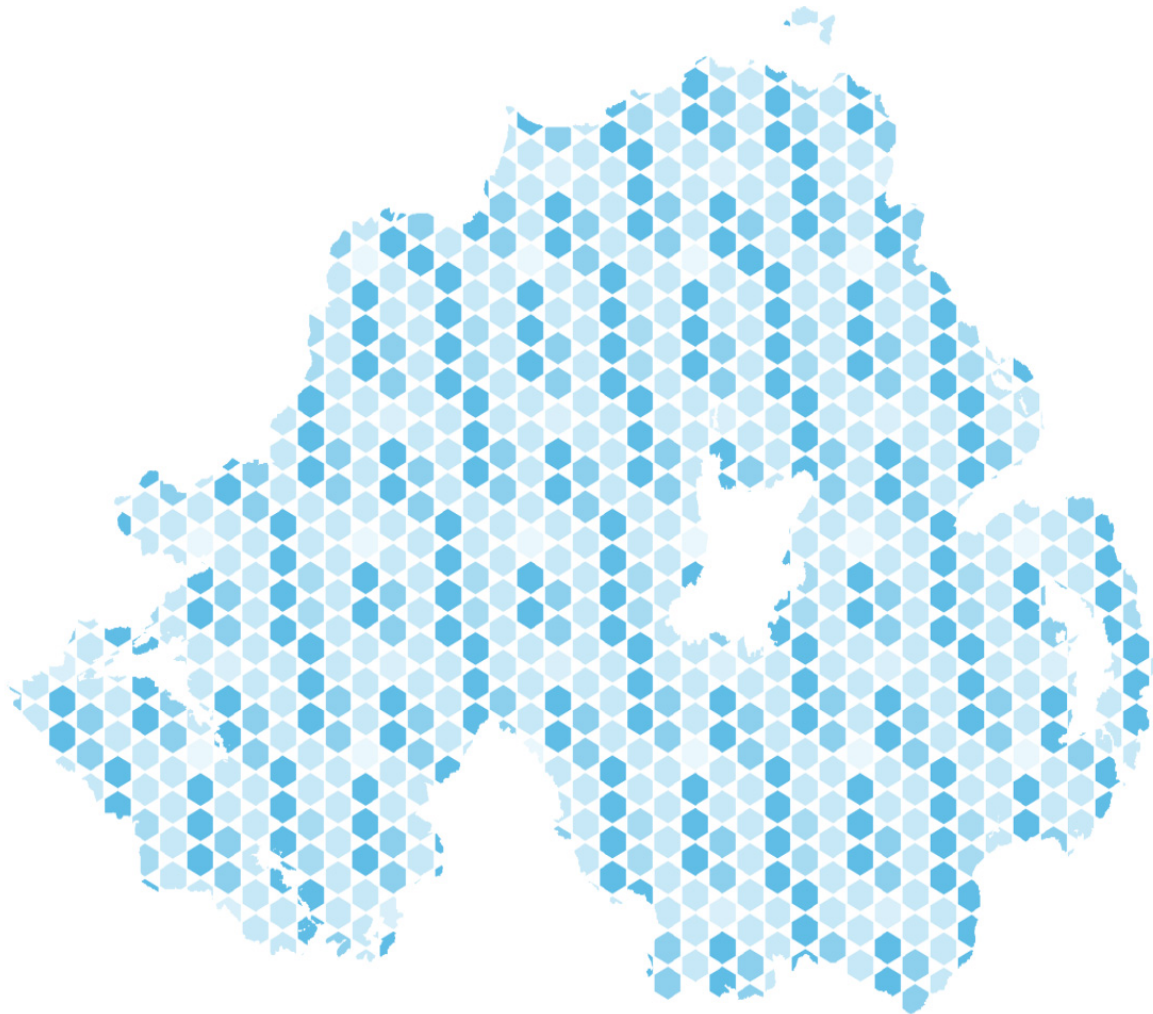


PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Millennium Integrated Primary
School and Nursery Unit,
Belfast

Report of an Inspection
in November 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	6
5.	CONCLUSION	6
6.	THE NURSERY UNIT	8
	STATISTICAL INFORMATION (NURSERY UNIT)	
	APPENDIX	

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. INTRODUCTION

1.1 SCHOOL CONTEXT

Millenium Integrated Primary School is located to the south of Belfast, between Carryduff and Saintfield. The enrolment in the school has grown over the past four years and currently stands at 222 children; of which 25 attend the Nursery Unit. The children come from a surrounding area that includes Carryduff, Saintfield and Ballygowan. At the time of the inspection, approximately 4% of the children were entitled to receive free school meals and approximately 22% of the children were identified by the school as having special educational needs.

1.2 FOCUS

The inspection focused on:

- the quality of the children's achievements and standards in literacy and numeracy;
- the quality of provision for learning; and
- the quality of leadership and management.

