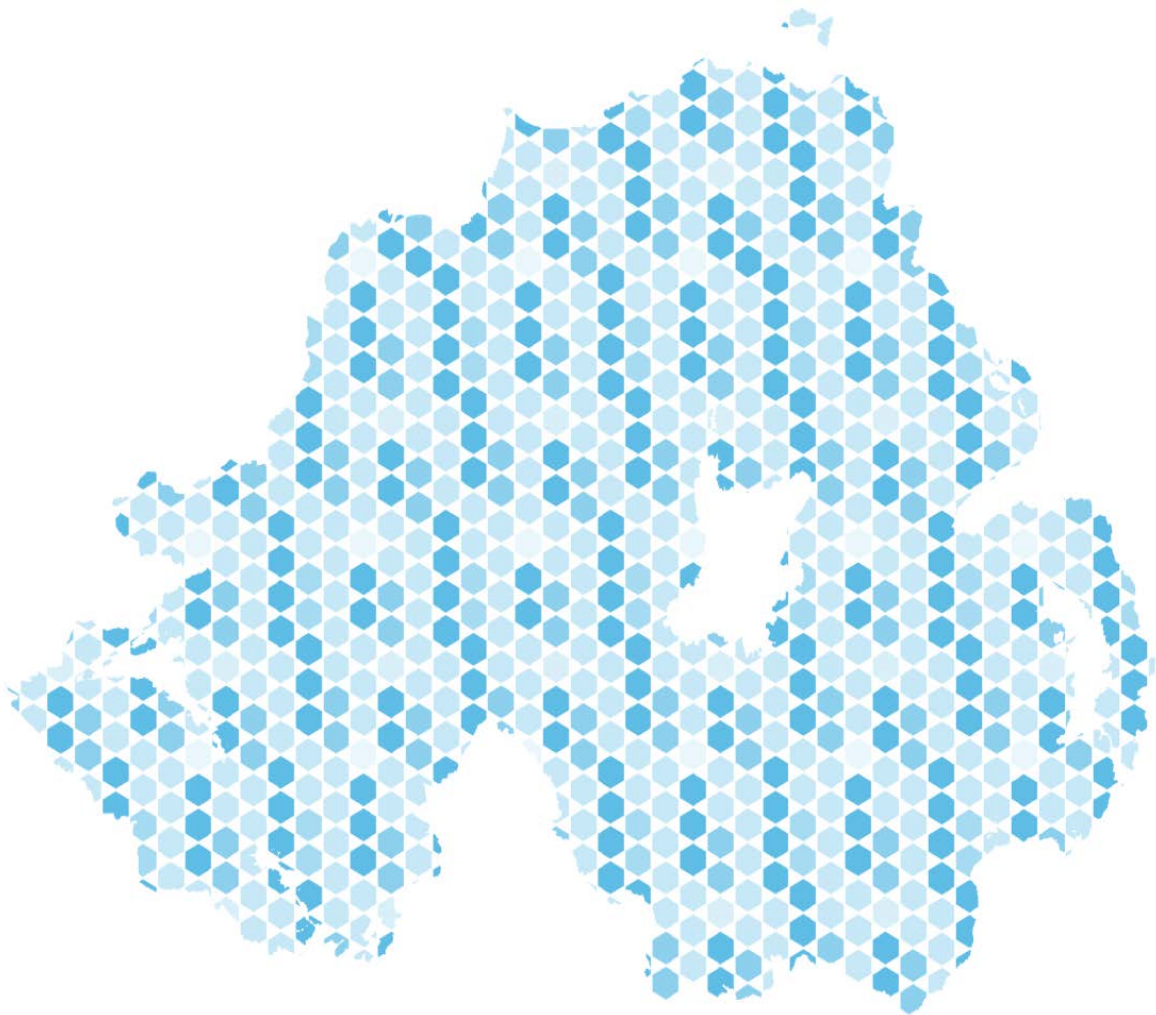


PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Dundonald Primary School
and Nursery Unit, Belfast

Report of an Inspection
in May 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

Dundonald Primary School is situated in the centre of Dundonald and the majority of the children come from the local area. The present building opened in 2006 and the nursery unit started in 2011. The enrolment in the primary school has grown steadily over the past four years and currently stands at 674 which includes 26 children in the nursery. At the time of the inspection, 19% of the children in the school were entitled to free school meals and approximately 18% were identified as requiring additional support with aspects of their learning.

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 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.

OVERALL FINDING OF THE INSPECTION

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.

Summary of key findings

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

KEY FINDINGS OF THE INSPECTION

3. Achievements and standards

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

- The children are well motivated, articulate and most of them engage actively and enthusiastically in their learning. The children's thinking skills and personal capabilities are developed effectively through the opportunities they have to work collaboratively, take decisions and be creative. Their learning also benefits from the opportunities they are provided with to learn other languages.

