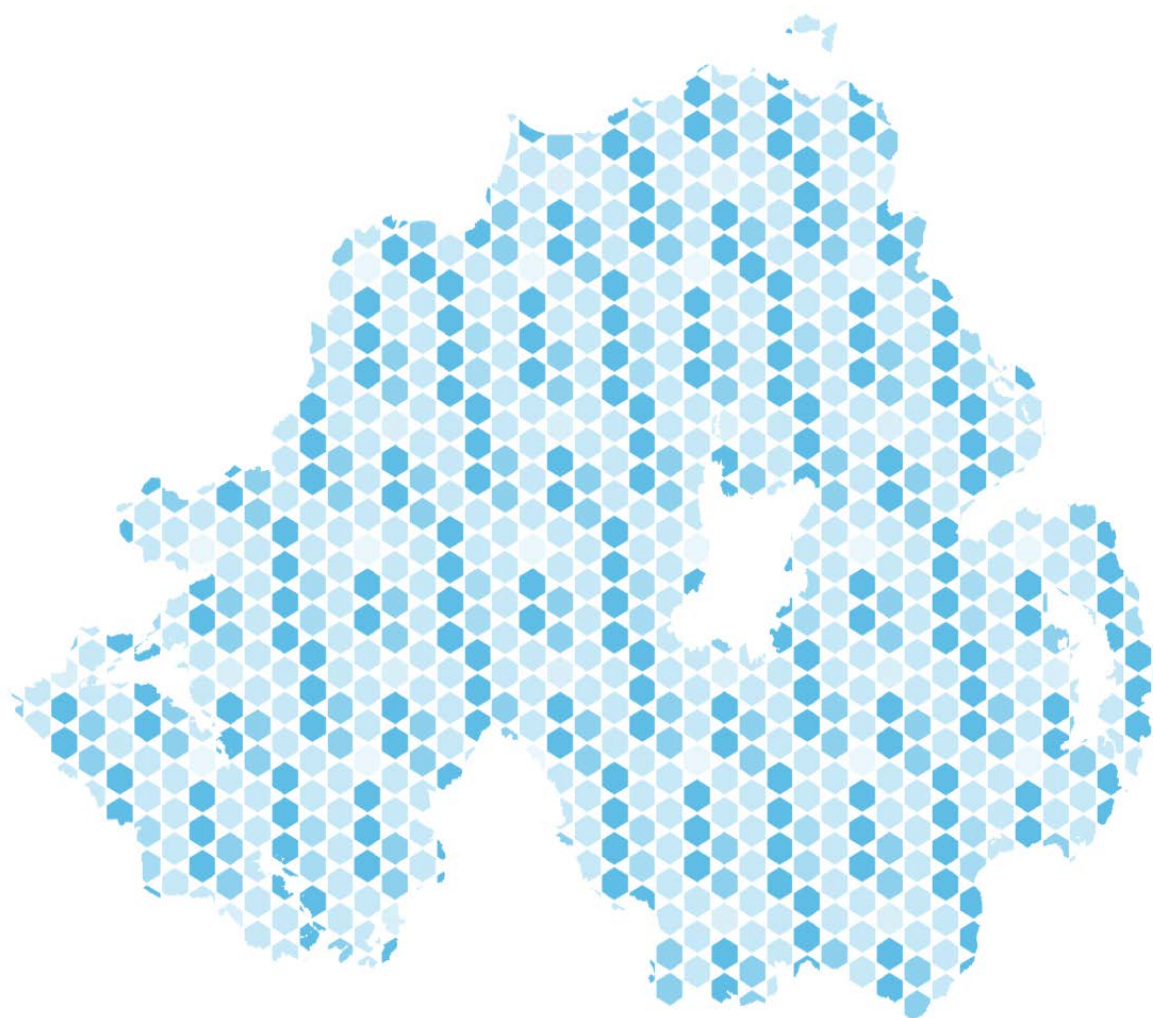


# PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training  
Inspectorate

Phoenix Integrated Primary  
School, Cookstown

Report of an Inspection  
in January 2013

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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

Phoenix Integrated Primary School is situated in Cookstown, County Tyrone. The enrolment has increased steadily since the school opened in 2004 and now stands at 166. At the time of the inspection 44% of the children were entitled to free school meals and 26% of the children were identified as requiring help with aspects of their learning. A new Principal was appointed in September 2011.