The use of information and communication technology (ICT) to support learning, and the school's arrangements for pastoral care, including child protection, were evaluated. In addition, the school was selected as part of a sample to monitor the implementation of the healthy food in schools initiative.

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 confidential questionnaires prior to the inspection, as well as meetings with representatives from the Board of Governors (governors), and a group of children from year 6. Twenty-four questionnaires were issued to the parents of the nursery unit; approximately 75% were returned to Inspection Services Branch (ISB) and nine contained additional written comments. All comments were highly supportive of the nursery and included mention of the friendly, highly motivated staff and the nurturing learning environment. One hundred and ninety-six questionnaires were issued to the parents of the primary school; approximately 66% were returned to ISB and 34 contained additional written comments. Almost all of the comments reflected favourably on the life and work of the school and included reference to the professionalism and approachability of the staff, the commitment to meeting the needs of all the children and the hard work and dedication of the Principal.

Thirteen of the teaching staff and sixteen members of the support staff responded to the online questionnaires. Three teachers and one support staff member supplied additional comments. All of the responses commented positively on the very good working relationships across the school and the dedicated team work to develop the school in the best interests of all of the children.

In discussions held with the governors they expressed strong support for the life and work of the school and the nursery unit and in particular praised the commitment and dedication of the Principal and the hard work of the staff.

In discussions held with the year 6 children, they talked enthusiastically, articulately and warmly about their school. In particular, they valued the caring, supportive and approachable teachers, the many opportunities available to become involved in interesting extra-curricular activities and to be elected as a member of the 'Junior Board of Governors,' and the availability of 'Diary Time' to discuss with a member of staff any worries they may have. They indicated unanimously that they feel happy and safe in school and know what to do if they have any concerns about their well-being.

The Education and Training Inspectorate (Inspectorate) has reported to the Principal and representatives of the governors the main messages emerging from the questionnaires and the discussions.

1.4 PASTORAL CARE

The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care in the school and the nursery unit is outstanding. Among the strengths are: the contribution made by the staff to all of the children to promote and maintain a well-organised and supportive environment for learning; the arrangements in place for transition between nursery, foundation stage (FS) and key stage (KS) 2; the personal development programme which encourages the children to explore values, talk about feelings and develop their understanding of diversity issues; the exemplary behaviour of the children, and the good links established with the parents and the local community.

1.5 CHILD PROTECTION

The school and the nursery unit have very good and 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 gives very good attention to promoting healthy eating and physical activity, for example through the annual Healthy Lifestyles Week and a descriptive Healthy Eating Policy that supports the school in encouraging the children to adopt healthy lifestyles.

1.7 LINKS WITH PARENTS AND THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

The school encourages and enjoys the strong support of the parents. The communication between school and home is frequent and effective and helps the parents to understand more about the working of the school. Together with the written communications, the staff organise a range of curriculum meetings to provide the parents with information and advice on how to support effectively their children's learning.

2. ACHIEVEMENTS AND STANDARDS

2.1 LEARNING

In all year groups, the children are highly motivated and engaged in the learning process. In the lessons observed, there were frequent examples of children giving thoughtful and articulate responses and they experience a wide range of opportunities to reflect on their own learning including effective plenary sessions at the end of lessons. There were also examples of outstanding learning opportunities through the play-based learning sessions both indoors and outdoors.

Considering the wide range of ability of the children which the school includes, from the most able to children with some challenging learning needs, the teachers and learning support assistants are very effective in overcoming any barriers to learning and ensuring that all of the children make very good progress.

In mathematics the school's performance over the past four years at KS2 has fluctuated from above to below the average for Northern Ireland with the most recent data indicating that standards have improved.

When compared with similar schools in the same free school meals category, the children's levels of attainment in mathematics at KS2 remain below average; wide-ranging strategies to improve standards and achievements in numeracy for all of the children have been identified and are currently being implemented well.

End of KS2 results show an improvement in standards in English, although with some year on year variation, over the past four years. By the end of KS2, almost all of the children achieve at the expected level of attainment in English, in line with schools with a similar free school meals entitlement. Furthermore, a majority exceed this level of attainment, a considerably higher level than in similar schools.

2.2 ENGLISH AND LITERACY

The quality of the provision for English and literacy is outstanding.

The literacy co-ordinator provides clear purpose to and highly effective management and planning for the class teaching in English and literacy across the whole school. The teachers have committed themselves to raise further the standards in several areas of the children's literacy; some of these aspects are already good.

All of the children have excellent opportunities to listen respectfully, to co-operate well with each other and to talk about their play and their work. Good relationships and effective questioning by the teachers encourage all of the children to extend their speech and take active roles, to which they respond with enthusiasm. In many instances, they contribute mature oral responses, present persuasively and articulate and justify well-researched and well-expressed opinions. The children also make and review digital videos of their work to assess themselves and their peers and to improve their work further.

