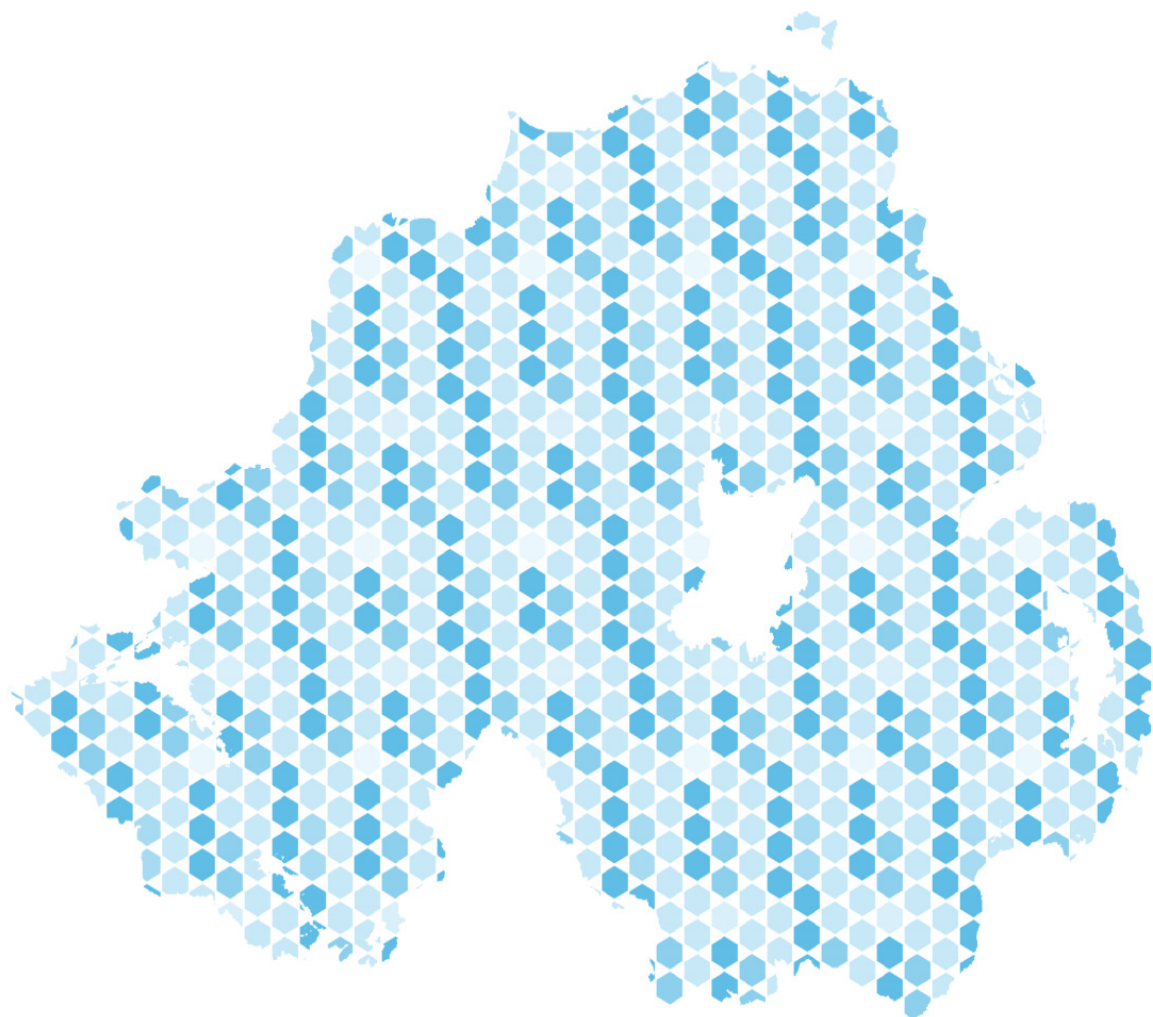


PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Fountain Primary School,
Londonderry

Report of an Inspection
in September 2010

CONTENTS

Section		Page
	STATISTICAL INFORMATION	
1.	INTRODUCTION	1
2.	ACHIEVEMENTS AND STANDARDS	2
3.	THE QUALITY OF PROVISION FOR LEARNING	4
4.	LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	5
5.	CONCLUSION	5
6.	THE NURSERY UNIT	7
	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: Fountain Primary Londonderry** iii. **Date of Inspection: W/B 27/09/10**
 ii. **School Reference Number: 201-6564** iv. **Nature of Inspection: Focused**

B.

