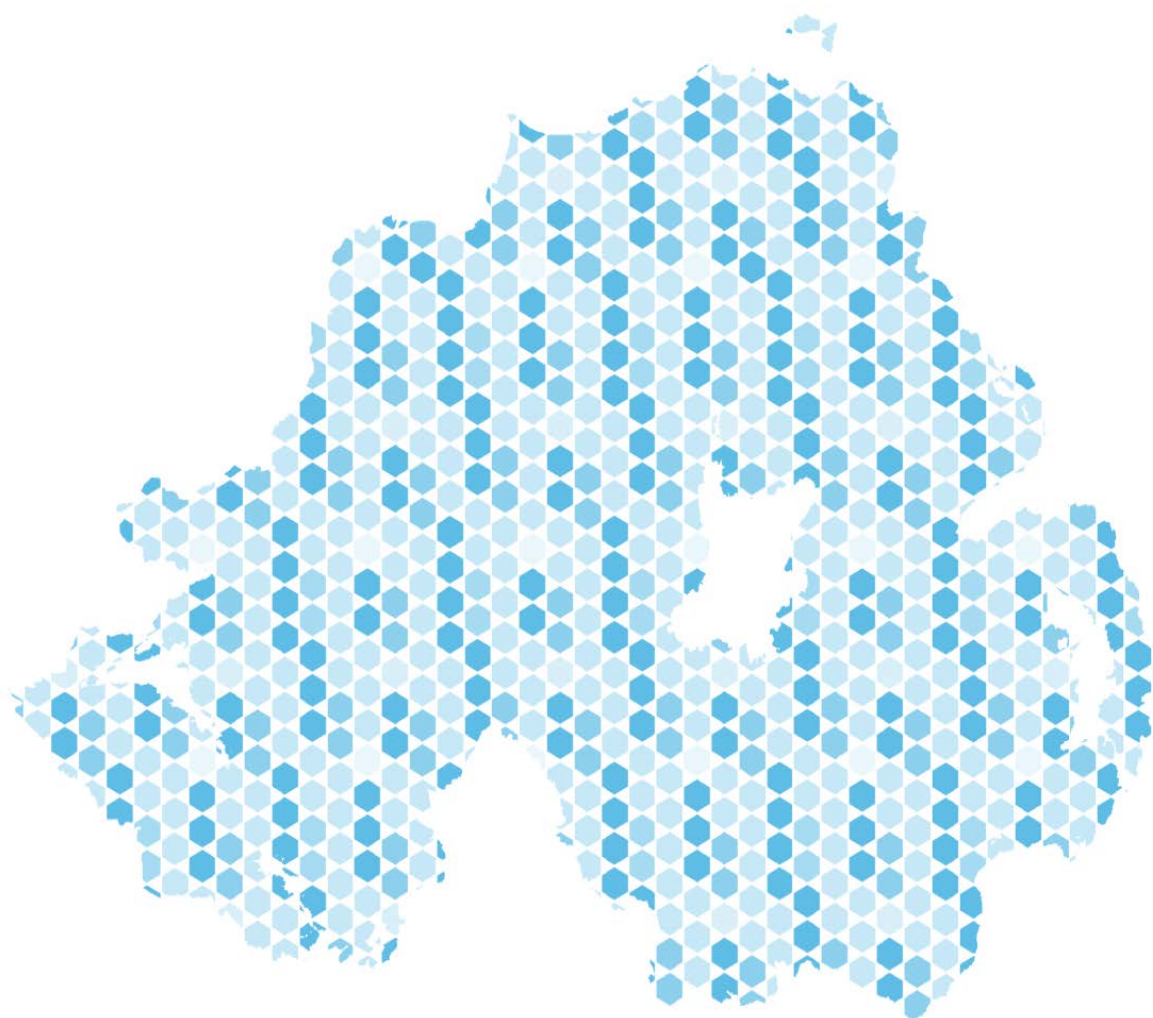


# PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training  
Inspectorate

Donegall Road Primary School,  
Belfast

Report of an Inspection  
in October 2012



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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

Donegall Road Primary School is situated on a restricted site in an area of redevelopment off the Donegall Road in west Belfast. The enrolment in the school has remained steady over the past four years, rising recently to 175 children in the current academic year. At the time of the inspection almost 74% of the children were entitled to free school meals and almost 33% were identified as requiring help with aspects of their learning. The children who attend come mainly from the surrounding local area.

