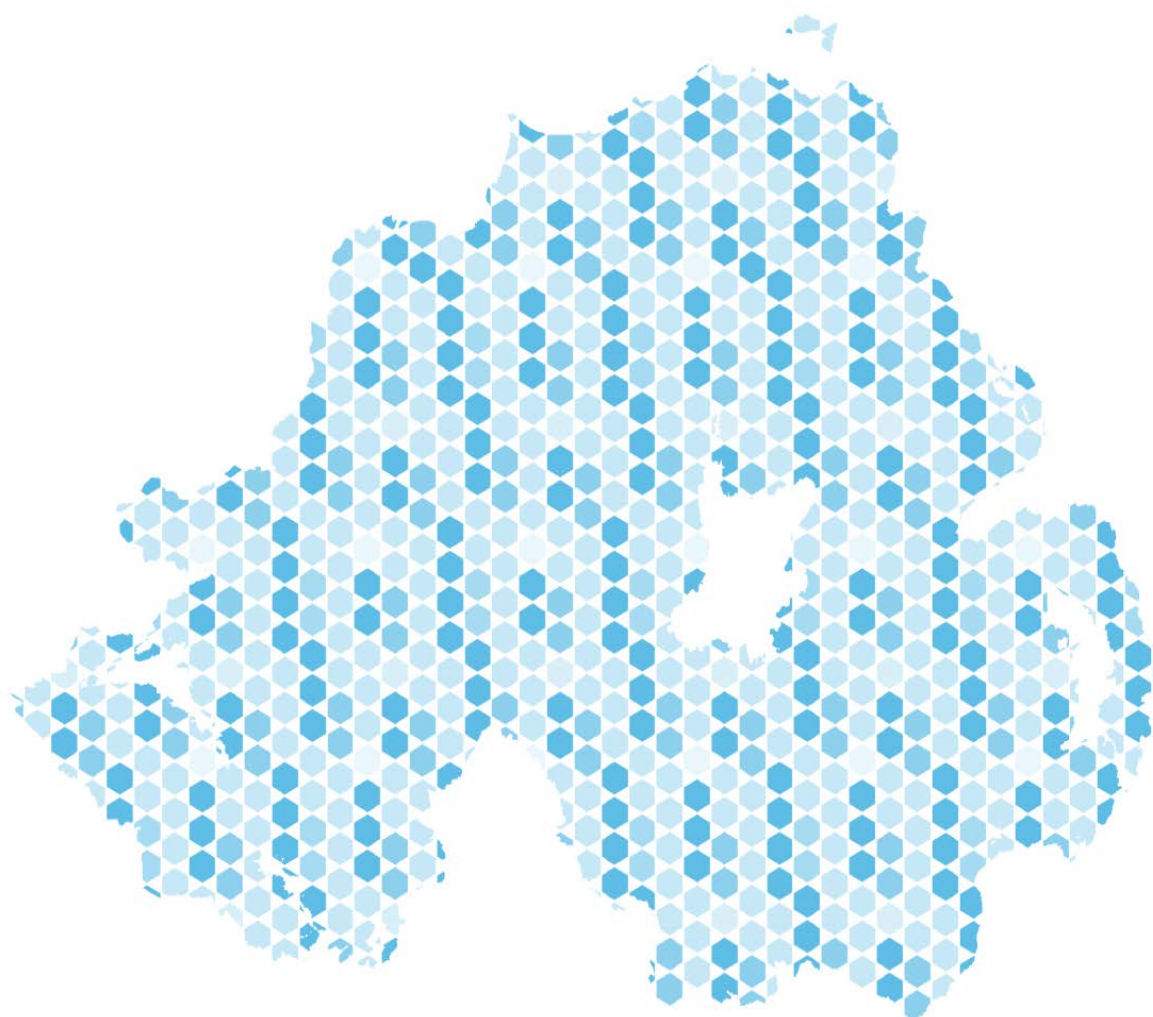


# PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training  
Inspectorate

Bronte Primary School,  
Banbridge

Report of an Inspection  
in January 2013



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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

Bronte Primary School was opened in January 2000 on the edge of Glasker Mills, Banbridge. The school was formed through the amalgamation of three smaller local primary schools. The children come from a wide rural area with about one-half travelling by bus to the school and most of the others travelling by car. Approximately 12% of the children in the primary school have been identified as having special educational needs (SEN) and 13% are entitled to free school meals.

A number of the classes have shared teaching arrangements and during the inspection, a significant minority of the classes were taught by substitute teachers.