School Year	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
Year 1 Intake	12	10	12	16	10
Enrolments					
Primary	86	66	64	70	72
Reception	0	0	0	0	0
Nursery Unit	26	26	26	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 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): 93.8% **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): 5 1 0 0
 (Full-time equivalent = 25 teaching hours)
- ii. PTR (Pupil/Teacher Ratio): 14.4% NI PTR: 20.4
- iii. Average Class Size: 14.4%
- iv. Class Size (Range): 10 to 18
- v. Ancillary Support:
 Number of Hours **Per Week**:
- | | |
|---|----|
| i. Clerical support: | 15 |
| ii. Foundation Stage Classroom Assistant Support: | 31 |
| iii. Additional hours of other classroom assistant support: | 25 |
- vi. Percentage of children with statements of special educational needs: 2.78%
- vii. Total percentage of children on the Special Needs Register: 33.33%
- viii. Number of children who are **not** of statutory school age: 0
- ix. Percentage of children entitled to free school meals: 77%
- x. Percentage of children at the end of Key Stage 2 for 2008/09 who attained level 4 and above in English and mathematics: **English** 71.43% **Mathematics** 71.43%

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 SCHOOL CONTEXT

Fountain Primary School is situated in the Fountain Estate in Londonderry. The enrolment in the primary school has remained steady over recent years and currently stands at 72 children with an additional 26 in the nursery unit. The children come from the Fountain neighbourhood and from the Waterside area of Londonderry. Approximately 77% of the children are entitled to free school meals (FSM). The school has identified 33% of the children as requiring additional support with aspects of their learning.

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 year 6.

Just over 28% of parental questionnaires from the primary school were returned to Inspection Services Branch. Four returns included additional written comments. The parents expressed a high level of satisfaction with the educational and pastoral provision provided by the school. In particular, they acknowledged the caring and supportive ethos of the school, the excellent manners of the children and the opportunities provided for them to participate in extra-curricular activities.

Just over 41% of the parents from the nursery unit responded to the questionnaires, three of whom wrote additional comments. The parents expressed a very high level of satisfaction with the provision in the nursery unit and they recorded their appreciation of the caring, patient and approachable staff.

All of the teachers and five members of the support staff responded to the online questionnaires indicating satisfaction with most aspects of the life and work of the school.

The small number of issues raised through the questionnaires were shared with the Principal and the governors.

The governors expressed strong support for the school. In particular they commented very positively on the excellent links that exist between the school and the local community.

In discussions, the children in year 6 spoke positively about their experiences in school. They reported that they feel safe and secure and are aware of what to do if they have worries about their safety or well-being.

1.4 PASTORAL CARE

The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care in both the school and the nursery unit is very good. This is evidenced through the inclusive, caring and supportive ethos, the good working relationships at all levels, and the well-mannered children and their very good behaviour. The school has recognised the need to involve the children more fully in discussions and decisions on issues that directly affect them.

1.5 CHILD PROTECTION

The school and nursery unit have 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 and nursery unit give very good attention to promoting healthy eating and physical activity, with, for example, a healthy breaks policy in the primary school and the snack and dinner routine in the nursery unit which encourages the children to taste a range of 'healthy' foods. The children have regular opportunities to engage in an appropriate range of physical activities.

1.7 LINKS WITH PARENTS AND THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

The school and nursery unit enjoy very good links with the parents and the local community. The parents are kept informed about important dates and events through regular news sheets. The school has a range of meaningful links with other schools and agencies to support and enhance its provision. An appropriate range of activities is offered through the Extended Schools Programme to the children, their parents and the wider community. There is a need to extend further the parental partnerships with regard to the curriculum in order to help the parents become more productively involved in their children's learning.

2. **ACHIEVEMENTS AND STANDARDS**

2.1 LEARNING

The children are well-behaved and show a sense of pride in their school. They have good opportunities for collaborative learning and are able to communicate effectively with their peers and adults. *An analysis of the key stage (KS) 2 assessment data over the past four years shows that in English and mathematics the school's performance is below the Northern Ireland average. When compared with schools in the same FSM category, the level of attainment in English and mathematics is above the average.

* The key stage outcomes should be interpreted with caution for small primary schools as a large percentage change from year to year can often be attributed to a very small number of children.

2.2 ENGLISH AND LITERACY

The provision for English and literacy is satisfactory.

In all classes, the teachers recognise the need for and are largely successful in providing good opportunities for the children to develop their talking and listening skills. In the best practice seen, the teachers use effective questioning and the majority of the children are able to express themselves well and to give extended oral responses. For the minority who are not, further ways need to be found to develop their confidence and competence in talking and listening.

From the beginning of the last school year, the teaching of reading has incorporated a strong phonics element. This is being integrated enthusiastically by the teachers in their teaching and the children's competence in reading new and unfamiliar words is improving. The majority of the children make progress in their reading in line with their abilities, and for the minority who have difficulties, support programmes are provided. The school needs to place a greater priority on developing the children's reading skills in order to improve the standards further.

