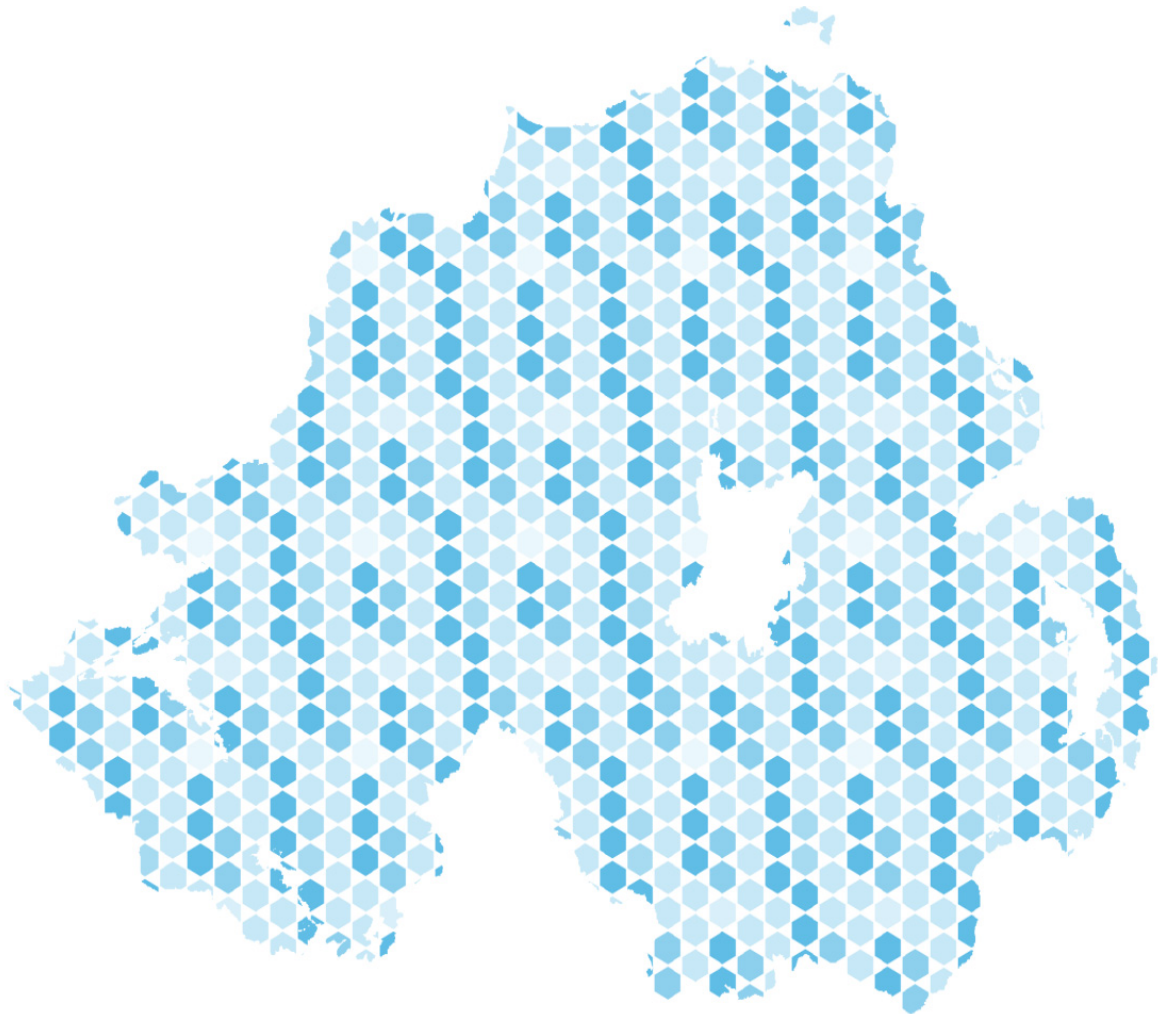


PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Oakwood Integrated Primary
School, Dunmurry, Belfast

Report of an Inspection
in January 2011

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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: Oakwood Integrated Primary Dunmurry, Belfast** iii. **Date of Inspection: W/B 17/01/11**
 ii. **School Reference Number: 406-6611** iv. **Nature of Inspection: Focused**

B.

