | | 27.75 | |
- vi. Percentage of children with statements of special educational needs: 1.3%
- vii. Total percentage of children on the Special Needs Register: 14%
- viii. Number of children who are **not** of statutory school age: 0
- ix. Percentage of children entitled to free school meals: 17.11%
- x. Percentage of children at the end of Key Stage 2 for 2011/12 who attained level 4 and above in English and mathematics, and Irish (in Irish-medium schools):
- | | | | |
|--|----------------|--------------------|--------------|
| | English | Mathematics | Irish |
| | 95.06% | 92.59% | N/A |

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