## 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 by the school is good. The school has important strengths in most of its educational and pastoral provision. The inspection has identified areas for improvement in achievements and standards and leadership and management which the school has demonstrated the capacity to address. The Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) will monitor the school's progress on the areas for improvement.

#### Summary of key findings

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

### KEY FINDINGS OF THE INSPECTION

## 3. Achievements and standards

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

- The children in the school are friendly and courteous and have a positive disposition to all aspects of their learning and school life. Most are well-settled in class and they work and play collaboratively and contribute well to group and class discussions. The children can apply their learning well in literacy and numeracy across the curriculum. Throughout the three key stages (KS), the children are developing steadily their independence and ability to manage their own learning.

- An analysis of the key stage (KS) 2 assessment data over the past four years shows that in mathematics, the school's performance is well above or in line with the Northern Ireland average in two out of the four years. In English it is above the Northern Ireland average in one out of the four years. When compared to schools in the same free school meals category, the school's performance in mathematics has fluctuated from below to well above the average and in English from below to above the average.
- Most of the children attain good or better standards in mathematics and literacy. The children gain a good understanding of their work across the main content areas in mathematics; by the end of key stage 2, most of the children are confident and flexible in their mathematical thinking and can solve problems and carry out investigative activities competently. In literacy, most of the children attain good standards in line with expectation. Most read with good fluency and convey their ideas well in discussion. Their ability to express their thinking creatively in a wide variety of extended written genres across the curriculum is also well-developed.
- The children who have been identified with special educational needs in the school are making good progress in all aspects of their learning and personal development. They are able to apply their developing skills well in wider aspects of their learning.
- The children's achievements and standards in ICT are good. They use their skills competently in a range of learning areas.

#### **4. Provision for learning**

##### **The quality of the provision for learning is good.**

- The teachers set the learning in meaningful and engaging contexts which link appropriately to the children's experiences and interests and develop well their thinking skills and personal capabilities. In the past year the teachers have worked to develop the whole school written planning and in the best practice, this is matched well to the children's needs and takes good account of the children's responses to the planned learning experiences. It will be important for the school to disseminate and embed this good practice in order to guide all of the staff more effectively in their day-to-day work with the children.
- The quality of the teaching observed ranged from satisfactory to outstanding. Most of the teaching is good or better and a significant minority is very good or outstanding. In this teaching, the teachers hold high expectations of the children's learning responses. They plan and deploy challenging and connected learning activities, using skilful questioning to meet appropriately the needs of the children and extend further their understanding and skills. In the less effective practice, in a minority of the teaching, there are missed opportunities for the children to develop their thinking and reasoning skills, due, for example, to the teachers' closed questioning and to tasks which lack appropriate challenge and pace.

- In literacy, the children have good opportunities to talk and listen, read and write across the curriculum and key language skills are taught in a holistic way in a rich range of learning contexts. The planned programme is currently being revised to improve further the children's ability to write freely and confidently in extended ways. The teachers mark the children's work regularly and support the children's efforts. In the best practice, clear guidance is given to the children about how to go about improving their work further; this needs to be undertaken more consistently within and across key stages.
- In mathematics, the children have an appropriately broad programme which covers all the important areas of numeracy and sets out a clear line of progression across the key stages. The teachers make effective use of routines and incidental opportunities to develop using mathematics and integrating the children's growing mathematical knowledge and skills across other areas of the curriculum. They give the children appropriate time and encouragement to explain their mathematical thinking and the processes they are using and to ask questions and talk about their learning.
- The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care in the school is very good. This is characterised, for example, through the supportive and inclusive ethos of mutual respect which permeates the school and through the strong team work amongst the teachers and support staff. The children are increasingly being given a greater voice in the life and work of the school through the school council and the Eco council; good opportunities are provided for the children to participate in a range of extra-curricular activities.
- The quality of the provision for children with SEN is good. The children with special educational needs are supported well in their learning through appropriate in-class and withdrawal interventions. The individual education plans have clearly focused targets, are reviewed regularly and guide appropriately the provision made for the children. Across the school, the classroom assistants contribute well to supporting the children's learning.
- The school give very good attention to promoting **healthy eating** and **physical activity** through, for example, the healthy break-time routines and the good range of personal development and sporting activities which encourage the children to adopt a healthy lifestyle.

