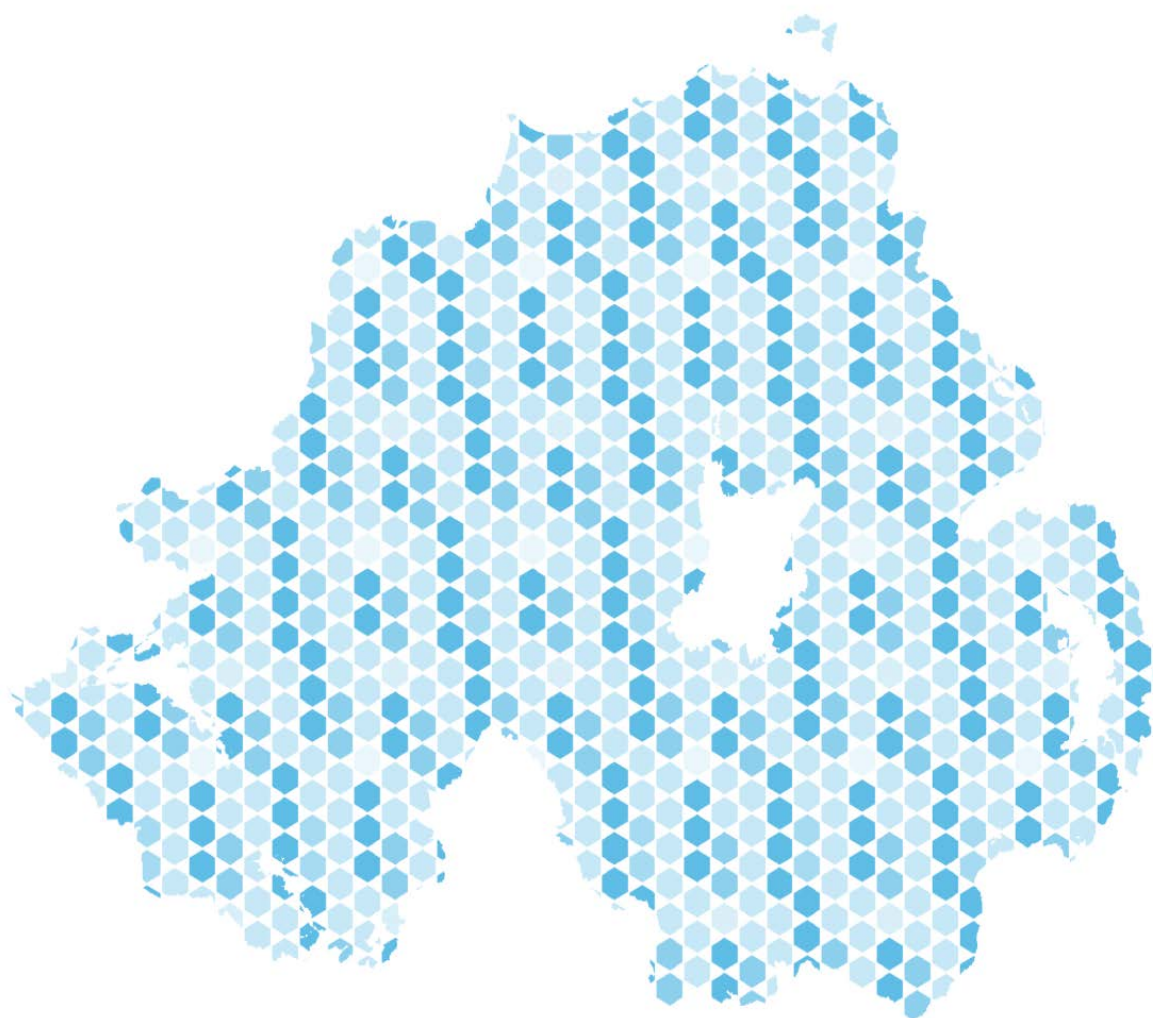


PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

St Macartan's Primary School,
Roslea

Report of an Inspection
in April 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

On 12 April 2012, Cornagague Primary School and Corranry Primary School were amalgamated to form the new St Macartan's Primary School in the parish of Clones. The new school is located in spacious grounds in close proximity to St Macartan's Church, Aghadrumsee, County Fermanagh. The Principal was appointed in June 2011 as part of the preparation for the amalgamation. There are 137 children enrolled in the school, including nine children who are not of statutory school age; four of these do not have a funded place. At the time of the inspection 25% of the children were entitled to free school meals and 18% of the children were identified as requiring help with aspects of their learning.

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	Satisfactory
Quality of provision	Satisfactory
Leadership and management	Satisfactory

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; they are co-operative and well-behaved. The children in reception and foundation stage are able to investigate and explore a range of natural materials. They acquire a good range of early language, mathematical and physical skills through the well-planned play-based learning activities. Most of the older children are able to work collaboratively with one another and, when the work is sufficiently challenging, can continue to manage their own learning independently.