Reading is taught through a wide range of word recognition strategies and a recently-introduced phonics programme, including effective approaches adopted from reading recovery methods. The children enjoy listening to stories and the majority are confident with attempting unfamiliar texts. A good range of fiction, poems, plays and non-fiction books are enjoyed and Internet sources such as news stories are used for research. The children enjoy listening to stories, the majority are confident with attempting unfamiliar texts: the standards of reading are good.

From the early years, the children are introduced to different forms of print and experiment with letter and word formation in many interesting ways and they are encouraged to 'have a go'. There are very good opportunities for emergent and for increasingly independent writing to develop and for the children to master a growing variety of written styles for different purposes and audiences. There are many examples of high quality, extensive, creative and

imaginative prose and poetry. The teachers have identified a need to continue to help some of the children to present their hand-writing more clearly and to spell more accurately. The children's writing improves in response to encouraging written comments by the teachers. There are many examples of high quality, extensive, creative and imaginative prose and poetry: the standards of writing overall are high.

There are some very innovative uses of ICT throughout the school; including some practices which have been recognised through a prestigious international award. To help them develop many aspects of their language and literacy, the children make use a variety of devices, software, cameras and online services, such as Learning NI, to research, to create, to communicate and to present. The revised CCEA ICT accreditation scheme is being re-introduced with a view to broadening yet further the integration of ICT across the whole curriculum.

2.3 MATHEMATICS AND NUMERACY

The quality of the provision in mathematics and numeracy is very good, and the standards at KS2 are improving.

The numeracy co-ordinator provides outstanding leadership and has a clear and progressive vision for the development of mathematics and numeracy within the school. She is a highly effective role-model of good practice and has been pro-active in supporting the teachers, support staff, parents and children in the improvement of this aspect of curriculum provision.

In the FS, the children are developing their confidence in the use of mathematical language and their understanding of mathematical concepts through a range of practical activities, including play-based learning. At KS1 and KS2, the children use mathematical language with increasing fluency and have a good understanding of number, measure, shape and space and handling data.

As a result of the teachers' ongoing evaluations of the mathematics programme, a wide range of flexible problem-solving strategies has been developed which includes mental mathematics activities in relevant contexts which are used extensively to promote mathematical thinking and understanding. Those children identified as requiring further support in numeracy, benefit greatly from the carefully structured additional sessions which integrate a range of well-chosen strategies and short, sharp motivating activities, to address gaps in learning, and to enable the children to develop personal confidence in their work.

Across both key stages, effective questioning and opportunities for discussion broaden the children's understanding of key concepts and vocabulary in numeracy. Information and communication technology was used to stimulate the children's thinking during mental mathematics calculations and to enhance learning. In discussions with the year 7 children, the most able have a very good understanding of place value, number facts, estimation, measures, and shape and space. The majority of the children enjoy their learning in mathematics and numeracy and make good progress in line with their ability.

3. THE QUALITY OF PROVISION FOR LEARNING

3.1 PLANNING

There is very thorough and consistent planning which guides well the day to day work of the school including giving effective guidance to support staff. The planning for both English and mathematics facilitates a consistent approach to preparation and a very good structure for lessons, enabling coherence, differentiation and progression.

3.2 TEACHING

Most of the teaching observed during the inspection was good or better; two-thirds was very good or outstanding, in almost equal measure.

The characteristics of effective practice included the negotiation of success criteria with the children at the start of lessons, the use of a wide range of teaching strategies and activities, the use of effective questioning to promote oracy and thinking skills and the excellent use of ICT to support learning as well as teaching.

Notably, the teaching was often very effectively supported by the well guided classroom assistants who have developed a good range of skills in helping children, who can sometimes find it difficult to manage in a classroom setting, to be well disposed to learn.

3.3 ASSESSMENT

Marking is of a high standard. The teachers annotate the work with positive and sensitive comments on how the children can improve on their work. The children are encouraged to assess themselves against their individual targets.

There is a high quality culture of self-evaluation within the school and the Principal and Vice-principal have played a key role in establishing this development. Self-evaluation by the teachers is most effective at bringing about continued and well coordinated improvement: the literacy coordinator and the numeracy coordinator, together with the Principal, regularly monitor the children's work, observe the teaching and provide highly focused, supportive and professional feedback to the teachers and, at times, to the learning support assistants. Shared moderation of samples of the children's work enables the teachers to draw out the implications for their teaching, review its effectiveness in raising standards and identify where children would benefit from additional support. The school makes a very adept use of an extensive range of performance data in order to track individual children's progress, set appropriate targets and demonstrate the very good value which is added to each child's progress and development by the school. The assessment arrangements enable the school to monitor and evaluate effectively the provision for the wide range of learning needs experienced by all of the children, including the most able.

