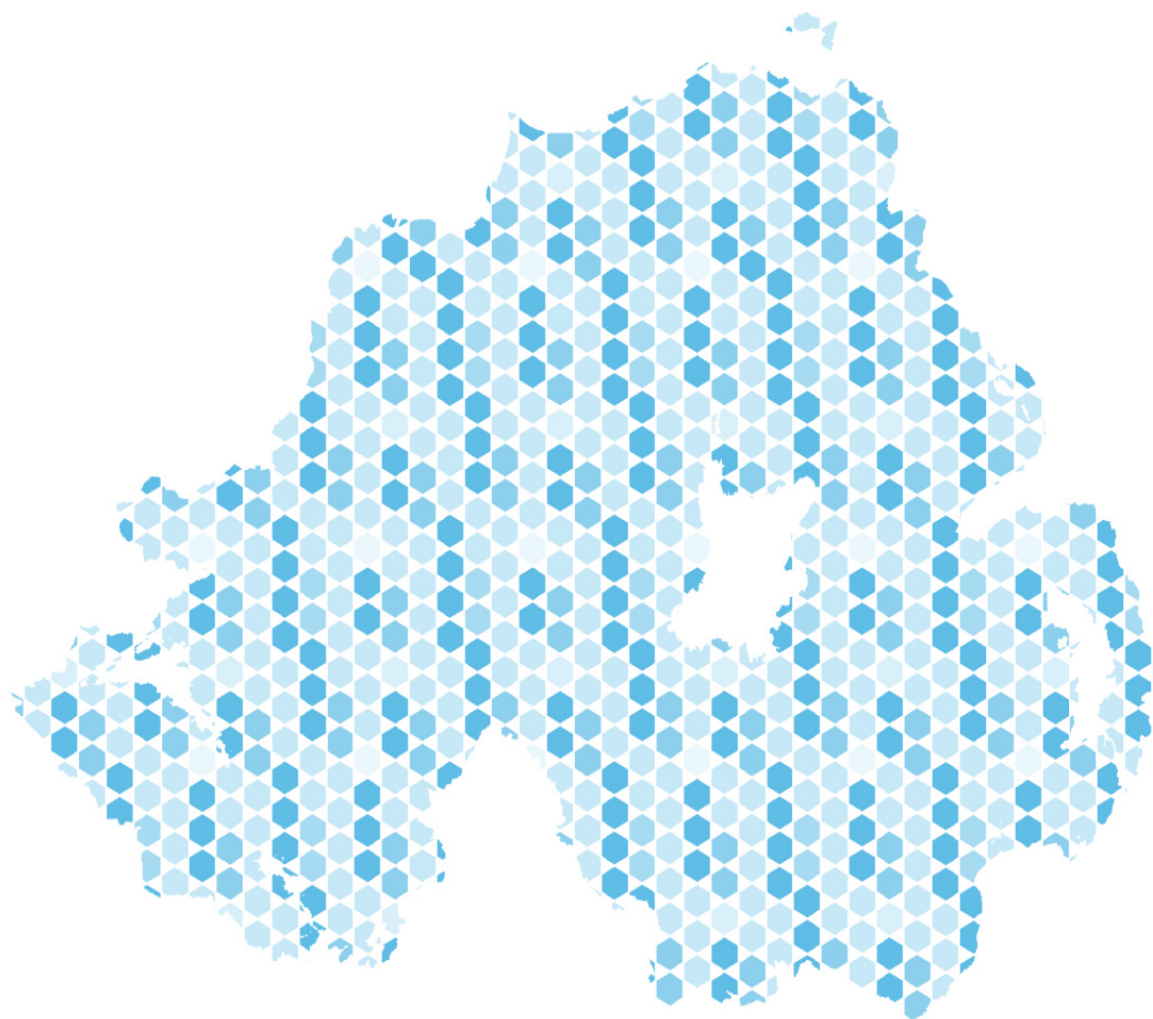


PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Bangor Central Integrated
Primary School, Co Down

Report of an Inspection
in May 2011



CONTENTS

Section		Page
	STATISTICAL INFORMATION	
1.	INTRODUCTION	1
2.	ACHIEVEMENTS AND STANDARDS	3
3.	THE QUALITY OF PROVISION FOR LEARNING	5
4.	LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	6
5.	CONCLUSION	7
	APPENDIX	

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

BASIC INFORMATION SHEET (BIS) - PRIMARY SCHOOLS

- A. i. **School:** Bangor Central Integrated Primary iii. **Date of Inspection:** W/B 23/05/11
 ii. **School Reference Number:** 405-1680 iv. **Nature of Inspection:** Focused

B.

