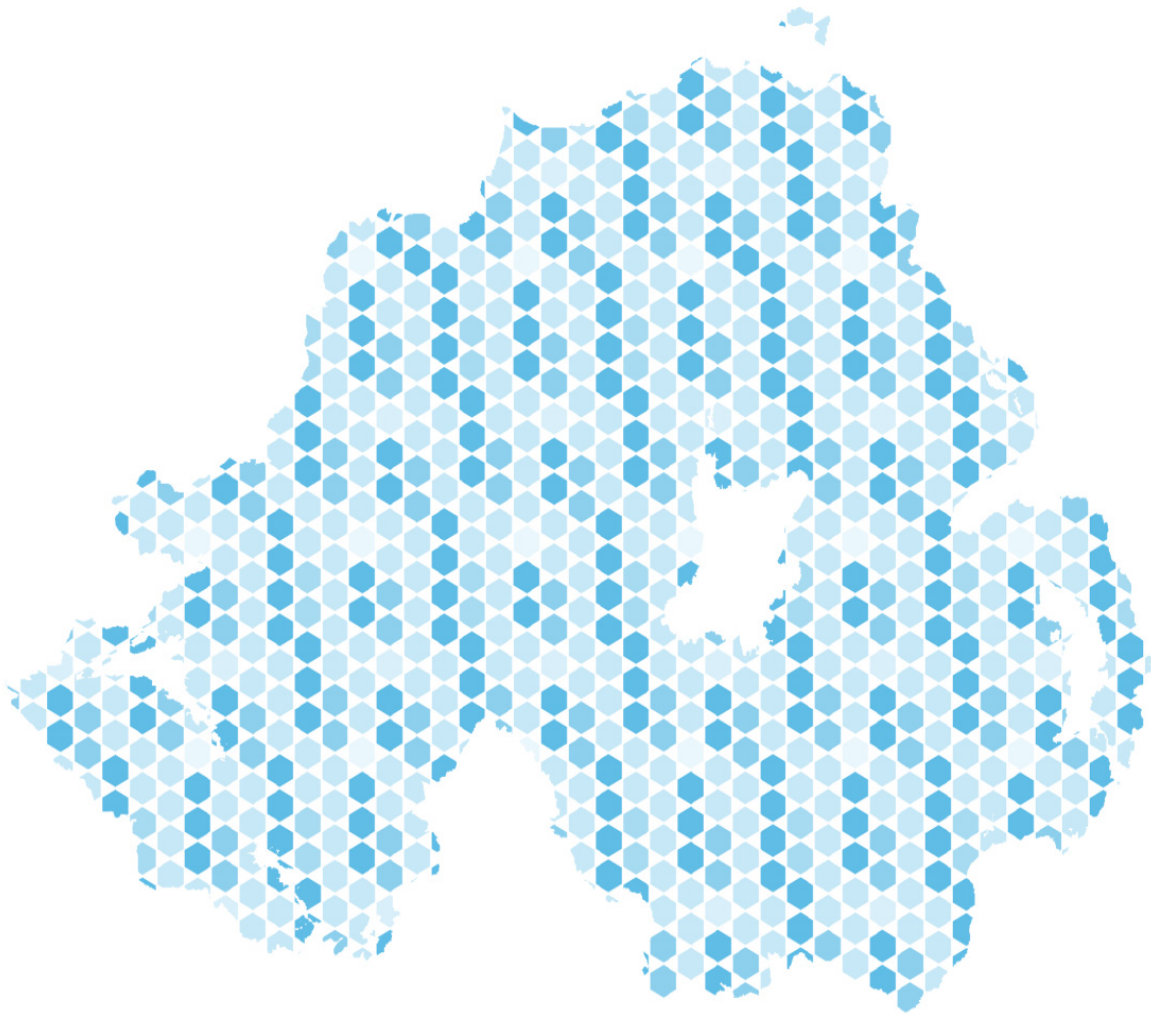


PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Carrick Primary School and
Nursery Unit, Lurgan

Report of an Inspection
in January 2012



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



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
6.	THE NURSERY UNIT	9
	STATISTICAL INFORMATION (NURSERY UNIT)	

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: Carrick Primary** iii. **Date of Inspection: W/B 30/01/12**
 ii. **School Reference Number: 501-1127** iv. **Nature of Inspection: Focused**

B.

