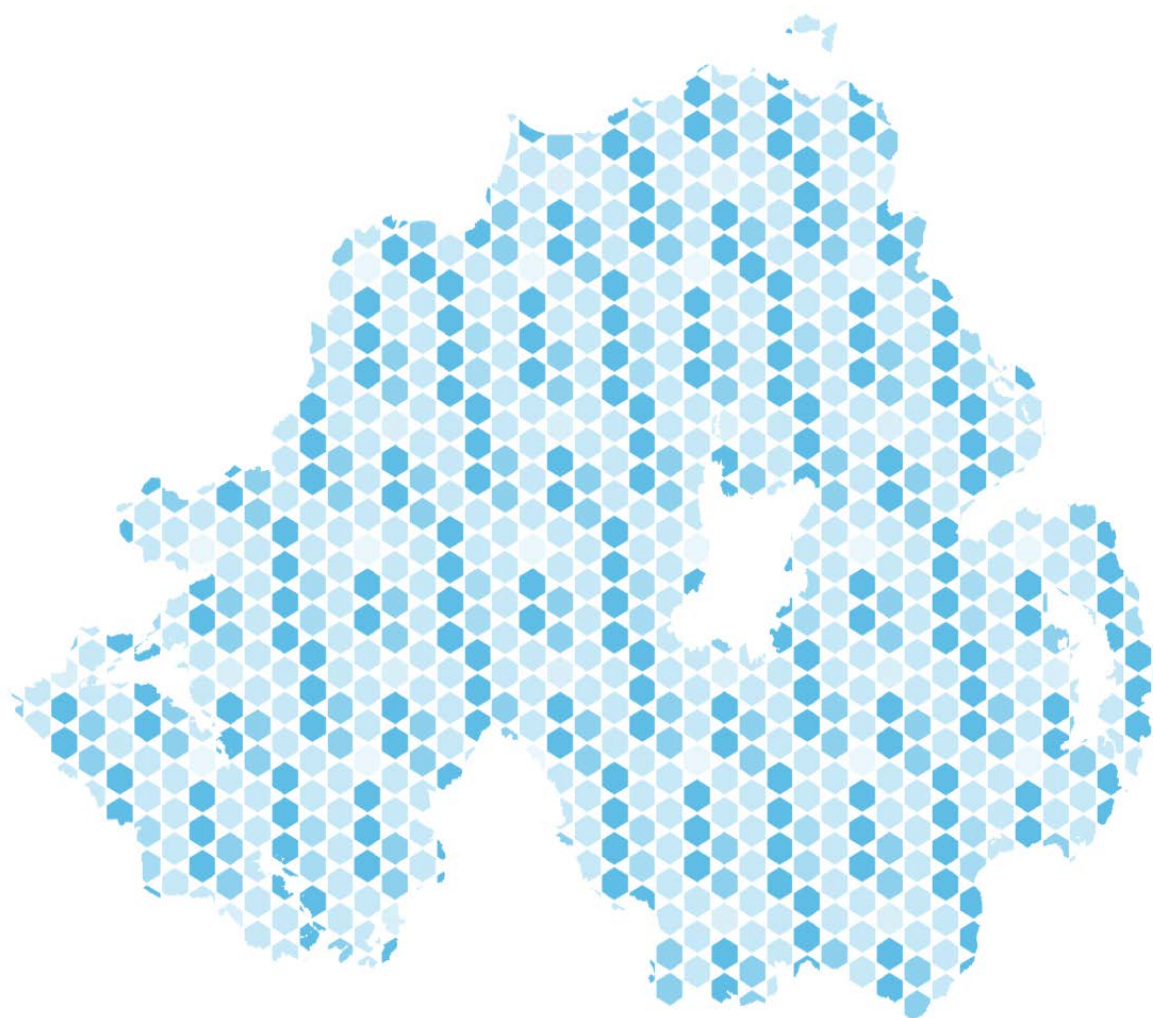


PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Holy Family Primary School
and Nursery Unit, Magherafelt

Report of an Inspection
in December 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