- In 2011/12, the school volunteered to be part of the CCEA Assessment pilot cohort, using the revised Levels of Progression in Communication and Using Mathematics for the purposes of assessing the children's attainment and for which there is currently no comparable data. In the four years preceding this, an analysis of the key stage (KS) 2 assessment data indicates that in both English and mathematics the school's performance is consistently above the Northern Ireland (NI) average. When compared to schools in the same free school meals category (FSM), the school's performance in English and mathematics, in two of the last four years, has fluctuated from being below or in line with the NI average. An analysis of the school's internal performance data shows that almost all of the children are achieving standards in both English and mathematics that are in line with or exceeding expectation. The school has identified the need to raise the standards further for the more able children in particular in literacy.
- The children attain good standards in both English and mathematics and they engage actively and readily in an appropriately broad range of literacy and mathematical activities. In most classes, the children listen well, enjoy practical tasks and work well with their peers to plan and discuss their strategies and record their findings. The school has identified appropriately the development of reading skills as a priority; in class, children were observed to be reading with fluency and confidence. Across the school, the children's written work is extensive, well-crafted and demonstrates creativity and imagination. By the end of KS2 the children demonstrate a firm grasp of key concepts across all areas of the mathematics curriculum including very good mental strategies and flexibility in their mathematical reasoning. Most of the children in the school who have been identified with special educational needs make good progress in their learning.
- The school provides very good care, advice and guidance to the newcomer children and their parents. The Vice- principal uses effectively the Common European Framework of Reference to monitor and record language learning and to inform planning; most of the children identified with English as a second language are making very good progress in their written and spoken language development.
- Most of the children, through participation in external accreditation, attain high standards in ICT.
- The children in the nursery unit are very well-settled and highly motivated; they are welcoming to visitors and can talk about their learning activities and experiences. The majority of the children show good imagination and creativity in their play and have a good understanding of early mathematical concepts. The development of the children's ICT skills is of a very high standard.

4. **Provision for learning**

The quality of the provision for learning is very good.

- The quality of the planning, teaching and assessment for learning is very good. The teachers evaluate regularly their planning which includes daily teaching plans incorporating differentiated activities for the children. The quality of the teaching observed ranged from outstanding to satisfactory with over one- third of the teaching being very good or better. A significant strength in the effective

lessons is the creation, through the use of a wide range of teaching strategies, of a climate of enquiry enabling the children to hone their thinking and problem solving skills. In a small proportion of the teaching, a minority of the children require more focused support with their social and emotional skills to improve the quality of their engagement in the learning. The teachers integrate skilfully a wide range of strategies to assess the children's learning and involve them and the parents in developing strategies to improve their achievements. The teachers mark the children's work regularly and in the majority of classes provide the children with helpful comments on how their learning can be improved; in the best practice the children are encouraged through self and peer assessment to reflect upon and improve the quality of their work. This good practice needs to be shared, further developed and applied more consistently throughout the school.

- The school has a consistent approach to the children's acquisition and development of literacy skills. The teachers plan for and provide meaningful connections between the development of the writer's craft and the development of the love of reading. In mathematics, the recently revised numeracy policy and long-term planning provide a progressive and balanced programme which guides the teachers well and provides the children with well-planned opportunities to explore the use of mathematics in real and relevant contexts.
- The quality of the arrangements for the pastoral care provision in the school and nursery unit is very good. The holistic development of each child is central to the ethos and work of the school and nursery unit. All of the staff are highly committed to the care and well-being of the children including those staff who have worked hard to establish before and after school provision for the children. There is an extensive range of excellent extra-curricular activities which enrich the learning experiences of the children while the School and Eco Councils enable the children to express their views and contribute to the decision making process.
- The quality of the provision for special educational needs is good. The children develop their confidence and independence in the small group withdrawal sessions provided by the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) and learning support staff. The school has recognised appropriately the need to review both the current individual education plans (IEP) and the balance between withdrawal and in-class support to enrich further the quality of the classroom practice and consolidate the children's progress in a more coherent way. The school adds significant value to the support for the children with special educational needs through a wide range of relevant outreach and support services.
- The nursery staff have created a rich and interesting learning environment which promotes effectively the all round development of the children; the promotion of the children's personal social and emotional development, language and early mathematical skills are particular strengths of the provision. The staff need to review the methods of record keeping and assessment to provide a more accurate account of the children's progress and development throughout the year and to inform helpfully their provision when they transfer to year 1.

- The school and nursery unit gives very good attention to promoting healthy eating and physical activity through, for example, the provision of healthy breaks and the numerous opportunities for the children to be involved in sports and related events.

5. Leadership and management

The quality of leadership and management is very good.