## 2. Focus of the 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 satisfactory. The strengths outweigh areas for improvement in the provision. The inspection has identified areas for improvement in standards, learning and teaching, and leadership and management which need to be addressed if the needs of all of the children are to be met more effectively.

#### Summary of key findings

Achievements and standards Quality of provision Leadership and management	Satisfactory Satisfactory Satisfactory
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### KEY FINDINGS OF THE INSPECTION

## 3. Achievements and standards

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

- An analysis of the key stage (KS) 2 assessment data over the past four years shows that the school's performance in English and in mathematics has been consistently below the Northern Ireland (NI) average. When compared with schools in the same free school meals band, the school's performance has been in line with or just above the average in three out of the last four years in literacy and consistently just above the average in mathematics.



- Most of the children co-operate well with the staff and display positive attitudes to, and dispositions for, learning. They take on roles and responsibilities willingly through for example, the playground buddy system and the eco-council. While the children can work well together in these circumstances, they need to have more consistent, well-planned opportunities across the whole school to engage in work which develops their creativity and involves them more actively in their learning.
- Most of the children achieve satisfactory standards in literacy and numeracy. By the end of KS2, most have a good grasp of key concepts and a majority can give a quick and accurate recall of mathematical facts. There is inconsistency in the level of the children's flexibility in their mathematical thinking and their ability to apply their knowledge to real life contexts. A majority of the children read with increasing confidence and fluency as they progress through the school and when provided with the opportunities, they are generally eager to communicate their ideas, thoughts and feelings. There is variation in the accuracy and quality of the children's written work throughout the school. In the best practice, children produce good quality pieces of writing across a range of genre, however, there is at times an over-emphasis on de-contextualised and repetitive exercises, which constrain the responses the children are able to make.
- A majority of the children who are identified with special educational needs (SEN) are making good progress in meeting the targets identified on their individual education plans (IEP) and on occasion, the children make sufficient progress to be removed from the SEN register.
- By the end of KS2, the children attain very good standards in the Information Communication Technology (ICT) accreditation scheme, which last year were above the Northern Ireland average.

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

**The quality of the provision for learning is satisfactory.**

- The quality of the teaching observed ranged from very good to inadequate. Just over one third of the teaching was good or better, just over one third was satisfactory, and the remaining quarter had significant areas requiring improvement. In the most effective practice, the teachers were skilled in modelling good use of language and in using effective questioning to elicit extended responses from the children. In the less effective practice, the teachers' expectations of the children's capabilities were too low and there were insufficient opportunities for the children to engage in appropriate tasks matched to their abilities. In addition, less effective classroom management led at times to a lack of concentration and meaningful learning by the children.
- The whole school planning for numeracy and literacy needs to be updated to provide a better overview of the progression and coherence in all aspects of the children's learning and experiences. The children's work is marked regularly and assessment is generally supportive; the use of effective assessment for learning strategies are at an early stage of development.



- The children need more varied and well-considered opportunities to develop their thinking skills and extend their creative and independent writing skills more widely across the curriculum.
- The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care is very good. The friendly, well behaved children, who were polite and well mannered throughout the inspection, clearly have a sense of pride in their school. The wide range of extra curricular activities enhances effectively the children's learning experiences and development beyond the classroom environment.
- The children who require support with aspects of their learning are identified early: groups are targeted for additional literacy support during withdrawal sessions with the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCo) or with peripatetic services. The withdrawal sessions led by the school need to be focused more sharply on specific group and individual targets and the children's progress tracked more systematically. A more effective link needs to be developed between the content of withdrawal sessions and the focus and challenge of the literacy work and strategies used within classes. The School is currently involved with the Capacity Building Literacy Development Programme.
- The school gives very good attention to promoting healthy eating and physical activity. The children can talk about healthy food options; they are encouraged to adopt a healthy lifestyle through participation in the good range of sport and healthy eating initiatives.

