

PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Moyallon Primary School,
Craigavon

Report of an Inspection
in April 2012



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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: Moyallon Primary** iii. **Date of Inspection: W/B 16/04/12**
 ii. **School Reference Number: 501-6543** iv. **Nature of Inspection: Focused**

B.

School Year	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Year 1 Intake	26	29	29	29	31
Enrolments					
Primary	164	172	175	176	189
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): 97.7% **NI Avg Att: 94.7%**

Average Attendance for those children on the
 Special Educational Needs Register: 97.3%

Primary & Reception	Nursery Unit	Special Unit	Irish Medium Unit
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- D. i. Number of Teachers
 (including the principal and part-time teachers): 8.96 0 0 0
 (Full-time equivalent = 25 teaching hours)

ii. PTR (Pupil/Teacher Ratio): 21.1 NI PTR: 20.2

iii. Average Class Size: 27

iv. Class Size (Range): 20 to 31

- v. Ancillary Support:
 Number of Hours **Per Week**:
- | | |
|---|------|
| i. Clerical support: | 25 |
| ii. Foundation Stage Classroom Assistant Support: | 35 |
| iii. Additional hours of other classroom assistant support: | 50.7 |

vi. Percentage of children with statements of special educational needs: 1%

vii. Total percentage of children on the Special Needs Register: 14%

viii. Number of children who are **not** of statutory school age: 0

ix. Percentage of children entitled to free school meals: 7%

- 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 | Mathematics | Irish |
| 100% | 100% | N/A |

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 SCHOOL CONTEXT

Moyallon Primary School is located in a rural setting between the towns of Portadown and Gilford. The children come from the local and surrounding areas. The school has been oversubscribed over the past four years and the enrolment currently stands at 189. Approximately 7% of the children are entitled to free school meals and 14% have been identified as needing additional support with aspects of their learning, including a small number of children who have statements of special educational needs (SEN).

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 staff and the 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.

Of the 134 questionnaires issued to the parents, 63% were returned to Inspection Services Branch, including 38 which contained additional written comments. A majority of the questionnaires expressed high levels of satisfaction with the life and work of the school. In most of their written comments the parents highlighted; the welcoming, caring and family atmosphere, the good standard of education, the support for the children with additional learning needs, and the importance of the school in the local community. An analysis of the questionnaires and the comments made were shared with the Principal and the governors.

Eight of the teachers and six of the support staff responded to the online questionnaires. The responses indicated very high levels of support for the Principal and the work of the school. The staff reported that they feel valued, enjoy working in the school and work collaboratively as a team in developing the provision in the best interests of the children.

The governors expressed their strong support for the work of the school. In particular, they highlighted the caring and dedicated staff; the very good relationships and positive ethos in the school and its standing in the local community.

In discussions held with a group of children in year 6, they spoke enthusiastically about the friendly ethos of their school and the caring teachers who support them well in their learning. They also indicated that they feel safe in school and know who to speak to if they have any concerns.

1.4 PASTORAL CARE

The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care in the school is very good. The children are friendly and welcoming, and their behaviour is exemplary. An inclusive and supportive ethos permeates the school; the staff places a strong emphasis on the development of the children's self-worth and confidence, and on the celebration of their work and achievements. The well-planned Personal Development and Mutual Understanding (PDMU) programme integrates effectively with other areas of learning. The school has made good links with another local school to explore mutual understanding about similarities and differences. In addition, good progress is being made to involve the children more fully in the decision-making process about issues which affect them in school through the recently established Eco Team.

1.5 CHILD PROTECTION

The school has 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 gives very good attention to promoting healthy eating and physical activity. The children are encouraged to follow, and made aware of, the importance of a healthy lifestyle through the school's healthy break provision and the wide range of sporting activities.

1.7 LINKS WITH PARENTS AND THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

The school operates an open-door policy and encourages the parents to discuss matters of concern or interest with the class teacher or Principal. The parents receive curriculum updates on the topics the children are learning about from the class teachers and information about the children's learning through an annual written report and one formal parent-teacher consultation. The school newsletter and the website are used well to showcase and celebrate the children's achievements and learning experiences. The children benefit from the meaningful links with the local community which extend and enhance their learning experiences, and from the strong links with the local post-primary schools which aid the transition to the next stage of their education. The school has developed curricular links with two local primary schools which provide a forum to share good practice and contribute to the professional development of staff. The school values the support of the parents and the additional funds raised by the parents' association which are used to purchase resources and to enhance the provision for the children.