## 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; 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 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 children are to be met more effectively.

#### Summary of key findings

Achievements and standards Quality of provision Leadership and management	Satisfactory Satisfactory Satisfactory
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### KEY FINDINGS OF THE INSPECTION

## 3. Achievements and standards

**The quality of the children's achievements and standards is satisfactory.**

- The children are interested in their learning and engage enthusiastically with the activities provided. When given opportunities, they are able to manage their own learning and work independently. In a significant minority of the lessons, the children have insufficient opportunity to talk about and reflect on what they have learnt.
- An analysis of the end of key stage (KS) 2 assessment data over the past three years shows that the school's performance in English and mathematics has been below both the Northern Ireland (NI) average and the average of schools in the same free school meals category.

- The children read with fluency and expression and are able to speak enthusiastically about a wide range of books and authors. As they progress through the school, they are developing appropriate skills to write for an increasing range of audiences and purposes. In discussions with the children, they are flexible in their thinking and understand important mathematical ideas and concepts across all areas of the mathematics curriculum. Throughout the school the children's talking and listening skills, including their mathematical language skills, are not systematically developed to enable them to offer extended oral responses and explain their understanding and opinions. The children would benefit from more opportunities to plan, take responsibility for and consolidate their learning in literacy and numeracy and across the curriculum.
- Almost all of the children who have been identified with special educational needs make good progress in their learning in line with their ability. They are well integrated in class and participate willingly in their learning.
- The children's standards in ICT are satisfactory. The children enjoy working on computers and using the interactive whiteboard to support their learning in literacy and numeracy.

#### **4. Provision for learning**

**The quality of the provision for learning is satisfactory.**

- The quality of the planning, teaching and assessment is inconsistent across the school. As a result, the teaching in just under one-half of the lessons is good; in the remaining proportion there are significant areas for improvement. In the more effective lessons, there is a clear focus on the learning and the activities are well-matched to the children's interests and abilities. In the less effective practice, the emphasis is on the completion of low-level activities; there are insufficient challenge and opportunities to develop the children's thinking skills and personal capabilities are not exploited.
- Whilst the long-term planning for literacy and numeracy is comprehensive and provides a framework for progression across the school, the teachers' short-term planning does not take adequate account of the children's wide range of abilities or individual stages of development. The teachers work hard to provide a variety of activities and resources for the children; however, they need to develop further their shared understanding of what constitutes effective learning and teaching specifically in relation to differentiation and progression in the children's learning. The assessment for learning is at a very early stage of development; the children do not receive effective oral and written feedback on how to improve the quality and presentation of their work.
- The quality of pastoral care is good. There is a friendly, welcoming and inclusive ethos in the school; the children are respectful to each other, and to the adults and visitors to the school. The staff creates a positive and supportive climate for learning within their classrooms through fostering caring working relationships with the children. The staff needs to ensure that the positive behaviour strategies foster high expectations for standards and achievements.

- The quality of the provision for special educational needs is good. There is effective support for the children experiencing difficulties in literacy and numeracy. In addition, a small number of the classroom assistants are trained to provide reading partnership programmes and these have improved considerably the children's reading skills. The individual education plans have been revised to recognise the voice of the child in the programmes of work to improve their learning.
- The school gives good attention to healthy eating and physical activity. The children are made aware of the importance of a healthy lifestyle and are provided with an appropriate range of physical activities within and beyond the curriculum.