## **5. Leadership and management**

### **The quality of leadership and management is satisfactory.**

- The leadership and management are aware of the needs within the community and actively seek to reduce barriers to the children's learning and to support their families. A useful start has been made to gathering a range of assessment data to identify children who may be underachieving and assess priorities for future development.
- The current systems for monitoring and evaluation at all levels, need to be more rigorous and strategic and provide clearer evidence of the children's progress and learning. The specific actions required need to be more clearly defined and more effectively measured for the impact they have on learning and teaching. The school development plan needs some amendments to be fully compliant with the relevant guidance from the Department of Education and needs to be further adjusted in light of the inspection findings.
- The accommodation and resources in the school are satisfactory. The staff work hard to create a bright, well-maintained and attractive learning environment. The children need to have a wider range of reading resources, including those which will motivate the boys. More richly resourced areas for play, including the addition of natural resources, is needed to help the younger children to extend their independent learning and creativity. The school has identified the need for the classroom computers to be upgraded so that they can be used more regularly within the daily practice to stimulate the children's interests and help develop standards in literacy and numeracy further.



- The school has established very good links with a range of other schools, partnerships and agencies to enhance the learning opportunities for both the children and their parents. The support of the parent and staff association is highly valued within the school community.
- The governors endorse the work of the Principal, and the hard-working staff. They are committed to the families in the school and to supporting the continued development and improvement of the provision and the standards the children attain.
- On the basis of the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the school has comprehensive arrangements in place for safeguarding children. These arrangements reflect the guidance issued by the relevant Department.

## CONCLUSION

In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by this school is satisfactory. The strengths outweigh areas for improvement in the provision. The inspection has identified areas for improvement in standards, learning and teaching, and leadership and management, which need to be addressed if the needs of all of the children are to be met more effectively.

The key areas for improvement include the need for:

- the leadership and management at all levels to develop a more strategic approach to self-evaluation and development which is more clearly focused on specific actions designed to bring about improvement and the impact they have on improving learning and teaching; and
- the teachers to ensure that their planning and teaching is more consistently matched to the full ability range of the children to improve further the standards they attain.

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. Summary of questionnaire responses

PARENTAL QUESTIONNAIRES	
Number of Questionnaires Issued to the school and nursery unit (Based on 09/10 Enrolment)	157
Number of Questionnaires Returned	44
Percentage of Returns	28%
Number of Comments	13



The very positive responses from the parental questionnaires indicated a high level of satisfaction with the provision in the school. In particular, the parents reported that their children felt happy in school and that they are making progress.

In discussions with the governors, they reported their confidence in the work of the Principal and the hard work of the staff team. They highlighted the close links within the local community and the positive ethos within the school.

TEACHERS QUESTIONNAIRES	
Number of Questionnaires Returned	10
Number of Comments	8

SUPPORT STAFF QUESTIONNAIRES	
Number of Questionnaires Returned	4
Number of Comments	3

The responses from the teaching and support staff were highly affirmative of all aspects of school life.

A number of concerns were raised in the questionnaires including the sufficiency of resources to meet the needs of an increasing number of children requiring additional support, and limitations in the current accommodation. All of the responses have been discussed with the governors and the Principal.

In discussions with a small group of year 6 children, they talked confidently about what they enjoyed in school. In particular they spoke about meeting their friends and enjoying their learning. They reported that they felt happy and safe in school and know what to do if they have any worries or concerns.



## BASIC INFORMATION SHEET (BIS) - PRIMARY SCHOOLS

- A. i. **School: Donegall Road Primary** iii. **Date of Inspection: W/B 12/11/12**  
 ii. **School Reference Number: 101-6060** iv. **Nature of Inspection: Focused**

B.

School Year	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
Year 1 Intake	19	26	22	34	35
<b>Enrolments</b>					
Primary	153	144	140	157	175
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): 91.9% **NI Avg Att: 94.7%**

Average Attendance for those children on the  
 Special Educational Needs Register: 93%

<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): 10.6 0 0 0  
 (Full-time equivalent = 25 teaching hours)

- ii. PTR (Pupil/Teacher Ratio): 19.4 NI PTR: 20.2

- iii. Average Class Size: 19

- iv. Class Size (Range): 16 to 27

- v. Ancillary Support:  
 Number of Hours **Per Week**:
- |   |       |
|---|-------|
| i. Clerical support:  | 30    |
| ii. Foundation Stage Classroom Assistant Support:           | 41.25 |
| iii. Additional hours of other classroom assistant support: | 0     |

- vi. Percentage of children with statements of special educational needs: 2.3%

- vii. Total percentage of children on the Special Needs Register: 33%

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

- ix. Percentage of children entitled to free school meals: 74.3%

- 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><br>67% | <b>Mathematics</b><br>71% | <b>Irish</b><br>N/A |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|---------------------|



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