Parents have also benefited from workshops on the assessment arrangements within the school.

3.4 SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

The overall quality of provision for children who require additional support with aspects of their learning is good. The school has created an environment in which the children feel included, valued and supported in their learning. Appropriate emphasis is placed on collating information on the needs of the children and relevant information, including detailed, personalised and informative individual education plans is discussed and exchanged among the staff. As a consequence, planning for lessons across all classes is of a very high quality and linked effectively to a broad range of learning activities which are accessible to all the children. In the best practice, excellent use of ICT ensures the learning is well directed. The learning support teachers and assistants provide additional support of a satisfactory to very good quality. The provision enhances the work of the class teachers and was best when the children were able to see connections to their learning, for example in the withdrawal sessions for mathematics, which they can apply in their classrooms. Notably, reading recovery support is of an outstanding quality though under used to support the literacy development of those children who would benefit from this approach. Progress for

the majority of the children receiving additional support is slow given their baseline assessment levels but progress in personal and social development is very good as the children can participate in class activities, work increasingly on their own or in small groups and know when and how to seek help when required. The need to raise the quality of the support for literacy for a small minority of the children is an area for improvement.

4. LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

4.1 LEADERSHIP

The Principal has been in post since the opening of the school in 2000. She provides outstanding leadership which is underpinned by her commitment to promoting inclusion and the determination to meet the needs of and raise the standards for all the children in the school. She leads by example and is very effectively supported by her Vice-principal.

4.2 PLANNING FOR IMPROVEMENT

The school development plan (SDP) sets out appropriate priorities for the medium and longer term. The accompanying action plans underpin well and supply the necessary detail required to complement the whole school priorities. The school meets fully, the requirements of the School Development Plans Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2005.

4.3 RESOURCES, FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE

The governors contribute effectively to the overall strategic planning and policy development for the school. They are well-informed about the work of the school.

4.4 ACCOMMODATION

Very good use is made of all the available space in the school; the staff work diligently to create inviting, language rich learning environments in the classrooms and in the circulation areas providing forums to celebrate the children's illustrated writing and their wider learning. The school is maintained well. However, given the significant increases in the enrolment, there is a need for an economic appraisal of the adequacy of the existing accommodation.

5. CONCLUSION

5.1 The strengths of the school include:

- the outstanding leadership of the Principal, very effectively supported by the Vice-principal;
- the high expectations of the teachers reflecting the inclusive nature of the school and its supportive ethos, leading to children who are well motivated and engaged in learning;
- the outstanding quality of the pastoral provision both in the school and in the nursery unit;
- the quality of the teaching observed, the majority of which was very good or outstanding;

- the consistently improving standards throughout the school in mathematics and English and a majority of the children achieving significantly above the level expected in English at the end of KS2;
- the effective culture of self-evaluation which ensures that the quality of the teaching and learning continues to improve.

5.2 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. THE NURSERY UNIT

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

- the positive and inclusive ethos of the nursery with outstanding relationships established at all levels.
- the progress made to date by the children in particular, their developing communication and language skills, personal, social and emotional development, interest in the world around us and mathematical language;
- the broad and balanced range of learning experiences for the children in all areas of the pre-school curriculum.
- the instances of good quality staff interaction in promoting the children's care, development and thinking and their commitment to improving the quality of the provision;
- the significant improvements made to the learning environment both indoors and outdoors; the good opportunities for learning in all areas of the curriculum, in particular, the development of and outstanding use made of the outdoor play areas; and
- the outstanding links with the parents which support the smooth transition of the children to year one in the primary school.

6.2 The inspection has identified the following areas for improvement:

- improve the organisation of the transitional times between routines and activities in order to maximise the children's learning opportunities and experiences fully; and
- develop further the planning and assessment methods in order to ensure that the information gained through the observations of the children's play is clearly linked into the future plans and that there is a sharper focus on promoting the learning inherent in the planned programme.

6.3 In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by the nursery unit is good. The nursery has important strengths in most of its educational and pastoral provision. The inspection has identified areas for improvement which the nursery has demonstrated the capacity to address. The Inspectorate will monitor the unit's progress on the areas for improvement.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

- A risk assessment of the parking arrangements in the school's grounds needs to be carried out.

**STATISTICAL INFORMATION ON MILLENNIUM INTEGRATED PRIMARY SCHOOL
NURSERY UNIT, BELFAST (406-6644)**

1. Details of Children

Number of children:	Class 1	Class 2
Attending full-time	0	0
Attending part-time	25	0
Under 3 years of age*	2	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.	0%
Average attendance for the previous year.	96%

2. Duration of Sessions

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

3. Details of Staff

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

Number of: ****	
Students	1
Trainees	0

**** Total placements since September of current year

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

Number issued	24
Percentage returned	75%
Number of written comments	9

© CROWN COPYRIGHT 2011

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

