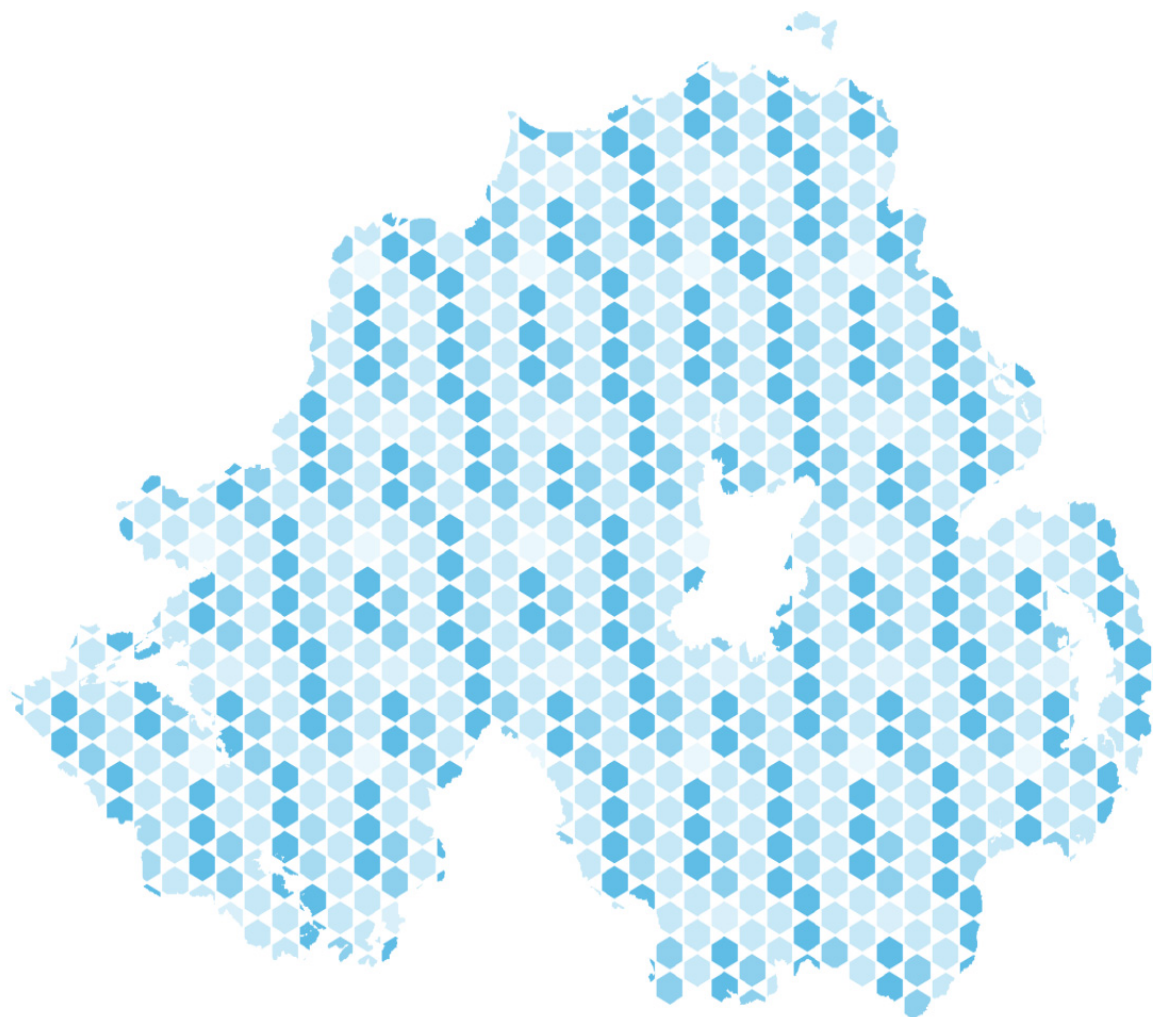


PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Killyleagh Primary School,
Co Down

Report of an Inspection
in November 2010

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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: Killyleagh Primary** iii. **Date of Inspection: W/B 29/11/10**
 ii. **School Reference Number: 401-1634** iv. **Nature of Inspection: Focused**

B.