School Year	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
Year 1 Intake	30	30	30	30	30
Enrolments					
Primary	207	209	207	208	201
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): 95.8% **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):
(Full-time equivalent = 25 teaching hours) | 9.72 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| ii. PTR (Pupil/Teacher Ratio): | 28.7 | NI PTR: 20.7 | | |
| iii. Average Class Size: | 28.7 | | | |
| iv. Class Size (Range): | 27 to 30 | | | |
| v. Ancillary Support:
Number of Hours Per Week : | i. Clerical support: | | 57 | |
| | ii. Foundation Stage Classroom Assistant Support: | | 82.66 | |
| | iii. Additional hours of other classroom assistant support: | | 153.33 | |
| vi. Percentage of children with statements of special educational needs: | 6.4% | | | |
| vii. Total percentage of children on the Special Needs Register: | 38.8% | | | |
| viii. Number of children who are not of statutory school age: | 0 | | | |
| ix. Percentage of children entitled to free school meals: | 9.5% | | | |
| 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
93.85% | Mathematics
92.85% | | |

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 SCHOOL CONTEXT

Oakwood Integrated Primary School is located on The Cutts, Dunmurry. The enrolment stands currently at 203 children. Most of the children attending come from a wide catchment area. At the time of the inspection, approximately 10% of the children were entitled to receive free school meals and approximately 39% 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.

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. In addition, the Education and Training Inspectorate (Inspectorate) held meetings with representatives from the Board of Governors (governors), and a representative group of children from year 6 and year 7.

One hundred and four questionnaires were issued to the parents; 47% were returned to the Inspection Services Branch and 27 contained additional written comments. Almost all of the responses were very positive and they indicated very high levels of parental satisfaction with the provision in the school, in particular, the caring learning environment, the professional commitment of all staff and the high quality of the leadership by the acting Principal.

Seven of the teachers and 13 members of the support staff responded to the online questionnaires. Most of the responses were affirmative of the work of the school.

The governors place a high value on the leadership of the acting Principal, the dedication of all staff and the quality of the pastoral care which develops the children's confidence and social skills. They support fully the school's commitment to innovation and evaluation of the curriculum.

The children in year 6 and year 7 spoke confidently and positively of their experiences at school, in particular, their access to a wide range of extra-curricular activities and their valued contribution to the life and work of the school through the mentoring system and the playground 'buddy system.' The children know how to behave and where to seek help if they have a concern about their safety.

The Inspectorate reported to the acting 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 is outstanding. An inclusive learning environment is a consequence of a well-constructed pastoral care system that all staff, children and parents understand. There is an appropriate emphasis on building the children's self-esteem by involving purposefully the children with their learning. The 'Class Council' and 'Pupil Council' systems provide the children with a genuine consultative process whereby their views are presented on future improvements within the school and on changes within the pastoral policy.

1.5 CHILD PROTECTION

The school has very good and comprehensive arrangements in place for safeguarding children. These arrangements reflect the guidance issued by the Department of Education (DE).

1.6 HEALTHY EATING AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

The school gives outstanding attention to promoting healthy eating. The Eco Committee organise the school's fruit shop from which the children can purchase a healthy snack at break time. The 'Green-fingers Club' and the 'Pupil Council' all contribute meaningfully to school policy and the practices which encourage the children to adopt healthy lifestyles.

1.7 LINKS WITH PARENTS AND THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

The school communicates effectively with the parents and the governors about the developments within the school. The staff organise a range of curriculum meetings to provide the parents with information on how to support effectively their children's learning, including the 'Super Learning Days' whereby children, parents/guardians and grandparents learn together through thematic activities. There is an active Parents' Council which provides additional resources that extend significantly the learning opportunities available to the children. The school supports regularly local and global charities.