- The Principal provides very effective, strategic leadership and clear realistic direction for the development of the school and nursery unit. He is highly committed to the pastoral and academic needs of all the children. There is a developing culture of self evaluation across the school and nursery unit, well informed by the increasingly adept use of internal and external performance data, to bring about improvement and raise further the standards for the children. In this work he is supported effectively by the Vice-principal. The school development planning processes are clear, well structured and effective in bringing about improvement. In light of recent staff changes, it is timely for the senior leadership team to review roles and responsibilities of the staff and build further the leadership capacity at all levels to help contribute to and develop the priorities and actions to effect improvement.
- The school and nursery unit has highly effective arrangements in place for communicating with the parents on their children's progress and informing them of curricular developments to help them support the children's learning through, for example, workshops and written guidance. The school and nursery unit benefits from the additional support provided by the Parent Teacher Association
- The governors keep themselves fully informed about all aspects of the life and work of the school and provide effective support and challenge to the Principal and staff. They attend training regularly and ensure that all aspects of school life are kept under review. 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 effectiveness of the governance arrangements.
- 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 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	
PRIMARY SCHOOL	
Number of questionnaires issued to the school	124
Number of Questionnaires Returned	54
Percentage of Returns	43.5%
Number of Comments	27
NURSERY UNIT	
Number of questionnaires issued	26
Number of Questionnaires Returned	5
Percentage of Returns	19.2%
Number of Comments	2

One hundred and twenty-four questionnaires were issued to the parents of the primary school; approximately 44% were returned to the Inspection Services Branch (ISB) and 27 contained additional written comments. Almost all of the comments were highly positive and included appreciation of the leadership and energy of the Principal and Vice- principal, the hard work, professionalism and dedication of the teachers, the links between the pastoral and the academic provision and the caring, nurturing ethos of the school. The small number of issues raised have been shared with the Principal and representatives of the governors.

In discussions with the children from year 6 the children reported that they feel safe and secure in school and are aware of what to do if they have concerns about their safety or well-being. They talked enthusiastically about all aspects of school life and spoke with confidence about the friendly, helpful staff and the consistent approaches by the teachers to make their learning enjoyable.

TEACHERS QUESTIONNAIRES	
Number of Questionnaires Returned	29
Number of Comments	3

SUPPORT STAFF QUESTIONNAIRES	
Number of Questionnaires Returned	27
Number of Comments	10

Twenty nine teaching staff responded to the online questionnaire and a small number included additional written comments which were, in the main, positive about the life and work of the school.

Twenty-seven support staff responded to the online questionnaires and ten included written comments praising the high level of care the school provides for the children; almost one-half of the support staff responses expressed the need for further opportunities for professional development.

BASIC INFORMATION SHEET (BIS) - PRIMARY SCHOOLS

- A. i. **School:** Dundonald Primary iii. **Date of Inspection:** W/B 20/05/13
 ii. **School Reference Number:** 401-1587 iv. **Nature of Inspection:** Focused

B.

School Year	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
Year 1 Intake	80	71	108	106	109
Enrolments					
Primary	565	556	586	616	648
Reception	0	0	0	0	0
Nursery Unit	0	0	0	26	26
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): 95.3% **NI Avg Att:** 94.7%

Average Attendance for those children on the Special Educational Needs Register: 93.4%

- | | | Primary & Reception | Nursery Unit | Special Unit | Irish Medium Unit |
|-------|--|--------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|
| D. i. | Number of Teachers (including the principal and part-time teachers):
(Full-time equivalent = 25 teaching hours) | 28.6 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| ii. | PTR (Pupil/Teacher Ratio): | 23.56 | NI PTR: 20.2 | | |
| iii. | Average Class Size: | 27 | | | |
| iv. | Class Size (Range): | 22 to 30 | | | |
| v. | Ancillary Support: | | | | |
| | Number of Hours Per Week : | | | | |
| | i. Clerical support: | | | 66 | |
| | ii. Foundation Stage Classroom Assistant Support: | | | 166.50 | |
| | iii. Additional hours of other classroom assistant support: | | | 297.25 | |
| vi. | Percentage of children with statements of special educational needs: | | | | 2.8% |
| vii. | Total percentage of children on the Special Needs Register: | | | | 18.2% |
| viii. | Number of children who are not of statutory school age: | | | | 1 |
| ix. | Percentage of children entitled to free school meals: | | | | 19% |
| 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
68.60% | Mathematics
70.93% | Irish
N/A | |

STATISTICAL INFORMATION ON DUNDONALD PRIMARY SCHOOL NURSERY UNIT

1. Details of Children

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

* 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.	38%
Average attendance for the previous year.	95%

2. Duration of Sessions

Full-time	Part-time: am	Part-time: pm
4½ hours	-	-

3. Details of Staff

Number of:	Full-Time	Part-Time
Teachers	1	0
Nursery Assistants (qualified)	1	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	26
Percentage returned	19.2%
Number of written comments	2

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