School Year	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
Year 1 Intake	17	10	10	8	
Enrolments					
Primary	99	93	80	69	65
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): 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): 4 0 0 0
 (Full-time equivalent = 25 teaching hours)
- ii. PTR (Pupil/Teacher Ratio): 16.25 NI PTR: 20.7
- iii. Average Class Size: 16.25
- iv. Class Size (Range): 13 to 19
- v. Ancillary Support:
 Number of Hours **Per Week**:
- | | |
|---|----|
| i. Clerical support: | 20 |
| ii. Foundation Stage Classroom Assistant Support: | 20 |
| iii. Additional hours of other classroom assistant support: | 10 |
- vi. Percentage of children with statements of special educational needs: 0.15%
- vii. Total percentage of children on the Special Needs Register: 32%
- viii. Number of children who are **not** of statutory school age: 0
- ix. Percentage of children entitled to free school meals: 31%
- x. Percentage of children at the end of Key Stage 2 for 2009/10
 who attained level 4 and above in English and mathematics: **English** 73% **Mathematics** 73.5%

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 SCHOOL CONTEXT

Killyleagh Primary School is a controlled school, situated within the village of Killyleagh, County Down. Most of the children come from the village and the immediate area. The enrolment has declined steadily over the past five years, from 99 in 2006 to the current enrolment of 65 children. At the time of the inspection 31% of the children were entitled to free school meals and 32% of the children were identified as requiring help with aspects of their learning. In addition, there is one child who has English as an additional language.

The school has experienced a number of staffing difficulties over the past four years. The Vice-principal has been Acting-principal for two years and the overall staffing quota has recently been reduced by one.

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, the teaching and support staff to complete confidential questionnaires prior to the inspection. In addition, meetings were held with representatives from the Board of Governors (governors), and a representative group of children from years 6 and 7.

Fifty-seven questionnaires were issued to the parents; 27 (47%) were returned to Inspection Services Branch of which 15 contained additional written comments. Nearly all of the responses indicated a high level of satisfaction with the provision in the school. In particular, the parents appreciated the caring, approachable Acting-principal and staff; the child-centred ethos in which the children are very happy, the breakfast club and the support for children with additional learning needs.

Four teachers and eight support staff completed the online questionnaire; three of the teachers and three members of the support staff included written comments. The responses were highly positive and supportive of the work of the school.

The governors expressed their appreciation of the work of the school, the commitment of the staff to the children and the leadership provided by the Acting-principal. They also expressed concern about ongoing problems with damp in one part of the school building.

The children in year 6 spoke very positively about their classroom experiences and the range of extra-curricular activities available to them. They indicated that they can speak to their class teacher if they have worries about their safety or well-being.

An analysis of the questionnaires and the written comments made by the parents and the staff were shared with the Acting-principal and the governors.

1.4 PASTORAL CARE

The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care in the school is very good. Among the strengths are the very good working relationships at all levels, the effective inclusion of those children who are experiencing difficulties with aspects of their learning and the promotion of the children's confidence and self-esteem.

1.5 CHILD PROTECTION

The school has satisfactory arrangements in place for safeguarding children. These arrangements reflect the guidance issued by the Department of Education. The school has identified the need for a summary of the procedures for reporting concerns about child protection matters to be re-issued to the parents.

1.6 HEALTHY EATING AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

The school gives good attention to promoting healthy eating and physical activity, for example, through the healthy school meals and the free fruit for all children at break time. The area for improvement identified includes the need to develop more opportunities for the children to engage in healthy eating programmes and activities.

1.7 LINKS WITH THE PARENTS AND THE WIDER COMMUNITY

The school has been proactive in fostering links with the local community, notably through involvement in the Killyleagh Social Partnership, the Vikings festival and a local history group. Good links have been established with other primary and post-primary schools in the area and the school has, very recently, established a partnership with a primary school in the south of Ireland through the Dissolving Boundaries programme. The children have also performed at residential homes and a friendship group in the area.

The parents are encouraged to become involved in the life of the school. They are regularly invited to the school assembly and are kept well informed about school events through regular newsletters. They also have the opportunity to attend general curriculum meetings and an annual Open Day.

The Parent-Teacher Association is active in raising funds to support the purchase of additional resources for the school; this has recently included ICT equipment and reading materials.

2. ACHIEVEMENTS AND STANDARDS

2.1 LEARNING

Most of the children settle quickly to their work; they demonstrate good levels of interest and engagement and are keen to talk about what they are learning.

In the foundation stage (FS), the children learn through a combination of well-planned play-based and formal learning activities. Whilst the children are generally well settled and are making some progress in their learning, there is a need for the school to take greater account of the children's pre-school experience and knowledge in order to optimise their

progress. There is also a need for the school to review the policy and programmes for play-based learning in order to ensure that the planned activities adequately support the development of the children's skills in literacy and numeracy

An analysis of the key stage (KS) 2 assessment data over the past four years shows a gradual improvement in the school's performance in English and mathematics. However, the levels attained in English and mathematics are below the Northern Ireland (NI) average and below the average for schools in the same free school meals category*.

2.2 ENGLISH AND LITERACY

The quality of provision for English and literacy is satisfactory.

The literacy co-ordinator has been in post for seven years; she has identified important areas for development which are integral to the school's development plan. These include the need to develop the children's comprehension and writing skills in order to raise their overall levels of attainment. The whole-school planning for literacy provides a broad framework for progression in talking and listening, reading and writing.