2. ACHIEVEMENTS AND STANDARDS

2.1 LEARNING

The children are highly motivated and confident, and engage well with one another in the learning process. Most of the children take responsibility for their learning and persevere in group work activities; they are able to take turns, adopt roles, communicate effectively and collaborate to make decisions.

An analysis of the key stage (KS) 2 assessment data over the past three out of four years shows that the school's performance in English and mathematics is consistently above both the Northern Ireland (NI) average and the average for schools in the same free school meal category. An analysis of the school's internal data indicates that most of the children are working at or above a level commensurate with their age in English and mathematics.

The school's data indicates that most of the children with SEN make very good progress in English and mathematics. The children have developed positive attitudes to learning and with very good support, are keen to overcome the barriers to their learning.

2.2 ENGLISH AND LITERACY

The quality of provision for English and literacy is good.

The literacy co-ordinator is recently appointed in September, 2011 and has identified appropriate areas for development following a thorough audit of the literacy provision.

Across the key stages the children have very good talking and listening skills. In the foundation stage (FS) the children are able to develop a wide range of literacy skills during well-planned play-based learning activities. During the inspection, they were observed engaging in problem-solving discussions whilst participating in mini-beast themed art activities and outdoor construction. Small groups of the children also took part in shared reading, role play and writing activities. In KS1, well-planned talking and listening activities including role-plays and interviewing skills are used effectively to enhance and support learning across the curriculum and the development of the children's independent writing. The children in a KS2 class analysed the use of language in a novel excerpt and were able to express their thoughts and feelings drawing on their own sensory ideas. The good practice of engaging in a creative way with more challenging novels and writings in order to improve further the children's inferential skills, should be developed across KS2.

Throughout the school the children experience a variety of approaches to reading and are encouraged to read for research, personal interest and pleasure. The school library is attractively displayed and the children reported that they enjoy using the library and were happy with the selection of books available. Across the FS and KS1, the children make very good progress in the development of a wide range of reading strategies and were observed applying their reading skills across the curriculum. The standard of reading in the school is very good and most of the children in KS1 and 2 are reading at a level appropriate for their age.

The standard of written work achieved by the children is good. In the FS, the children are encouraged to write their own words and sentences and there are good examples of early independent writing. The children in KS1 develop as writers through well-structured guided writing lessons. The teachers need to encourage the children to use dictionaries, thesauri and other strategies in order to access and spell the words they need to write independently. In the best practice, the children in KS1 and 2 are able to write in different forms including, poems, letters, plays, reports, stories and instructions and they are encouraged to plan, draft and edit their writing.

Information and communication technology is effectively integrated into classroom activities; the children make good use of ICT to draft, edit and present their work to a good standard. Digital microphones have been introduced to enable the children to record and present their work in a different medium.

2.3 MATHEMATICS AND NUMERACY

The overall quality of the provision for mathematics is very good.

The numeracy co-ordinator engenders a collegial staff approach to the effective development of the mathematics and numeracy provision.

The children have benefited from the recent whole-school focus on the four operations in mathematics, and this is particularly evident in their quick and accurate recall of number facts. This work contributes well to their learning in all areas of the mathematical curriculum. The children demonstrate high levels of confidence in mathematics and engage enthusiastically with practical problem-solving tasks. They use a range of resources, including interactive games, programmable devices and websites to support their learning in numeracy. In the best practice, the teachers set the learning in meaningful contexts based on the children's experiences and interests, and across other areas of the curriculum; they make effective and skilful use of routines, everyday situations and incidental opportunities to promote using mathematics.

In the FS, the children's early mathematical language and understanding is effectively developed through a range of well-resourced and well-planned play-based activities. During discussions with year 4 and year 7 children, they demonstrated very good knowledge and understanding of important mathematical ideas and concepts across all areas of the mathematics curriculum. They were flexible in their thinking and able to explain their strategies.

Overall, the standards in mathematics are very good and by the end of KS2 most of the children achieve standards that are in line with their abilities.

3. THE QUALITY OF PROVISION FOR LEARNING

3.1 PLANNING

The teachers have worked hard to develop comprehensive long-term and medium-term planning across the curriculum. The thematic planning, using a topic to connect the areas of learning, supports effectively a range of stimulating learning experiences. In the best practice, the children learn in meaningful contexts to develop a range of skills across the curriculum. In a few instances, there are some missed opportunities in the planning to maximise the potential of the planned activities to challenge the more able children. It will be important to continue to develop the evaluation of planning in order to adapt the planning where necessary to meet the needs and interests of all the children.

3.2 TEACHING

The quality of the lessons observed ranged from outstanding to satisfactory.