School Year	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
Year 1 Intake	82	79	80	86	85
Enrolments					
Primary	561	562	558	563	577
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 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): 94.6% **NI Avg Att:** 94.9%
- | | Primary & Reception | Nursery Unit | Special Unit | Irish Medium Unit |
|--|--------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|
|--|--------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|
- D. i. **Number of Teachers**
 (including the principal and part-time teachers): 25.3 0 0 0
 (Full-time equivalent = 25 teaching hours)
- ii. **PTR (Pupil/Teacher Ratio):** 22.8 NI PTR: 20.7
- iii. **Average Class Size:** 27.5
- iv. **Class Size (Range):** 24 to 30
- v. **Ancillary Support:**
- | | | |
|----------------------------------|---|-----|
| Number of Hours Per Week: | i. Clerical support: | 72 |
| | ii. Foundation Stage Classroom Assistant Support: | 155 |
| | iii. Additional hours of other classroom assistant support: | 85 |
- vi. **Percentage of children with statements of special educational needs:** 0.7%
- vii. **Total percentage of children on the Special Needs Register:** 22.8%
- viii. **Number of children who are **not** of statutory school age:** 5
- ix. **Percentage of children entitled to free school meals:** 23.2%
- x. **Percentage of children at the end of Key Stage 2 for 2009/10 who attained level 4 and above in English and mathematics:**
- | | |
|----------------|--------------------|
| English | Mathematics |
| 79.2% | 77.9% |

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 SCHOOL CONTEXT

Bangor Central Integrated Primary School is a co-educational controlled integrated primary school situated near the centre of the town of Bangor. The school transformed to integrated status in 1998. A majority of the children come from the surrounding area with a significant minority coming from further afield. The enrolment has increased over the past four years and currently stands at 577. The school has identified 23% of the children as requiring additional support with aspects of their learning. Approximately 23% of the children are entitled to free school meals.

1.2 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.

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.

1.3 THE VIEWS OF THE PARENTS, TEACHERS, GOVERNORS, 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, as well as meetings with representatives from the Board of Governors (governors) and the children from year 6.

One hundred and thirty-seven questionnaires were issued to the parents prior to the inspection: just over one-half were returned to Inspection Services Branch and 49 contained additional written comments. The responses from the questionnaires were highly affirmative. Most of the responses indicated a high level of satisfaction with the school. In particular, the parents paid tribute to the leadership of the Principal, the school's inclusive and child-centred ethos, the dedicated and supportive staff, and their attention to the well-being and all-round development of all the children.

Twenty teachers and nine members of the support staff completed the online questionnaire. Of the teachers' questionnaires, eleven contained written comments. Four of the support staff also provided additional written comments. Almost all of the responses were highly affirmative of the life and work of the school.

The governors conveyed high levels of support for all aspects of the school's provision. They highlighted the school's caring, family ethos and good reputation in the community, and expressed their appreciation of the work of the Principal and all the staff. In particular, they highlighted their view of how well the school's inclusive ethos supported the children's diverse range of individual, social and educational needs. They reported that they were kept well informed of the school's developments, programmes and child protection arrangements.

In discussions, the children in year 6 reported that they felt very safe and secure and were aware of what to do if they had concerns about their safety or well-being. They talked confidently and enthusiastically about their experiences at school; in particular, the school's friendly atmosphere, the very wide range of after-school activities available to them, and the support and care provided by all of the adults.

The Education and Training Inspectorate (Inspectorate) has reported to the Principal and representatives of the governors the views emerging from the parents', teachers' and support staff questionnaires.

1.4 PASTORAL CARE

The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care in the school is outstanding.

The school has an inclusive and caring ethos which promotes very well all aspects of the children's development. A whole-school approach to promoting and rewarding positive behaviour develops the children's confidence, and a strong emphasis is placed on meeting the academic and pastoral needs of all the children. The children display an evident sense of pride in themselves and in their school. They are very friendly and caring of one another. They respond well to the experiences provided and their behaviour, both in and out of class, is excellent. They participate well in a wide range of extra-curricular and after-school activities, which caters well for the sporting, cultural, artistic, musical and creative interests of all. The school has strong links with a wide range of groups in the local and wider community, and uses these well to provide additional experiences to broaden and widen the children's learning. All of the staff contribute well to the ethos which supports the cultural diversity that exists and the quality of the support for newcomer children is outstanding. The school leadership plans effectively to ensure that the provision is open to, and accessible by, all of the children. The ECO Council, children's class councils and their School Council provide regular opportunities for the children to contribute meaningfully to the school's decision making process, and this supports very well the evident inclusive ethos.