School Year	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Year 1 Intake	33	37	38	41	44
Enrolments					
Primary	253	231	237	234	240
Reception	0	0	0	0	0
Nursery Unit	53	53	52	53	53
Special Unit	46	42	42	40	33
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): 94.1% **NI Avg Att: 94.7%**
- Average Attendance for those children on the Special Educational Needs Register: 88.6%
- | | Primary & Reception | Nursery Unit | Special Unit | Irish Medium Unit |
|--|---------------------|--------------|--------------|-------------------|
|--|---------------------|--------------|--------------|-------------------|
- D. i. Number of Teachers (including the principal and part-time teachers): 12.1 2 5 0
 (Full-time equivalent = 25 teaching hours)
- ii. PTR (Pupil/Teacher Ratio): 20.25 NI PTR: 20.2
- iii. Average Class Size: 24.5
- iv. Class Size (Range): 18 to 31
- v. Ancillary Support:
 Number of Hours **Per Week**:
- | | |
|---|------|
| i. Clerical support: | 51 |
| ii. Foundation Stage Classroom Assistant Support: | 92.5 |
| iii. Additional hours of other classroom assistant support: | 128 |
- vi. Percentage of children with statements of special educational needs: 5.3%
- vii. Total percentage of children on the Special Needs Register: 25%
- viii. Number of children who are **not** of statutory school age: 0
- ix. Percentage of children entitled to free school meals: 38.52%
- 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 | Mathematics | Irish |
| 85% | 88% | N/A |

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 SCHOOL CONTEXT

Carrick Primary School is a controlled school situated in Lurgan and the enrolment currently stands at 240. At the time of the inspection, approximately 38% of the children were entitled to free school meals; 31% of the children were identified as requiring help with aspects of their learning and there were 31 newcomer children. In addition, there are 52 children in the nursery unit. Twenty children are grouped into two classes in an Educational Centre for Speech and Language (ECSL) based within the school; these children attend the ECSL for four days and spend one day in their own primary school, for a maximum period of two years. A further 29 children with statements of educational need receive their education in a specialised Learning Support Centre (LSC) within the school which is comprised of three classes. A small number of these children have complex learning difficulties. During the inspection, a significant minority of the permanent teaching staff were absent.

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 and 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 a group of the children from years 6 and 7.

Of the 137 questionnaires issued to the parents of children at the school, the nursery unit and the LSC, 98 were returned to Inspection Services Branch, including 30 which contained additional written comments. The responses from the parents were positive and indicated their appreciation of the hard work of the Principal and staff, the caring ethos and the inclusion of all pupils.

Fifteen members of the teaching staff and 17 members of the support staff completed the online questionnaire. Seven members of the teaching staff and a small number of the support staff made written comments. All of the responses from the staff were very positive and highlighted the support of the staff for the work of the school.

The governors expressed their appreciation of the hard-working Principal and staff in focusing on the improvement in the standards attained by the children and the strong sense of community throughout the school.

The few issues raised by the parents of the school, the nursery unit and the LSC have been discussed with the governors and with the Principal.

The children talked enthusiastically about their learning and the many aspects of school life they enjoy. They mentioned their experiences of peer mediation and their appreciation of the celebration of their achievements through, for example, the Pupil of the Month award. They indicated that they feel safe in the school and are fully aware of what to do if they have any concerns regarding their work, safety or well-being.

1.4 PASTORAL CARE

The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care is good. The children benefit from opportunities to learn in an increasingly diverse environment and to participate in a wide range of extra-curricular activities. During the inspection, the children demonstrated their strong sense of loyalty and pride in their school through their performance of the 'School rap' during an assembly. The school has developed the excellent use of innovative zones in the playground which reflect the interests of the children and promote high standards of behaviour. There are extensive pastoral policies in place, including strategies to promote positive behaviour throughout the school. It is important, however, that all staff reflect the principles detailed in the positive behaviour policy in all their interactions.

The children's behaviour is exemplary; they are polite, courteous and take pride in their school and in their achievements. The children display high levels of self-confidence and they have very good opportunities to develop their leadership skills through the 'playground pals', student council and Eco club.

1.5 CHILD PROTECTION/ SAFEGUARDING

The school has satisfactory arrangements in place for safeguarding the children; these arrangements broadly reflect the guidance issued by the Department of Education (DE). The school needs to review the code of conduct, detailing clearly how the code of conduct will be monitored.

The nursery unit has very good comprehensive arrangements in place for safeguarding children. These arrangements reflect the guidance issued by DE.

1.6 HEALTHY EATING AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

The nursery unit gives excellent attention to promoting healthy eating and physical activity and this is developed further throughout the school. The children participate in a wide range of after-school sporting activities and learn about the importance of a healthy lifestyle through the personal development and mutual understanding (PDMU) programme, the healthy break initiative, the breakfast club and the gardening club.