## **5. Leadership and Management**

### **The quality of leadership and management is satisfactory.**

- The Principal has a clear vision for the work of the school based on a sound professional knowledge and understanding of the school improvement process. Within a short period of time, she has led effectively a number of important curricular and pastoral developments. She has identified, appropriately, the need for more rigorous monitoring and evaluation of the provision and the quality of the learning and teaching in order to raise the children's standards in literacy and numeracy. The co-ordinators have begun to gather and use performance data to identify low and underachievement and to track the progress of individual children. In order to take this work forward, it will be important to develop further the leadership roles at all levels and to build the capacity of all staff to contribute more effectively to the school improvement process. Good consultation procedures have been established as part of the school development planning process and it is timely that a new cycle of planning for improvement is now due following the inspection.
- There are effective arrangements in place for communicating with the parents and to involve them in the ongoing development of the school. The school links with local pre-schools and post primary schools to support the children's transitions to the next stage of their education and has established meaningful links with the local and wider community to broaden the children's learning experiences.
- The Board of Governors is recently reconstituted. The governors are well informed about the work of the school and provide the Principal and staff with effective support in bringing about improvements in the provision for the children.
- On the basis of the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the school has comprehensive arrangements in place for safeguarding children. These arrangements reflect the guidance issued by the Department of Education. In discussions with the year 6 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 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 children are to be met more effectively.

### The areas for improvement include the need to:

- match the learning activities more closely to the children's abilities and stages of development to ensure progression in their learning and to improve the standards they achieve in literacy and numeracy; and
- develop further the leadership roles at all levels and to build the capacity of all staff to contribute more effectively to the school improvement process.

## 6. Summary of questionnaire responses

PARENTAL QUESTIONNAIRES	
Number of Questionnaires Issued	129
Number of Questionnaires Returned	30
Percentage of Returns	23%
Number of Comments	13

The parental questionnaires indicated high levels of support for and satisfaction with the work of the school. In the additional written comments, the parents praised the staff for their commitment to the children and highlighted the caring and welcoming environment.

TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRES	
Number of Questionnaires Returned	8
Number of Comments	*

SUPPORT STAFF QUESTIONNAIRES	
Number of Questionnaires Returned	13
Number of Comments	*

The teacher and support staff questionnaires responses were very supportive of the work of the school. The additional comments highlighted the strong sense of community and teamwork within the school.

In discussions with the governors, they expressed their pride in the school and their confidence in the commitment of the Principal and the staff to improve further the quality of the provision.

### Accommodation

- The limited space, both inside and outdoors, dictates the timetabling arrangements and restricts the children's learning experiences.



## BASIC INFORMATION SHEET (BIS) - PRIMARY SCHOOLS

- A. i. **School: Phoenix Integrated Primary** iii. **Date of Inspection: W/B 21/01/13**
- ii. **School Reference Number: 506-6657** iv. **Nature of Inspection: Focused**

B.

School Year	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
Year 1 Intake	23	26	27	29	29
<b>Enrolments</b>					
Primary	104	127	149	161	166
Reception	0	0	0	0	
Nursery Unit	0	0	0	0	
Special Unit	0	0	0	0	
Irish Medium Unit	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):

**NI Avg Att: 94.7%**

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

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  
(Full-time equivalent = 25 teaching hours)

- ii. PTR (Pupil/Teacher Ratio): 20.88 NI PTR: 20.2

- iii. Average Class Size: 27.8

- iv. Class Size (Range): 26 to 31

- v. Ancillary Support:

- |                                  |      |  |      |
|----------------------------------|------|--|------|
| Number of Hours <b>Per Week:</b> | i.   | Clerical support:                                      | 37.5 |
|                                  | ii.  | Foundation Stage Classroom Assistant Support:          | 30   |
|                                  | iii. | Additional hours of other classroom assistant support: | 78.5 |
|                                  |      |  |      |

- vi. Percentage of children with statements of special educational needs:

- vii. Total percentage of children on the Special Needs Register: 26%

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

- |     |   |     |
|-----|---|-----|
| ix. | Percentage of children entitled to free school meals: | 44% |
|-----|---|-----|

- |    |  |                          |                              |                     |
|----|--|--------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------|
| 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): | <b>English</b><br>66.67% | <b>Mathematics</b><br>73.33% | <b>Irish</b><br>N/A |
|----|--|--------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------|

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