2. **ACHIEVEMENTS AND STANDARDS**

2.1 LEARNING

In all year groups, the children are motivated highly and engage in the learning process. The children use well-embedded active learning approaches and are successful collaborative and independent learners, as exemplified through the thematic 'learning centre' activities. In all key stages, the children work competently on a range of ICT activities which complement and support their work in literacy and numeracy.

The children with special educational needs (SEN) benefit significantly from the learning support that meets their individual needs. The school's data indicates that almost all of the children make very good progress over time.

An analysis of the key stage (KS) 2 assessment data over the past four years shows that the school's performance is well above the Northern Ireland average. When compared with schools in a similar free school meals category, the children's attainment in English is outstanding and in mathematics, it is very good.

2.2 ENGLISH AND LITERACY

The overall quality of the provision in English is outstanding.

In all key stages, the children communicate confidently in a range of purposeful contexts. They listen to and consider the contributions of others, and convey their ideas and views with increasing maturity and fluency using extended responses in the discussions. The very high quality of the children's debate contributes to the 'pupil voice' and is in keeping with the school's ethos.

The children develop their skills systematically as they progress through the school's reading programme. They enjoy reading and give well-informed opinions about preferred genres and authors. During the inspection, carefully planned reading activities, which contained appropriate levels of interest, progression and challenge, were observed in all key stages.

The children achieve increasing levels of sophistication in their writing skills as they progress through the school's carefully planned writing programme. A newly devised spelling programme and agreed teaching approaches allow the children to write with confidence. In the foundation stage, the children experiment with early writing for meaningful purposes. By the end of KS2, the children apply their knowledge and understanding of the writing forms across various contexts and most children plan, draft and edit effectively their work.

The effective literacy co-ordinator leads the literacy team and the staff in the implementation of the English programme that ensures the children's language experiences are enjoyable, holistic and progressive.

2.3 MATHEMATICS AND NUMERACY

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

The comprehensive programme for mathematics provides appropriate guidance for the teachers to plan effectively for a balanced coverage of the mathematics curriculum.

The children work with enthusiasm and enjoyment, particularly during mental mathematics sessions, and engage well with other children to complete problem-solving and practical activities set in meaningful real life contexts. During the inspection, the highest attaining children in year 4 and year 7 demonstrated a very good knowledge of the important concepts and flexibility in their mathematical thinking.

The numeracy co-ordinator provides very good leadership. The ongoing development of the provision for mathematics and numeracy continues to be prioritised within the school development plan (SDP). The mathematics action plan is informed by the analysis of performance data and focuses appropriately on improving further the children's achievements in particular areas of the mathematics provision.

3. THE QUALITY OF PROVISION FOR LEARNING

3.1 PLANNING

The teachers' planning is very effective; it connects successfully all areas of learning to address the requirements of the skills infused Northern-Ireland Curriculum. The teachers work collaboratively with the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) and the learning support assistants (LSAs) to provide a coherent overview that ensures continuity

and progression in the children's knowledge, skills and understanding across the areas of learning. The teachers' six-weekly planning and the weekly planning include relevant evaluations of learning which inform future learning and teaching. The children contribute successfully to the planning to influence their learning and to evaluate their progress.

3.2 TEACHING

During the inspection, the quality of teaching in the lessons observed ranged from good to outstanding; two-thirds of the lessons evaluated were very good or outstanding. The effective practice included well-structured lessons in which the teachers set high expectations of the children's learning. They employed a wide range of highly effective teaching approaches which responded to the children's various learning styles, matching well the resources and materials to their interests and abilities. The learning intentions were clear and the success criteria were negotiated skilfully with the children. In almost all of the lessons observed, the teachers used skilful questioning to engage and challenge the children, and encouraged them to reflect on and explain their thinking using the appropriate vocabulary. The effective integration of ICT supported well the learning in both literacy and numeracy.