During the inspection, most of the lessons observed were good or better and over half of all the lessons were very good or outstanding. There is an effective whole-school emphasis on the development of the children's thinking skills and personal capabilities. In the best practice, the teachers had high expectations, effectively differentiated the teaching and matched the work to both challenge and support the children's individual needs. The lessons had a good balance between whole-class teaching and opportunities for group and paired work during practical activities and discussions. The plenary sessions were used well to consolidate learning and develop thinking skills. In the minority of satisfactory lessons observed, the pace was too slow and too much time was spent on whole-class teaching thereby limiting the children's opportunities for more active learning.

3.3 ASSESSMENT

The school has recently developed an assessment for learning policy in response to the Council for Examinations and Assessment training in January 2012. In most of the classes, the teachers provide prompt oral feedback to improve the children's learning and they regularly mark the children's written work. In the best practice, effective marking promotes improvement and the children are encouraged to engage in self-evaluation of their learning. The school needs to develop a greater consistency in the application of the assessment of and for learning strategies, across all key stages.

The school uses a range of standardised and non-standardised testing to assess the children's level of achievement in English and mathematics. Recently, the staff has begun to use more effectively this assessment information to identify and target the more able children who have the potential to achieve at a higher level. The school provides booster sessions in literacy and numeracy and has identified the need to monitor more rigorously the effectiveness of the sessions in leading to improvement in the standards attained by the children.

3.4 SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

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

The school gives a high priority to those children who require support with their learning and allocates a substantial resource to improving the children's learning. The withdrawal support observed was of a very good quality and is linked effectively to the children's work in class through careful and regular liaison with the class teachers. There is a very inclusive and welcoming ethos for children with SEN in the school; the children are identified at an early stage through the appropriate use of the teachers' professional judgements, diagnostic and class tests.

The special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) provides very good leadership and management of the SEN provision and has updated the special needs policy. She is effectively developing a whole-school staff development programme for SEN and has identified the need to improve further the target-setting for the children's individual education plans.

The school receives beneficial multi-disciplinary support for those children requiring specialised help through, for example, the services of the Southern Education and Library Board (SELB) Curriculum Advisory Support Service (CASS) and other agencies to support learning and teaching, and the children's emotional development.

4. LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

4.1 LEADERSHIP

The overall quality of leadership and management is very good.

The Principal sets a positive tone for the school and gives a high priority to the well-being and care of all the children and to raising further the standards they attain. In his role as numeracy and assessment co-ordinator, he provides clear direction for school improvement. He effectively manages resources, and a range of organisational and staff changes including the effective KS1 job-share arrangements to provide a broad primary curriculum.

He is well-supported by a hard-working staff and committed Vice-principal who effectively performs a number of key roles as a class-teacher, SENCO and as the designated teacher for safeguarding the children.

4.2 PLANNING FOR IMPROVEMENT

The school improvement process is clearly focused on improving further the provision for the children and the school development plan is currently being reviewed in line with The Education (School Development Plans) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2010. The school improvement process is underpinned by a recent analysis of data. The Principal and the staff have engaged in an open and honest evaluation of leadership and management and the provision for learning using an appropriate self-evaluative tool. In order to take this work forward, it will be important to develop further the leadership and management roles of the curricular co-ordinators to support whole-school improvement through more rigorous monitoring, evaluating and action planning processes.

4.3 ACCOMMODATION

The teachers and support staff have created stimulating learning environments in the classrooms and in the shared resource areas, which support and celebrate the children's work in the school and local community. Good use is made of the available outdoor space to provide valuable learning opportunities for play and the world around us and it is appropriately identified for further development. The school is very well-maintained and the standard of caretaking is excellent.

4.4 RESOURCES, FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE

The school has a very good selection of resources to stimulate the children's interest and extend their understanding.

The governors are fully involved in the life and work of the school. They are supportive of the Principal and the staff, and assist with the financial planning and engage in the development of policies to guide the management of the school.

5. CONCLUSION

5.1 The strengths of the school include:

- the highly motivated and confident children who readily engage with their learning;
- the quality of most the teaching which was good to outstanding;
- the very good provision and standards achieved by the children in numeracy;
- the very good standards achieved by the children in talking and listening, and reading;
- the caring, inclusive and supportive environment for the children with special educational needs; and
- the effective leadership of the Principal and Vice-principal and the staff's diligent and collegiate approach to school development.

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 learners; and has demonstrated its capacity for sustained self-improvement.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

- The school needs to ensure that there is adequate outdoor lighting.

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