## 5. Leadership and management

### The quality of leadership and management is good.

- The leadership team has worked diligently in bringing about improvement in key aspects of the school's overall provision and has placed a good focus on improving the children's learning experiences and the standards they attain.
- The school's self-evaluation procedures, including consultation with the staff, parents, children and governors, have been used well to inform the identification of appropriate improvement priorities for the school development plan. This process is beginning to be informed further by the staff's use of a wide range of performance data to monitor the children's progress over time and to identify

those children who are underachieving or require additional support with aspects of their learning. A good range of action plans and a systematic monitoring programme which includes the Principal's and co-ordinators' scrutiny of the planning and the children's work are in place to support the school's key improvement areas.

- The school has a good range of connections with the wider community to extend the children's learning. The parents are informed about their children's progress through a detailed annual written report, parent teacher interviews, curriculum evenings and informal discussions upon request.
- The staffing arrangements for learning and teaching observed during the inspection were working well in most instances in terms of the quality and extent of the provision being made for the children and the outcomes they achieved. It will be important for the Principal and governors to keep these arrangements under continuous review to monitor the impact of these arrangements on the children's learning.
- The recently appointed governors are knowledgeable about various aspects of the school's work and they support and value the work of the Principal and staff. In continuing to develop their role in support of the work of the school, it will be important for the governors to strengthen their challenge function further in order to monitor more effectively the school's provision in the interests of all the children.
- On the basis of the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the school has satisfactory arrangements in place for safeguarding children. These arrangements broadly reflect the guidance issued by the Department of Education; however, there is a need to update the training in safeguarding and child protection for the recently-appointed governors.

## 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 areas for improvement which the school has demonstrated the capacity to address. These are to:

- disseminate the existing good practice in learning and teaching across the school to raise further the achievements and standards of the children; and
- develop and improve further how the school communicates with the parents.

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

## 6. Summary of questionnaire responses

PARENTAL QUESTIONNAIRES	
Number of Questionnaires Issued to the families in the school	107
Number of Questionnaires Returned	52
Percentage of Returns	49%
Number of Comments	26

Most of the parental questionnaires expressed high levels of satisfaction with most aspects of the life and work of the school. In the written comments, a majority of the parents expressed their appreciation of the approachability and dedication of the staff and their children's positive experiences of school life. Alongside this, however, a majority of the written comments also referred to a number of recurring issues; in particular, the parents expressed their views about some key aspects of the school's communication with parents and the current arrangements for staffing. The issues raised were discussed with the Principal and the governors.

In discussions with some of the year 6 children, they talked enthusiastically and confidently about all aspects of school life. They indicated that they feel happy and safe in school and know what to do if they have any worries or concerns.

In discussion with the governors they reported their appreciation of the hard work and dedication of the Principal and the whole staff, they praised the educational and pastoral experience that all children receive in Bronte Primary School and the important role the school plays in the local community.

TEACHERS QUESTIONNAIRES	
Number of Questionnaires Returned	6
Number of Comments	*

*\*Denotes fewer than five*

SUPPORT STAFF QUESTIONNAIRES	
Number of Questionnaires Returned	5
Number of Comments	0

Most of responses from the teaching and support staff were very affirmative of most aspects of school life, including their support of the leadership of the Principal and their enjoyment of the work and life of the school.



## BASIC INFORMATION SHEET (BIS) - PRIMARY SCHOOLS

- A. i. **School: Bronte Primary** iii. **Date of Inspection: W/B 28/01/13**  
 ii. **School Reference Number: 501-6612** iv. **Nature of Inspection: Focused**

B.

School Year	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
Year 1 Intake	27	23	19	28	21
<b>Enrolments</b>					
Primary	166	170	168	173	161
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): 96.2% **NI Avg Att: 94.7%**

Average Attendance for those children on the Special Educational Needs Register: 95.7%

<b>Primary &amp; Reception</b>	<b>Nursery Unit</b>	<b>Special Unit</b>	<b>Irish Medium Unit</b>
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- D. i. Number of Teachers (including the principal and part-time teachers): 7.2 0 0 0  
 (Full-time equivalent = 25 teaching hours)

ii. PTR (Pupil/Teacher Ratio): 22.4 NI PTR: 20.2

iii. Average Class Size: 23

iv. Class Size (Range): 16 to 30

v. Ancillary Support:

Number of Hours <b>Per Week:</b>	i. Clerical support:	20
	ii. Foundation Stage Classroom Assistant Support:	41
	iii. Additional hours of other classroom assistant support:	53.33

vi. Percentage of children with statements of special educational needs: 2.5%

vii. Total percentage of children on the Special Needs Register: 12.4%

viii. Number of children who are **not** of statutory school age: 0

ix. Percentage of children entitled to free school meals: 13.7%

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):	<b>English</b> 80.6%	<b>Mathematics</b> 80.6%	<b>Irish</b> N/A
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