3.3 ASSESSMENT

The school has developed, and continues to refine, rigorous procedures for evaluating the quality of the children's learning and the progress of all children. The analysis of a broad range of performance data, such as, standardised tests and end-of-key-stage results, provides important evidence in tracking the children's learning and setting appropriate targets for on-going improvement in literacy and numeracy.

The teachers mark regularly the children's work with positive comments indicating how the children have achieved the learning objectives and how to develop further their skills in English and mathematics. The children are encouraged to self-evaluate against their individual targets and they use very good peer evaluation approaches.

3.4 SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

The overall quality of the provision in SEN is outstanding.

Thirty-nine per cent of the children have been identified by the school as requiring help with aspects of their learning; 7% of the children have a written statement of SEN. The school places a high importance on early identification and uses the teachers' professional knowledge and judgement, together with a wide range of diagnostic assessments to identify those children who would benefit from additional learning support. The children's individual education plans outline well-focused targets and approaches to support their learning and to guide the work of the teachers and the LSAs. Each child's progress is evaluated regularly by the SENCO, class teacher, LSA and the child, and the parents are kept well informed.

The children benefit significantly from a wide range of interventions which consist of a combination of in-class assistance from the teachers and/or LSAs and for children with more complex needs, the SENCO provides various forms of withdrawal support. The school's LSAs contribute extensively to the SEN provision. Together with the teachers, they use their training and skills to ensure that all children are meaningfully included, and that the children make good and very good levels of progress. These approaches include the use of scaffolding techniques for children with learning differences such as dyslexia, operating

reading and positive behaviour interventions and giving structured help to the small number of children whose first language is not English. All staff implement effectively the Primary Movement programme throughout the school. In addition, the SENCO provides a 'Social Communication Skills' programme for those children who require it and implements a successful multi-sensory support programme.

The SENCO provides outstanding leadership and management of the complex organisation of the SEN provision. Furthermore, the school has secured a number of external endorsements of its work, for example, the Inclusion Quality Mark (May 2010).

4. LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

4.1 LEADERSHIP

The overall quality of the leadership and management is outstanding,

The highly committed acting Principal promotes a positive ethos and reflects confidence, trust and mutual co-operation among staff, children, governors, parents and the wider school community. She provides informed and effective leadership and has a clear and shared vision for the future development of the school. The distributed style of leadership and management linked to whole-school development and improvement is a significant feature of the school. The acting Principal, acting Vice-principal, school leadership team and staff set and achieve high standards and a culture of self-evaluation permeates all learning and teaching in the school by all staff. Central to this work, has been the very good use of a number of self-evaluation tools, including 'Investors in People.' All the co-ordinators evaluate and review systematically and effectively the quality of the planning, the teaching, the learning experiences and the standards achieved by the children.

4.2 PLANNING FOR IMPROVEMENT

The school's improvement process links to a well-constructed SDP which has taken account of the views of a range of stakeholders within the school community. The school meets fully, the requirements of the School Development Plans Regulations (Northern- Ireland) 2005.

4.3 RESOURCES, FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE

The governors are highly committed to the welfare of the children and their families and to the inclusive ethos that underpins the work of the school. They are well-informed and involve themselves in the strategic planning and policy development for the school, including reviewing targets for improvement and monitoring the progress made against the agreed priorities.

4.4 ACCOMMODATION

Very good use is made of all the available space in the school and the staff work well to create inviting classrooms and corridors celebrating the children's work.

5. CONCLUSION

5.1 The strengths of the school include:

- the outstanding quality of the pastoral provision which reflects the inclusive ethos of the school;

- the high quality of the teaching, which was evaluated as very good or outstanding in two-thirds of the lessons;
- the outstanding quality of the provision for children with special educational needs;
- the outstanding standards achieved by the children in English and the very good standards achieved in mathematics;
- the outstanding quality of the children's collaborative and independent work observed during the inspection; and
- the outstanding leadership of the acting Principal supported effectively by all staff.

5.2 In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by the primary school is outstanding; the quality of pastoral care is also outstanding. The school has demonstrated its capacity for sustained self-improvement.

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