1.5 CHILD PROTECTION

The school has very good comprehensive arrangements in place for safeguarding children. These arrangements reflect the guidance issued by the Department of Education.

1.6 HEALTHY EATING AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

The school gives very good attention to promoting healthy eating and physical activity to encourage the children to adopt healthy lifestyles. This is fostered well, for example, through the promotion of healthy food choices for break and lunch, and the meaningful inclusion of healthy lifestyle topics within the school's Personal Development and Mutual Understanding programme. Physical activity is also promoted well across the school through regular opportunities for energetic outdoor play and sports, often taken by a specialist teacher employed for that purpose.

1.7 LINKS WITH PARENTS AND THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

The school gives a high priority to and enjoys very good links with parents and the local community. The parents are kept well informed about important events through regular newsletters and the school website, and they are consulted regularly. There is an active Parent Teacher Association which supports very well the life and work of the school and has raised significant funds to develop extra facilities, including an ICT suite of computers which is used well by the children. The parents attend a range of meetings which informs them well about their children's progress, and there are plans to extend this to encourage them to

become more aware of how they can support their children in their learning. There are opportunities through a range of focus groups for the parents to contribute to the development of school policies, and their contributions are used well by the Principal to inform his planning. The school has established important links with a wide range of external organisations, including other local schools, businesses and community groups; these links enhance the school's curriculum provision and broaden the children's experiences. In addition, the children benefit from the school's links with the local churches and a wide range of agencies and organisations, which support well the pastoral provision.

2. ACHIEVEMENTS AND STANDARDS

2.1 LEARNING

The children are well behaved, courteous and friendly. They demonstrate good levels of engagement and enjoyment in their learning. They interact confidently with their teachers, and are able to learn collaboratively through group and paired work. In most classes, particularly in key stage (KS) 1, the children experience a range of appropriately challenging tasks and activities which provide very good opportunities for them to develop their levels of independence and self management skills.

An analysis of the KS2 assessment data over the past four years shows that, in English and mathematics, the school's performance has fluctuated around the average for Northern Ireland and similar schools in the same free school meals category.

By the end of year 7, most of the children make good progress in literacy and numeracy. Whilst the standards achieved by the children at the end of KS2 are good, the school has, appropriately, identified the need to support the small number of children who are underachieving.

2.2 ENGLISH AND LITERACY

The quality of provision for English and literacy is good.

The children benefit from a range of talking and listening activities, which develops well their oral language skills. In the foundation stage (FS), the children are able to listen and respond to stories and to talk about their learning. In KS1 and 2, a good range of effective talking and listening activities is used to enable the children to express their opinions and deepen their understanding of what has been read. By year 7, almost all of the children can offer their ideas and viewpoints confidently.

Reading is a strength in the literacy provision. In the FS and KS1, there is a good focus on developing the children's phonological awareness, and on providing them with good quality shared and modelled reading experiences. As the children progress into KS2, they develop greater independence in their reading. The children can talk enthusiastically about their reading and, by year 7, they are able to read with fluency, expression and show a good understanding of what has been read. In year 7, the children read good quality novels, and the teachers are currently linking the use of these novels to more challenging writing activities, with a clear focus on raising reading standards further.

The development of the children's writing in the FS and KS1 is good, and there are appropriate opportunities for them to develop their writing skills, from early writing and experimental pieces to producing good quality independent writing. In the best practice, in most classes, emergent to extended and independent writing is developed effectively through meaningful contexts. In KS2, the children are able to write in a range of appropriate

genres. However, evidence from the children's books shows that, in a majority of the KS2 classes, the quality of the writing could be improved further through developing additional challenge in the writing tasks. The literacy co-ordinator has rightly identified writing as an area for further development and work is already underway on this aspect.

The literacy co-ordinator is highly effective in her role. Planning for literacy is very good, and is underpinned by the good use of data and self-evaluation to match teaching activities to the needs of particular groups and individual children. The co-ordinator has rightly identified the need to monitor the children's work more closely, in order to promote further improvement. The use of ICT is integrated effectively into classroom activities and makes a very positive impact on teaching and learning.