Holy Family Primary School is situated on the Castledawson Road in Magherafelt. The enrolment has increased over four years from 514 in 2008 to the current figure of 522; in addition, 52 children are enrolled on a part-time basis in the nursery unit (NU). At the time of the inspection, approximately 18% of the children were entitled to free school meals and approximately 15% were identified as requiring help 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 in the school and nursery unit; 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 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 Quality of provision Leadership and management Nursery unit	Very Good Very Good Outstanding Very Good
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KEY FINDINGS OF THE INSPECTION

3. Achievements and standards

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

- The children in the school and nursery unit are confident, articulate and enthusiastic learners. They have high levels of independence and co-operate well in paired and group activities.
- An analysis of the key stage (KS) 2 assessment data over the past four years shows that in English the school's performance is consistently above the Northern Ireland (NI) average and in mathematics the school's performance is above the NI average in three of the four years. Compared with schools in the same free school meals category, the levels of attainment in English and mathematics are on or above the average in three of the four years.

- By year 7, most of the children attain very good standards in literacy and numeracy. In most classes the children listen well to the adults and to one another; and are able to give clear, well-reasoned responses using a wide vocabulary. They can write to a very good standard across the curriculum; in the foundation stage the standard of writing is excellent. The children in year 7 read with expression and demonstrate high levels of understanding of the themes, characters and plot in texts. Throughout the school, the children display flexibility in their mathematical thinking and discuss their methodology confidently using precise mathematical language. They apply their mathematical knowledge and skills in meaningful everyday contexts and are particularly successful in developing their financial capability.
- The children in the school who have been identified with special educational needs make very good progress in their learning.
- Almost all of the children in the nursery unit are settled and happy and the majority of them engage in purposeful play. The children are self-assured when engaging with the adults and with one another and the majority of them display good language skills and are beginning to collaborate well in role playing and building activities.

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 quality of teaching observed ranged from satisfactory to outstanding; with a majority of the teaching being very good or outstanding. In the best practice, the teachers plan engaging learning activities that promote connections across the curriculum; they use learning intentions and success criteria skilfully to guide learning and teaching; and their evaluations are focused clearly on the children's learning to inform future planning. In a minority of the teaching, the activities planned did not provide sufficient challenge to extend the learning of all the children.
- The quality of the provision for literacy and mathematics is very good. The children have excellent opportunities to develop their language in literacy and numeracy across the curriculum through activity-based learning and the practical investigations provided for them by the teachers. The children's reading and writing skills are developed effectively through the well-considered use of contexts from the curricular areas of the world around us and personal development and mutual understanding.
- The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care in the school and nursery unit is outstanding. This is evident in the caring, supportive and inclusive ethos, the exemplary behaviour of the children who interact politely with their peers and the adults, and the quality of the working relationships at all levels which reflects the school motto of 'Forward Together'. The school has developed very good practice in target-setting at whole class and individual level to ensure that the children progress well personally, socially, spiritually and academically.

- The quality of provision for special educational needs is outstanding. The children who require additional support with aspects of their learning are supported very well through highly effective withdrawal sessions and appropriately differentiated strategies in the majority of classes. The individual education plans are focused clearly on the children's learning and there is rigorous regular monitoring and evaluation of their progress.
- The nursery unit provides very good opportunities for learning across almost all areas of the pre-school curriculum. The staff makes very effective use of natural and real items throughout the playroom to develop well the children's observation skills, extend their vocabulary and provide them with a wide range of creative experiences.

5. Leadership and management

The quality of leadership and management is outstanding.

- The senior management team provides highly strategic leadership in effecting improvement in the children's learning and the standards that they attain. The staff benefits from a well-devised, school-based staff development programme which emphasises the sharing of good practice. This significant, successful development work is informed by rigorous self-evaluation processes that are strongly focused on raising further the children's achievements and standards. The school development plan is well informed by a thorough analysis of internal performance data and the teachers' observations of the children's learning. The high quality action-planning process at individual class level ensures that the priorities for improvement impact positively on the learning and teaching across the school.
- The parents are well informed about their children's progress and the life and work of the school through, for example, monthly newsletters and the informative school website. There are regular opportunities provided for the parents to give feedback to the school through questionnaires. There is a good range of enrichment activities to enhance the children's learning experiences.
- The governors are fully involved in the process for school improvement and they monitor the outworking of the priorities for development through meetings with the subject co-ordinators. In addition, the governors view planning and visit classes in order to gain an understanding of the learning experiences of the children. They are enthusiastic about the school and make a very positive contribution to its life and work.
- On the basis of the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the school and nursery unit have comprehensive arrangements in place for safeguarding children; these arrangements reflect the guidance issued by the Department of Education (DE). In discussions with the children, they indicated that they feel happy in school and that they know who to speak to if they have any concerns about their well-being.