1.7 LINKS WITH PARENTS AND THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

The school has recently sought the views of key partners of the school, including the parents, and regularly shares the children's achievements with them through, for example, the newsletter and website. The school also provides the parents of the newcomer children with social, educational and pastoral advice through the effective use of the parents' room, and the international coffee morning. The children benefit from the significant Extended Schools provision which includes clustering with other local schools. The school also provides helpful curricular information evenings for the parents.

2. ACHIEVEMENTS AND STANDARDS

2.1 LEARNING

The children are well motivated to learn; they are highly co-operative and, when given the opportunity, they can work well independently, in pairs and in groups and display good levels of self-confidence. A majority of the children attain good standards in the Council for Curriculum and Assessment (CCEA) ICT Accreditation Scheme at KS2.

Nearly all of the children identified as requiring additional support with their learning make good progress and meet the targets outlined in their individual education plans (IEPs). The newcomer children are making very good progress.

An analysis of the key stage (KS) 2 assessment data over the past four years shows that in mathematics, the school's performance was above the Northern Ireland (NI) average in three out of the past four years. In English, in two out of the past four years, it was above the NI average. Compared with schools in the same free school meals band, the levels of attainment in English, in three out of the past four years, have been in line with or above the average. In mathematics, in the past four years, the levels of attainment have been in line with or above the average.

2.2 ENGLISH AND LITERACY

The quality of provision for English and literacy is good.

In Foundation Stage (FS) the children engage well with the adults and develop very good listening skills. As the children progress through the school they continue to listen carefully to adults and each other and contribute well to class discussions.

The standard of the children's reading is good. There is a structured programme in place for the teaching of reading and phonics within the school. The teachers use effective questioning to encourage the children to develop their comprehension skills and their understanding of the characters in the books they read. As a result of recent surveys of both the parents and the children, the teachers have put in place a number of additional initiatives in order to foster a greater enjoyment and enthusiasm for reading among the children. These have included class visits and membership of the local library, additional resources for the class and school libraries, an after-school book club and a workshop for parents on how to support their children with reading and phonics. The children in years 4 and 7 read with confidence and fluency; they indicate that they enjoy reading and are able to talk enthusiastically about their favourite books and authors.

A small number of classroom assistants and parent volunteers are trained in Reading Partnerships and the 'Hi Five' reading and writing programme. These programmes are used to provide additional support for small groups of children in order to improve their levels of attainment and confidence in reading and writing. The school's own data indicates that the children who engage in these programmes make good progress.

The standards attained by the children in writing are good. In the FS, the children's letter formation, word-building skills and knowledge of the basic conventions such as simple sentence structure, are developed through shared-writing activities and some opportunities for independent writing. In order for the children in FS to become more independent writers at an earlier stage, the teachers need to provide the children with more focused

opportunities to develop their initial writing and phonic skills. The children in KS1 and KS2 develop as writers through well-structured guided and modelled writing lessons. In the children's books, there are good examples of extended and independent writing in a range of genres. In the best practice, the children are encouraged to improve the quality of their writing by planning, drafting and editing their work.

The literacy co-ordinator provides very effective leadership in the development of the literacy provision with a clear focus on continuous improvement. The co-ordinator has made good use of audits and the school's internal data to identify appropriate priorities for the development for literacy across the school. A key strength of the provision is the effective staff development provided by the co-ordinator in order to support the teachers in their teaching of literacy.

2.3 MATHEMATICS AND NUMERACY

The quality of provision for mathematics and numeracy is good.

In most instances, the children are provided with a variety of appropriate strategies and resources to help them develop their learning in mathematics. The mathematics lessons incorporate, at some stage, good sessions focused on developing the children's mental capabilities and skills. These sessions would benefit from more opportunities for the children to articulate in their own words the processes they use to arrive at an answer.

In the most effective teaching in mathematics, the teachers hold high expectations for the children's achievements and standards. This is characterised by an appropriate combination of whole-class and group work; good use of the Interactive White Board (IWB); opportunities for the children to use mathematics computer programs which reinforce the work they are doing and good questioning from the teachers which develops well the children's understanding. Where it is less effective, in a minority of lessons, the work is not matched closely enough to the abilities of the children.

The whole-school programme for mathematics is coherent and progressive. It has undergone review and development in recent years and through this process, any gaps in the intended provision have been identified. Currently, the teachers are, quite appropriately, working to address the further development of the financial capability aspect of the programme to enhance the children's understanding and application of finance. The provision includes opportunities for the children to undertake problem-solving and investigations, and in most classes there is evidence of this work being undertaken well. To improve the provision further, these opportunities need to be incorporated in the programme more consistently in all classes.