Overall, the standards in English are good. Most of the children achieve a good standard by year 7, and most make good year on year progress.

2.3 MATHEMATICS AND NUMERACY

The overall quality of the provision for mathematics and numeracy is very good.

In the FS, the children have good mathematical knowledge and skills; these are developed well through practical mathematical lessons, games and action songs. The children make accurate use of early mathematical language, have a good understanding of early mathematical concepts, and can sort, order and match number. In a minority of the classes, the level of challenge in the activities is too low and the success criteria for mathematics learning delivered through activity-based learning are not explicit enough.

In KS1, the children use practical resources, including mathematical games, and develop a sound understanding of basic number, measures, and shape and space. In discussions with the children, they spoke confidently about their mathematics. They have a very good understanding of number facts, shape and space, measures and handling data, and can use an appropriate range of mental mathematics strategies.

In KS2, the children engage in a wide range of investigative tasks, which extends their problem-solving skills. In discussions with the year 7 children, they had a very good understanding of place value, estimation, measures, the properties of shapes, and were flexible in their mathematical thinking. Within and across the year groups, however, there is too wide a variation in the quality and standard of the children's written record of their mathematics work.

Throughout the school, the children enjoy mathematics, tasks are set in meaningful contexts, and explicit connections are made with other areas of learning. The mathematics curriculum is suitably broad and balanced. The comprehensive long-term and medium-term planning generally ensures appropriate continuity and progression in learning. The children's understanding and use of mathematical language is developed systematically. Information and communication technology, including programmable devices, interactive websites and software, is used very effectively to support and enhance the children's learning.

The numeracy co-ordinator provides effective leadership. He leads effectively the ongoing development of whole-school numeracy. This work is based appropriately on self-evaluation in order to improve the quality of the provision.

Overall, across KS1 and KS2, most of the children make good progress. By the end of the key stages good standards are reached and the more able children, in particular, achieve very good standards.

3. THE QUALITY OF PROVISION FOR LEARNING

3.1 PLANNING

The teachers prepare thoroughly for lessons and their short-term and medium-term planning for learning is highly effective. In most classes, the teachers' evaluations are used effectively to inform future written planning for learning, and appropriate cognisance is taken of the varying needs and ability of the children. In a minority of classes, this is an area for further improvement.

There is clear evidence, for example, through the well-written and frequently annotated individual education plans, of effective communication between the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO), learning support assistants, class teachers and classroom assistants, which leads to early and effective intervention where extra help is needed. This ensures a good consistency and coherence in the children's learning.

3.2 TEACHING

The teachers are strongly committed to the wellbeing of the children in their care and work very hard to meet their academic and social needs. They hold appropriately high expectations of the children's learning and they manage and resource their lessons well.

The quality of the teaching observed ranged from satisfactory to outstanding; almost all of the lessons were good or very good. All of the teaching was characterised by good written planning, and teachers who were well prepared for lessons with a wide range of resources available for the children to use. The teachers were supported well by the classroom assistants.

The very good or better teaching, observed in just over half of the lessons, was characterised, in particular, by work well matched to the various needs of the children, and effective oral questioning which extended the learning for all of the children. In these lessons, the teachers explained well the learning intentions and success criteria, which, where appropriate, were discussed and negotiated with the children. The children engaged in a wide range of strategies which engaged them actively in open-ended tasks.

Where there was less effective practice, and in order to raise the standards further, the teachers need to ensure that the work provided matches better the varying needs and abilities of groups within the class.

3.3 ASSESSMENT

The parents are kept well informed of their children's progress through parental interviews and a very informative annual written report.

The teachers employ a range of appropriate strategies to assess the extent of the children's learning, and use well the information gained from the assessments to inform their future practice. The children's work is marked diligently and regularly and, in the best practice, the teachers annotate the work, often indicating clearly the particular strengths of the work and how it could be improved further. This very good practice, seen in most classes, needs to be disseminated to all the classes.

The school uses classroom observation and a suitable range of standardised and non-standardised testing to assess the children's levels of achievement in English and mathematics. The assessment co-ordinator and the assessment team use very effectively this performance data to inform the setting of whole-school targets for improvement in the literacy and numeracy provision. The teachers use well the outcomes from observation and testing to identify at class level those children who require additional support with aspects of their learning in literacy and numeracy. There is a need to engage in a more extended use of the assessment outcomes in order to track the progress of, and to help pinpoint particular difficulties for individual children across the ability range.