CONCLUSION

In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided in 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	
Number of Questionnaires Issued	100
Number of Questionnaires Returned	43
Percentage of Returns	43%
Number of Comments	27

Almost all of the responses from the parental questionnaires indicated a high level of satisfaction with the provision in the school. In particular, they highlighted the inclusive, family ethos, the hard work and dedication of the Principal and staff and that their children are very happy and making good progress.

NURSERY UNIT	
Number of Questionnaires Issued	52
Number of Questionnaires Returned	10
Percentage of Returns	19.2%
Number of Comments	5

All the responses from the nursery unit parental questionnaires indicated a high level of satisfaction with the provision in the nursery unit. In particular, they commented on the caring, child-centred ethos and stated that their children are well-settled and happy.

In discussions with the governors, they expressed their appreciation for the hard work and dedication of the Principal and staff and the commitment they show to improving further the standards of teaching and learning. The governors highlighted the diversity within the school community and the highly inclusive and supportive ethos. They also spoke of their concerns about deficiencies in the school accommodation. These concerns were shared by some of the parents.

TEACHERS QUESTIONNAIRES	
Number of Questionnaires Returned	25
Number of Comments	7

SUPPORT STAFF QUESTIONNAIRES	
Number of Questionnaires Returned	14
Number of Comments	0

All of the teachers and support staff completed a questionnaire. The comments made by the staff highlighted the caring family ethos, the team work and stated that they enjoy working at the school.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

- The doors to the rear and side entrances to the main school building are not secured and therefore open to access by unauthorised personnel.
- The mobile classrooms are not secured and therefore open to access by unauthorised personnel.
- There is severe traffic congestion at arrival and departure times each day, which poses a potential danger to the children.
- Several of the classroom doors do not have vision panels.

ACCOMMODATION

- There is damp in the wall facade, particularly in storage areas.
- There is an unhygienic smell coming from the drains in the staff toilets.

BASIC INFORMATION SHEET (BIS) - PRIMARY SCHOOLS

- A. i. **School: Holy Family Primary** iii. **Date of Inspection: W/B 03/12/12**
ii. **School Reference Number: 303-6562** iv. **Nature of Inspection: Focused**

B.

School Year	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
Year 1 Intake	78	65	70	76	85
Enrolments					
Primary	514	510	509	509	522
Reception	0	0	0	0	0
Nursery Unit	52	52	52	52	52
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): | | 95.2% | NI Avg Att: 94.7% | | | |
| | Average Attendance for those children on the
Special Educational Needs Register: | | 93.63% | | | | |
| | | | 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) | 23.6 | 1 | 0 | | 0 |
| | ii. | PTR (Pupil/Teacher Ratio): | 22.12 | NI PTR: 20.2 | | | |
| | iii. | Average Class Size: | 24.8 | | | | |
| | iv. | Class Size (Range): | 21 to 29 | | | | |
| | v. | Ancillary Support: | | | | | |
| | | Number of Hours Per Week: | | | | | |
| | | i. | Clerical support: | | 52 | | |
| | | ii. | Foundation Stage Classroom
Assistant Support: | | 122.5 | | |
| | | iii. | Additional hours of other
classroom assistant support: | | 211.25 | | |
| | vi. | Percentage of children with statements of special educational needs: | | | 2.11% | | |
| | vii. | Total percentage of children on the Special Needs Register: | | | 15.13% | | |
| | viii. | Number of children who are not of statutory school age: | | | 0 | | |
| | ix. | Percentage of children entitled to free school meals: | | | 18.39% | | |
| | 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
85.33% | Mathematics
85.33% | | Irish
N/A |

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