The standard of talking and listening in the school is good. In the FS the children are exposed to a broad range of spoken language through effective modelling by the teacher. Effective questioning in all the classes enables the children to make extended contributions to whole-class discussion and to develop their thinking skills. Most of the children engage enthusiastically in talking and listening activities in class. In paired and group discussions in KS1 and 2 the children interact well with one another, listen to one another's views and respond appropriately.

The school promotes the enjoyment of reading through regular book fairs, visits to the local library, timetabled silent reading sessions and well-stocked class libraries. Across the year groups the children benefit from a range of reading experiences, including shared, guided and independent reading. In the FS the children's reading is developed through a combination of phonological strategies. The literacy co-ordinator has identified the need to develop and implement a whole-school phonological programme and has been pro-active in seeking appropriate staff development. The Education and Training Inspectorate (Inspectorate) endorse this as a key priority in order to ensure consistency and progression in the children's learning across the year groups. The children from the end of KS1 and KS2 who were observed reading did so fluently, with understanding and increasing expression. However, throughout the school there is a need to help the children to develop strategies to decode words when reading unfamiliar text. Whilst the majority of the children attain satisfactory standards in reading, there is a significant minority who are reading at a level lower than their chronological age.

The standard of the children's written work is satisfactory. In the best practice, the children's achievements in writing are celebrated in attractive, stimulating displays of their work in the classrooms and corridors. While there are examples of extended writing in the children's workbooks, there are missed opportunities to develop the children's independent writing more fully across the curriculum. The teachers need to ensure that a wider range of opportunities to practise and refine further the children's writing skills are planned for and optimised across all areas of learning.

The children use ICT competently for the purposes of research, to enhance the presentation of their writing and facilitate the drafting and editing process.

* 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.

2.3 MATHEMATICS AND NUMERACY

The overall quality of provision in mathematics is satisfactory.

The co-ordinator has been in post for three years. She is leading the school's current focus on developing the children's investigative and problem solving skills, has developed a useful action plan to guide this work and has begun to monitor the implementation of the plan. She has, appropriately, identified the need to develop a more strategic approach to monitoring and evaluating the quality of learning and teaching in mathematics, including the analysis and use of the school's data, in order to identify key priorities for development in this important area of learning.

There is a comprehensive whole-school programme for mathematics which outlines the progression for each area of the mathematics curriculum. Whilst the programme provides appropriate guidance for the teachers to create their medium-term and short-term planning, there is an over-reliance on a commercial mathematics scheme to guide the learning activities planned for the children.

There is a whole-school programme for the development of mental agility. However, during the inspection, only a very small number of mathematics lessons incorporated an effective mental mathematics activity; in these lessons the children were encouraged to think flexibly and to use accurate mathematical language to ask and respond to questions. This good practice needs to be shared and developed in all the classes.

In most of the lessons observed, the teachers built effectively on the children's previous knowledge and experience and differentiated the learning activities to meet the range of needs within the class. In the most effective practice, the teachers made the intended learning explicit for the children and successfully sustained the focus on learning throughout the lesson. In the less effective practice, there was insufficient pace and challenge to stimulate the children's thinking and to promote improvement in the standards they achieved.

In discussions with the children from year 7, they demonstrated a sound understanding of key concepts of shape and measures. However, they were often insecure in carrying out mental calculations; they drew on a narrow range of strategies to solve mathematical problems and lacked confidence in articulating their thought processes.

Whilst a majority of the children attain standards in mathematics which are in keeping with their age and stage of development, there is a small number of children, identified by the school, who are not attaining the standards in mathematics of which they are capable.

The teachers are becoming familiar with the recently installed interactive whiteboards (IWB). During the inspection there were a few instances where the IWB was used effectively to introduce the mathematics lesson.

3. THE QUALITY OF THE PROVISION FOR LEARNING

3.1 PLANNING

The teachers plan their work conscientiously; they complete comprehensive evaluations of their planning which they use effectively to inform future teaching and learning. In the best practice, the whole-school planning in literacy and numeracy is effectively translated into

medium- and short-term planning to ensure consistent progression in the children's learning. However, in a number of the lessons observed, the planned teaching and learning activities were pitched at too low a level to ensure the children make adequate progress in their learning.

3.2 TEACHING

During the inspection, the quality of the teaching observed ranged from satisfactory to very good. In half of the lessons observed, the teaching was good and, in a small number of lessons, the teaching was very good.

In the best practice there is a clear focus on learning throughout the lesson; the teachers manage a range of learning activities to meet the varied needs within the class and they use skilful questioning to stimulate the children's thinking and to promote their independence. In these lessons the teachers also make purposeful use of praise to promote positive behaviour and to raise the children's confidence and self-esteem.

In the less effective practice, the teachers have low expectations of what the children can achieve; there are limited opportunities for them to engage in collaborative learning; and there is a lack of pace and insufficient challenge.