The children's early writing is informed appropriately from their personal experiences. They learn to write for a variety of different purposes and in a range of formats. As they progress through the school, the children are able to write with increasing independence and show resourcefulness in, for example, accessing words, meanings and vocabulary from dictionaries and thesauri. Most of the children attain writing standards which are in line with their abilities but these standards could be improved further by expecting and encouraging the children to write more extensively in English and in other areas of the curriculum. Of the children with special educational needs, most make progress in line with their abilities. A minority need additional specialist support and the school needs to consider alternative ways within its budget that their needs can be met more effectively.

The co-ordinator for English leads its development throughout the school well. The current action plans are set within the context of the school development plan and identify appropriate areas for development. Within the stated objectives, a greater prominence needs to be given to raising standards of literacy for all the children.

2.3 MATHEMATICS AND NUMERACY

The quality of provision for mathematics and numeracy is satisfactory.

The teachers provide the children with a wide range of experiences in number, shape and space, measures and data-handling. They use a range of practical equipment to develop the children's understanding of mathematical concepts. The children engage in a variety of problem-solving and investigative mathematics and are able to work collaboratively with their peers in pairs and small groups. The teachers have worked hard to develop the role of mental mathematics as an important element of the children's learning. Mental mathematics sessions were observed in all classes. In a minority of these the pace was good and the activities engaged, challenged and motivated the children; in these lessons the children were encouraged to articulate their thinking processes and the teachers used effective questioning to challenge and extend the children's thinking. In the majority of the lessons observed, however, the teacher's expectations of what the children can achieve were insufficiently high and a slow pace undermined more effective learning.

The children are able to apply their mathematics in context within other areas of the curriculum and in real life. For example, as part of a World Around Us project the children represent graphically their own weights and heights. Information and communication technology is used well throughout the school to support the learning and teaching of mathematics.

The standards achieved by the children in mathematics are satisfactory. During the inspection while the highest attaining children in years 4 and 7 demonstrated their knowledge of important ideas and concepts, for example, place value and measures, they were unsure of the most effective mental mathematics strategies and were slow to demonstrate flexibility in their mathematical thinking. While the majority of pupils achieve standards in numeracy in line with their abilities, the numeracy co-ordinator has appropriately identified a significant minority of pupils who do not do so. It will be important that these children receive intensive and targeted support in order to enhance their progress in their areas of need.

3. THE QUALITY OF PROVISION FOR LEARNING

3.1 PLANNING

The quality of the teachers' medium-term planning to support the teaching and learning is satisfactory. In a minority of classes it identifies appropriately the intended learning and the teaching strategies to be used. This good practice needs to be applied more consistently across the school. The schemes of work for mathematics and literacy need to be reviewed, and used by the teachers to focus their planning more specifically on ensuring greater challenge in the children's learning.

3.2 TEACHING

The quality of the teaching observed ranged from very good to inadequate; the majority of the teaching was satisfactory. In the best practice the lessons are well paced and the teachers make effective use of a range of practical resources and skilful questioning to stimulate the children's thinking and develop their understanding; they use the learning intentions effectively to focus the children's attention and to assess the quality of their learning. In the majority of the lessons observed they were overly teacher directed, the teachers' expectations of what the children could achieve were insufficiently high, and the planned activities lacked pace and challenge to meet adequately the needs of all the learners. The teachers have identified one-third of the children as needing support with aspects of their learning. In the main, effective support is provided within class through the class teacher and classroom assistants, and to facilitate this class sizes are kept small. Additional support is provided through outreach services and a reading partnership initiative involving personnel from the business community

3.3 ASSESSMENT

The school has effective processes in place to measure the attainment of the children in literacy and numeracy. Through regular and internally administered assessments, the children's progress year on year is recorded and matched against their measured ability. Through this means, the teachers are aware of a significant minority of the children who are under-achieving. This valuable analysis work on assessment needs to be built upon through a more robust diagnosis of the children's individual strengths and areas for improvement, and teachers need to use this to inform and improve the quality of the children's learning.

The children's achievements and standards are reported to the parents regularly through an annual written report, a formal parent-teacher meeting and informal contacts between teachers and parents. The reports provide the parents with a comprehensive account of the children's strengths and areas for improvement.

The teachers undertake the marking of the children's work conscientiously and frequently add supportive and appreciative comments which encourage the children. They need to raise the quality of the marking further through the provision of comments which will indicate to the children how their work can actually be improved.

4. LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

4.1 LEADERSHIP

The quality of leadership and management is satisfactory. The Principal, who has been in post for 20 years, gives a high priority to the future sustainability of the school and its enrolment, and has been successful in establishing a wide range of effective links with the local community. Her concern and care for the children and the staff is very evident. The special needs provision is guided effectively by the special educational needs co-ordinator who ensures there is appropriate involvement between and communication with the parents and other education and welfare partners. It is important that the role of all of the co-ordinators in monitoring and evaluating the quality of the teaching and learning is strengthened to ensure that the children achieve higher standards in literacy and numeracy across the school.