Most of the children attain good standards in their mathematics and by the end of year 7 have a sound understanding of place value, can work flexibly with numbers, are able to work with and estimate in metric measure and can plot graphs illustrating aspects of topical or local interest that they have researched.

The development of the mathematics programme is led by a highly effective co-ordinator. She ensures that learning and teaching in mathematics remains an area for continuing improvement within the school's overall development. There are effective processes in place for tracking the progress of the children at various levels and this is enabling the teachers to identify and support the small number of children who are at risk of under-achieving. The additional support is provided in an effective and sensitive manner. The work in mathematics is monitored regularly and effectively by the co-ordinator.

3. THE QUALITY OF PROVISION FOR LEARNING

3.1 PLANNING

Almost all of the teachers plan conscientiously for all aspects of the curriculum. They have worked hard to compile comprehensive planning to ensure progression in the children's learning. The school has identified appropriately that the teachers need to use this planning to provide more opportunities to develop the children's thinking, personal capabilities and creativity. In addition, the teachers need to plan for individuals and small groups within the composite classes rather than age-related groups.

3.2 TEACHING

In the school, the quality of the teaching observed during the inspection ranged from inadequate to very good; two-thirds of the lessons were good or better. In the more effective practice, the teachers are clear about the intended learning and use a range of teaching strategies to meet the individual needs of the children. The teachers build upon the children's prior learning and encourage them to apply their learning in practical contexts and to make connections across the curriculum. Through skilful questioning, the teachers promote the children's thinking and develop their extended oral responses. In the less effective practice, the work is overly teacher-directed and the tasks are set at too low a level. The teachers are unsure about the intended learning and consequently do not differentiate the work to meet the range of abilities and needs of the children in their classes.

3.3 ASSESSMENT

The Principal and co-ordinators have collated and analysed effectively a wide range of performance data including standardised tests and DE bench-marking information in order to identify underachievement and track the progress of individual children. In the best practice, the teachers are using this information to refine their planning and identify specific strategies and activities to address the needs of targeted groups of children.

The teachers mark the children's written work regularly and provide positive affirmation of the children's progress. Where this is most effective, the teachers mark the work against agreed criteria and provide the children with clear guidance about how to improve their work. This good practice in marking for improvement needs to be applied more consistently by all of the teachers.

There are appropriate procedures and records for keeping the parents informed about their children's progress. The written reports are comprehensive; they are related well to the curriculum and provide the parents with detailed and pertinent information regarding their children's progress.

3.4 EDUCATIONAL CENTRE FOR SPEECH AND LANGUAGE (ESCL)

The quality of the provision in the ECSL classes is very good. There is appropriate documentation in place to guide the daily running of the ECSL. In both classes, the teachers' planning is detailed, the learning is managed well and the activities are matched appropriately to the needs and interests of the children. The teachers, the classroom assistants and the therapy staff work effectively as a collaborative team to support the children, who are motivated and engage well in their learning. The detailed records of the children's needs are used effectively to track individual progress and plan future lessons and strategies to develop the potential of each child. All of the children make very good progress and achieve very good standards by the end of their two-year programme.

3.5 LEARNING SUPPORT CENTRE (LSC)

Overall, the quality of the provision in the LSC is inadequate.

In all three classes in the LSC, the working relationships are very good, there is a caring ethos and the children are treated sensitively by all of the staff. The teachers review the children's targets regularly, and the majority of the children are making satisfactory progress. There are also arrangements in place for some of the oldest children in the LSC classes to integrate with their peers in the mainstream classes, for example, in the Eco Club, the student council and the very effective integration opportunities at play time.

In the more effective practice, the children's needs are met well through a broad curriculum, appropriately matched to their abilities. The children have very good opportunities to improve and develop their communication skills and their independence through working collaboratively in small groups and presenting their work to others. In the less effective practice, the children, whilst engaged, were often involved in tasks that did not sufficiently challenge them or contribute to their social development, their development of language skills or their basic understanding of numeracy and literacy. The teachers in these classes need to develop effective classroom routines and to review the curriculum in order to ensure a more appropriate match to the needs of the children.

The Principal needs to ensure that the LSC staff monitor and evaluate the provision and that the capacity of the staff is developed, with external support where appropriate, in order to meet better the needs of all of the children.

3.6 SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

The quality of the provision for Special Educational Needs (SEN) is good. The SEN team are fully committed to the children in their care and provide good support to them, and to the rest of the staff. There are effective small group withdrawal sessions for the children identified as requiring additional support for their learning. The children enjoy these withdrawal sessions and are making good progress in literacy and numeracy. The SEN team has started to provide the class teachers and classroom assistants with strategies to overcome barriers to the children's learning and they co-operate closely with their colleagues to plan for continuity and progression in the children's learning. In the best practice, the teachers liaise closely with the classroom assistants to use these strategies to help the children progress in their learning. This effective in-class support needs to be consistent across the school.

4. LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The overall quality of leadership and management is satisfactory. The Principal has worked hard and successfully with the support of his staff to raise the standards attained by the children in his care. He has been instrumental in deepening the commitment to pastoral care throughout the school community which contributes significantly to the education and welfare of all of the children. He has strengthened the Senior Leadership Team (SLT), by including the co-ordinators in literacy, numeracy and KS1 and as a result, empowered them to bring about improvement in these key areas. The Principal and the governors need to review the roles and responsibilities within the SLT to ensure more effective and equitable strategic leadership within it in the interests of the whole school's future development.

4.1 PLANNING FOR IMPROVEMENT

The school development plan is compliant with the Department of Education (School Development Plans) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2010. This school's self-evaluative processes for continuous improvement are supported by action plans which are reviewed annually. However, the co-ordinators need to refine their targets further to ensure that the outcomes for the children can be measured through the more formal interim review process planned by the SLT.

4.2 ACCOMMODATION

The staff works hard to make good use of the available space in the school and to ensure that the children's work is celebrated in the corridors and classrooms. The outdoor learning environment is excellent and the premises are maintained to a high standard. The school has informed the SELB about issues relating to rising damp and the need for safe and appropriate storage.

4.3 RESOURCES, FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE

The governors are very supportive of the work and life of the school. They are well informed and they support the Principal and staff in the priorities of the SDP. The school's budget is currently in deficit and the governors have supported the Principal in putting in place plans to address this situation.

5. CONCLUSION

5.1 The strengths of the school include:

- the self-confident, courteous children whose behaviour is exemplary;
- the good quality of the provision for literacy and numeracy;
- the good or better teaching in two-thirds of the lessons observed;
- the high quality provision in the ECSL and the nursery unit;
- the good quality of the pastoral care, including the excellent provision for the children in the playground; and
- the effective focus by the Principal and the staff on raising the standards attained by the children.

5.2 The areas identified for improvement are:

- to review and develop the roles and responsibilities within the SLT to ensure more effective and equitable strategic leadership within the school; and
- to improve the quality of the provision in the majority of the classes in the Learning Support Centre.

5.3 Overall, in the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by this school is satisfactory; the strengths outweigh areas for improvement. The inspection has identified areas for improvement in the quality of the provision and in leadership and management which need to be addressed if the needs of all the learners are to be met more effectively. The Education and Training Inspectorate will monitor and report on the school's progress in addressing the areas for improvement over a 12-24 month period.

6. THE NURSERY UNIT

6.1 The main strengths within the nursery's educational and pastoral provision are as follows:

- the nurturing inclusive ethos based on the very good working relationships at all levels;
- the quality of the interaction between the staff and the children which is of a consistently high standard;
- the carefully planned programme which is broad and balanced and provides very good opportunities for learning in all areas of the pre-school curriculum;
- the well-organised daily timetable which helps to develop effectively the children's thinking skills and levels of independence;
- the observation and assessment methods which inform very effectively the planning; and
- the excellent leadership of the teacher-in-charge of the nursery unit who both demonstrates and fosters, a reflective and self-evaluative approach by the dedicated and hard-working staff team.

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

No follow-up inspection of the nursery unit is required.

STATISTICAL INFORMATION ON NURSERY SCHOOL

1. Details of Children

Number of children:	Class 1	Class 2
Attending full-time	26	26
Attending part-time	0	0
Under 3 years of age*	0	0
With statement of special educational needs	0	0
Without a statement but receiving therapy or support from other professionals for special educational needs	1	0
At CoP stages 3 or 4**	2	0
At CoP stages 1 or 2**	0	0
With English as an additional language	5	5

* On 1 July.

** The stages refer to those set out in the Code of Practice for the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs.

Percentage qualifying under DE admission criteria 1 or 2.	29%
Average attendance for the previous year.	91.5%

2. Duration of Sessions

Full-time	Part-time: am	Part-time: pm
4 hours 35 mins	-	-

3. Details of Staff

Number of:	Full-Time	Part-Time
Teachers	2	0
Nursery Assistants (qualified)	2	0
Nursery Assistants (non-qualified)	0	0

Number of: ***	
Students	0
Trainees	0

*** Total placements since September of current year

4. Parental Questionnaires

Number issued	
Percentage returned	%
Number of written comments	

© CROWN COPYRIGHT 2012

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