3.3 ASSESSMENT

The teachers mark the children's written work regularly. In the best practice, they use the planned learning intentions as the basis for their marking and advise the children, orally or in writing, on how to improve the quality of their work. The teachers are also beginning to encourage the children to engage in peer and self-assessment. There is a need for this work to be developed further in order to ensure that the children's assessments have a clear focus on learning. In a majority of the classes, the teachers make effective use of individual whiteboards to monitor the children's accuracy in the completion of tasks.

The school carries out a range of standardised testing to identify individual children's potential for learning and to confirm their levels of attainment in English and mathematics. Within the past twelve months the teachers have begun to analyse and use the outcomes from the tests to inform planning at individual and class level. The senior leaders have, appropriately, identified the need to develop further the analysis of the information gained and to use it more strategically to identify priorities for whole-school development, to address the issue of underachievement and to raise the overall standards in literacy and numeracy.

The parents are kept well informed of their children's progress through an annual interview, informal meetings and two annual written reports.

3.4 SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

The quality of the provision for special educational needs is good.

The special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) has been in post for two years. She has established very good communication with the class teachers and the learning support teacher. The SENCO works closely with the class teachers to draw up individual education plans. She has appropriately identified the need to review the current format of these plans in order to focus the targets more sharply on meeting the children's' needs and to facilitate more efficient tracking of their progress.

The needs of the children are met through additional support teaching in withdrawal sessions for individuals and small groups. In these sessions the learning support teacher employs a range of highly effective teaching strategies to develop the children's literacy and numeracy skills. It will be important to share this good practice with all the teachers in the school.

The school has initiated an effective reading partnership programme to provide targeted support to those children who require additional support in reading. There is clear evidence that all the children involved in the programme make significant progress. The school development plan (SDP) has rightly identified the need to extend this effective part of the school's provision.

4. LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

4.1 LEADERSHIP

The overall quality of leadership and management is satisfactory.

The school has experienced a number of staffing difficulties over the past four years. The Principal retired two years ago. Since then, the Vice-principal has taken on the role of Acting-principal. She has been willingly and effectively supported in this position by the senior teacher, the other teachers and support staff. In addition to leading and managing the school, the Acting-principal has responsibility for teaching a composite year 6/7 class.

Over the past two years the Acting-principal has provided stability and direction for the school; she has initiated important procedures to guide the school's development and she has worked effectively to raise the school's profile within the community.

4.2 PLANNING FOR IMPROVEMENT

The school's self-evaluation and development planning processes are satisfactory.

The SDP outlines a number of appropriate priorities for development and is supported by a range of useful action plans. The senior leaders have identified the need to develop further the monitoring procedures within the school in order to evaluate strategically the quality of learning and teaching, to inform the school development planning process more fully and to promote improvement in the standards achieved by the children. The SDP is compliant with the Department of Education's relevant School Development Planning Regulations.

4.3 ACCOMMODATION

The school building is approximately 70 years old and presents the natural difficulties associated with a building of that era. The teachers have made effective use of all the available accommodation, for example, by creating a library and dedicated areas for art and play-based learning. They have appropriately identified the need to develop the outdoor environment in order to extend the children's learning experiences; this has been included as a priority in the SDP.

The standards of caretaking and cleaning are very good.

4.4 RESOURCES, FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE

The school is adequately resourced to support learning and teaching in literacy, especially in reading materials. However, there is a need to improve the range and quality of resources to support play-based learning and practical mathematics activities.

The governors take a keen interest in developments within the school; they are very supportive of the Acting-principal and of the work of the school. They are fully aware of the school's financial position and of the potential impact of the falling enrolment trends.

It will be important that the employing authority, governors and 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 staff.

4.5 STAFF DEVELOPMENT

A number of appropriate staff development priorities have been identified in the SDP. It will be important for these priorities to be reviewed in light of the inspection findings and the outcomes from future self-evaluation in order to ensure that the staff develop and implement agreed teaching strategies consistently throughout the school.

5. CONCLUSION

5.1 The strengths of the school include:

- the enthusiastic, co-operative and well-mannered children;
- the good quality of the teaching in the majority of the lessons observed;
- the caring, inclusive ethos which is characterised by the very good working relationships at all levels;
- the good quality of the provision for children with special educational needs and the good progress they make;
- the strong links established with the local community; and
- the dedicated, hard-working Acting-principal, teachers and support staff who work effectively as a team.

5.2 The areas for improvement include the need to:

- raise the children's levels of attainment in literacy and numeracy; and
- develop further the monitoring procedures within the school in order to evaluate strategically the quality of learning and teaching, to inform the school development planning process more fully and to effect improvement in the standards achieved by the children.

5.3 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 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 Inspectorate will monitor and report on the school's progress in addressing the areas for improvement.

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