3.4 SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

The quality of the provision for special educational needs (SEN) is very good.

The recently appointed SENCO, well supported by the Principal, provides highly effective leadership in the areas of SEN and English as an additional language. She has extensive links with outside agencies and the parents. Assessment arrangements provide an effective early screening of progress, and are used well to identify pupils requiring additional support, both in class and through effective withdrawal classes. Progress is shared with the children and their parents and, as a result, the children's confidence and self esteem develop well. Information and communication technology is used very effectively to promote literacy and numeracy. A feature of the work is the well-planned and managed withdrawal sessions for identified children. All the children make very good progress.

4. LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

4.1 LEADERSHIP

The overall quality of leadership and management is very good.

The Principal, who has been in post since 2009, provides highly effective strategic leadership. There is a strong sense of openness and collegiality within the school, and the Principal plays a key and effective role in facilitating this. He has a clear and appropriate vision for the work of the school and is supported well by his Vice-principal and senior leadership team (SLT). He is committed strongly to ensuring the welfare of the staff and promoting the ongoing school improvement. A key aim of his work since his appointment was to develop a culture of self-evaluation leading to improvement, and in this he has succeeded. The SLT and co-ordinators have well-defined roles and responsibilities, and these are being appropriately adjusted to improve the effectiveness of the various curricular teams involved in self-evaluation. The Principal, staff and governors give a high priority to the pastoral care and welfare of all of the children and the effectiveness of their work is manifested in the outstanding arrangements for pastoral care.

4.2 PLANNING FOR IMPROVEMENT

The school's processes for ensuring continuous improvement in its provision have many strengths. The improvement processes are linked well within the school development plan (SDP) which meets fully the requirements of the Department of Education School Development Planning Regulations /Schedule 2005/19. The SDP clearly sets out priorities for the medium and longer term, and is underpinned by well-focused action plans, financial costings and rigorous evaluation. Following his appointment, the Principal identified and prioritised appropriate key areas for future development. The governors are well-informed about, and maintain a good strategic overview of, the school's improvement work. They are involved in, and support effectively the Principal and the staff, in the SDP process.

4.3 ACCOMMODATION

Very good use is made of all the available space in the school; the staff work well and create inviting learning environments in the classrooms, corridors and outside spaces. The school and the surrounding grounds are very well maintained. There is no canteen facility within the school. Presently the children who take dinners go to the neighbouring post-primary school and this reduces valuable teaching and outdoor play time by 15 minutes. This is a short term solution and every effort is made to ensure this arrangement operates effectively. There are currently plans to develop a temporary canteen facility on site to address this inadequate situation.

4.4 RESOURCES, FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE

The budget allocation is used well to support the key priorities in the SDP. Within the development plan, the curricular priorities, as set out, are well matched to the budgetary priorities. The school is very well resourced to support learning and teaching, especially in literacy, numeracy and ICT. The governors support the Principal in maintaining a rigorous oversight of the school's spending and in ensuring that this spending is managed effectively.

5. CONCLUSION

5.1 The strengths of the school include:

- the good standards achieved in literacy and numeracy, including the very good standards achieved in numeracy by the more able and the highly effective use of ICT across the school to support and enhance the children's learning;
- the excellent behaviour of the children who are interested in their learning and have a strong sense of care and responsibility for each other;
- the outstanding quality of the arrangements for pastoral care, including the inclusive ethos, the wide range of extra-curricular activities, and the strong links made with the local community which enhance the children's learning experiences;
- the dedicated and hard-working teachers, and the quality of the teaching observed during the inspection, almost all of which was good or very good;
- the highly effective strategic leadership provided by the Principal, supported well by the Vice-principal and SLT, and the shared commitment and associated action to bring about further school improvement; and
- the very good quality of the provision for children who require additional support with aspects of their learning.

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.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

- There are insufficient toilets for the number of children in the school.
- The existing stone surface of the stairs should be covered with cushioned material to minimise risk when staff, children and other visitors walk on them.

© CROWN COPYRIGHT 2011

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part, except for commercial purposes or in connection with a prospectus or advertisement, provided that the source and date thereof are stated.

Copies of this report are available on the ETI website: www.etini.gov.uk