4.2 PLANNING FOR IMPROVEMENT

A collegial approach to school development planning has been established which involves the staff in the audit of provision and in the setting of priorities for both the primary school and the nursery unit. The school development plan is compliant with the Department of Education School Development Plan Regulations/Schedule 2005/19. However the action plans are too general to guide the monitoring of the implementation of the targets and do not adequately identify the strategies through which these targets will be realised.

4.3 RESOURCES, FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE

The governors are fully involved in the life and work of the school and support effectively the Principal and the staff in raising the profile of the school and maintaining effective links with the parents and the local community.

5. CONCLUSION

5.1 The strengths of the school include:

- the inclusive, welcoming and supportive ethos of the school;
- the very good quality of the pastoral care provision;
- the very good behaviour of the children and their application to their work;

- the hard work and commitment of the teachers and support staff to the children and their welfare; and
- the effectiveness of the Principal in raising the profile of the school and maintaining effective links with the parents and the local community.

5.2 The areas for improvement include the need for:

- the teachers to provide greater challenge in their lessons, and match the teaching more effectively to the diagnosed needs of all of the children; and
- leadership to hold higher expectations for what the children can achieve, focus more clearly on the children's learning, and implement appropriate strategies to ensure improvements in the standards in literacy and numeracy they attain.

In most of 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 achievements and standards, learning and teaching, and 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 organisation's progress in addressing the areas for improvement over a 12-24 month period.

It will be important that the employing authority, school governors and the staff plan for, and manage, issues related to the sustainability of the school provision and school budget, in order to address the current and future needs of the children and the staff.

6. THE NURSERY UNIT

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

- there is a caring and nurturing atmosphere in the nursery unit. The children's behaviour is very good and they are generally well-settled for the start of the year. The new children are becoming familiar with the daily routines and staff expectations. The returning older children appear confident and have developed a range of skills such as investigating and making choices which they often apply to their play;
- the quality of the play and learning is appropriate for the time of the year. The children display satisfactory to good levels of interest in the range of activities provided in the indoor and outdoor learning environments;
- high priority is given to the development of the children's language through adult interactions which successfully build on the children's interests. During the inspection, there were some instances of good quality staff interaction which effectively promoted mathematical language and learning often through stories, songs and rhymes;
- the nursery unit provision is broad and balanced and offers satisfactory to good opportunities for learning in most areas of the pre-school curriculum. The staff have made a satisfactory start to compiling a pre-school programme with the intention of addressing the wide variety of needs arising from the composite group of pre-school and two-year old children and any other potential special needs arising throughout the year;
- the nursery unit teacher is beginning her third year in the nursery unit. She maintains effective links with other nursery unit staff and is committed to the development of the nursery unit provision. She takes personal responsibility for her professional development through attendance at a range of courses; and
- the classroom assistant provides a high level of support and there is a strong team spirit among the hard-working staff.

6.2 The inspection has identified the following areas for improvement.

- The further development of the assessment methods to identify, diagnose and plan more effectively for the children's wide range of needs.
- The need to make more effective use of the daily routines in order to ensure that all the time is used for learning.
- To ensure that the opportunities for communicating with the parents are exploited fully to focus on the children's learning, progress and development.

In most of the areas inspected the quality of education provided in the nursery unit is satisfactory; the strengths outweigh areas for improvement in the provision. The inspection has identified areas for improvement in learning and teaching and 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 nursery unit's progress in addressing the areas for improvement.

STATISTICAL INFORMATION ON FOUNTAIN PRIMARY SCHOOL NURSERY UNIT

1. Details of Children

Number of children:	Class 1	Class 2
Attending full-time	26	0
Attending part-time	0	0
Under 3 years of age*	9	0
With statement of SEN**	0	0
At CoP stages 3 or 4***	0	0
At CoP stages 1 or 2***	0	0
With English as an additional language	0	0

* On 1 July.

** Special Educational Needs.

*** 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.	26.9%
Average attendance for the previous year.	

2. *Duration of Sessions*

Full-time	Part-time: am	Part-time: pm
5 hours 10 mins	-	-

3. DETAILS OF STAFF

Number of:	Full-Time	Part-Time
Teachers	1	0
Nursery Assistants	1	0
Qualified Nursery Assistants	0	0

Number of: ****	
Students	2
Trainees	0

**** Total placements since September of current year

4. Parental Questionnaires (to be completed by Inspection Services Branch)

Number issued	17
Percentage returned	41.1%
Number of written comments	3

© CROWN COPYRIGHT 2010

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