- At the time of the inspection there was only one year of key stage data available. The staff use standardised tests in English and mathematics to baseline the children's attainment, to identify low and under-achievement and for referral, where appropriate, to a range of educational professionals. The evidence from the inspection indicates that a majority of the children attain satisfactory standards in literacy and numeracy in line with their ability. The staff has identified that the standards and achievements in literacy and numeracy for a significant minority of the children are too low.
- In numeracy, a majority of the children can recall accurately a range of tables and facts and can apply these to basic written exercises; when completing mental calculations, however, most of the children draw on a narrow range of strategies to solve mathematical problems. They have difficulty in explaining their chosen methods of working and applying their knowledge outside of classroom tasks.
- In literacy, most of the children are able to read with fluency and very good expression; however, a significant minority are reading books at a level below their interest and capability. The children are aware of writing for audiences and beginning to write to express feelings; a majority are able to write independently, with accuracy and proficiency using the essential conventions of grammar and sentence construction.
- Most of the children who have been identified with special educational needs make good progress in their learning in line with their ability. In most classes, the children are well-integrated and effectively supported by the classroom assistants; they participate willingly in their learning and acquire the literacy and numeracy skills of which they are capable.
- The children's standards in ICT are satisfactory. The younger children are able to record sound on audio devices and use cameras competently to record and discuss their learning. A majority of the older children are confident in the use of a range of word processing and information handling programmes. The children need to apply their ICT skills more frequently within and across the curriculum.

4. Provision for learning

The quality of the provision for learning is satisfactory.

- Almost all of the children are taught in composite classes. The quality of the planning, teaching and assessment is inconsistent across the year groups. In the best practice, the teachers make effective use of a range of assessment for learning strategies, including oral and written marking for improvement, to assess the children's progress and to inform the planning to meet the children's learning needs. This good practice needs to be developed further and implemented consistently throughout the school.
- During the inspection, the quality of the teaching observed ranged from very good to inadequate. In just over one-half of the lessons it was good or very good; in the remaining lessons there was a need for significant improvement in the quality of the teaching, planning and assessment. In the most effective lessons, there is a clear focus on the planned learning; the activities are well-matched to the children's interests and abilities and the children are encouraged to engage

in meaningful peer and self-assessment. In these lessons, the children are well-engaged in the learning process and have the opportunity to express their ideas and opinions. In the less effective lessons, there are instances of over-direction by the teachers, gaps in the implementation of the curriculum planning and ineffective classroom management.

- The teachers have made a good start to the development of a play-based learning programme; the staff needs to collaborate to develop progression in play across foundation stage and key stage one.
- The quality of the arrangements for special needs is satisfactory. Most of the children enjoy learning with their peers and are developing important life skills to address barriers to their learning. The current individual education plan format does not provide sufficient information about the children's specific strengths and learning needs nor the strategies to support the children's learning.
- The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care is good. There is a friendly, welcoming ethos in the school; the children are respectful to each other, and helpful to the adults and visitors to the school. The children engage in a range of shared education programmes which inform their understanding of different cultures within their community. The school council provides an opportunity for the children to have an input into the playground provision.
- 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. The staff has identified the need to devise and implement a policy related to the provision of a healthy break.

5. Leadership and management

The quality of leadership and management is satisfactory.

- The whole staff is a newly formed team and committed to the development of St Macartan's Primary School to meet the needs of all of the children. The Principal has worked tirelessly with the staff, governors and the parents to facilitate the amalgamation process and to successfully ensure a smooth transition for the children into their new learning environment. In addition, she has led the staff effectively in developing the current management structures and in establishing the necessary routines for the effective day-to-day running of the school. In the next stage of development, the Principal and staff need to work closely together, to build a more collegial approach to the development and implementation of the school aims and policies which should focus specifically on meeting the needs of the children and in supporting them to realise their full potential as learners. It will be important for the co-ordinators to provide more effective strategic leadership within their respective areas of responsibility in order to manage developments and improvements in learning and teaching and to raise the children's levels of attainment in literacy and numeracy.

- The processes for self- evaluation are at an early stage of development and need to be developed further to include robust monitoring and evaluation at all levels. The draft school development plan identifies appropriate priorities for improvement; the associated action plans do not focus sufficiently on the specific actions which will bring about improvement in the quality of learning and teaching.
- The current Board of Governors was reconstituted in December 2012 to ensure equal representation from each of the amalgamated schools. Based on the evidence presented at the time of inspection, the inspection team's evaluation is that the parents, staff and school community can have confidence in the aspects of governance evaluated. The governors are well-informed about recent developments; they have undertaken training in safeguarding and governance and have contributed to the development of a draft school development plan. There are a few aspects of governance which require review and further development, namely, the monitoring and evaluation of the development planning process for school improvement, the exercising of the challenge function to raise standards and working to ensure that the reception provision for underage children is not impacting unduly on the quality of the provision for the children of statutory school age.
- There are effective arrangements in place for communicating with the parents about events and school routines. The school needs to develop a more strategic approach to communication with the parents about supporting the children's learning and providing information about their progress and development. The school's links with local pre-schools are underdeveloped.
- 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:

- have consistently high quality teaching in all of the classes to ensure a more coherent development of the children's learning through the seven years; and
- develop the leadership and management roles at all levels to effect the required improvements in the provision for literacy and numeracy and to raise the children's standards.

The Education and Training Inspectorate will monitor and report on the school's progress in addressing the areas for improvement over a 12-24 month period.

6. **Summary of questionnaire responses**

PARENTAL QUESTIONNAIRES	
Number of Questionnaires Issued	76
Number of Questionnaires Returned	45
Percentage of Returns	59%
Number of Comments	13

Almost half of the parental questionnaires indicated very high levels of support for and satisfaction with the work of the school. In the additional written comments, the parents praised the staff for the settling in arrangements to the new school, their commitment to the children and highlighted support provided for the parents. A small number raised concerns about the composite class arrangements and the inconsistencies, breadth and balance in the children's learning experiences.

TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRES	
Number of Questionnaires Returned	7
Number of Comments	*

SUPPORT STAFF QUESTIONNAIRES	
Number of Questionnaires Returned	8
Number of Comments	*

*redacted as the responses were five or fewer.

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

- There is a need to review the accommodation allocation within the school to ensure that the children within the same foundation and key stage are clustered within close proximity to each other for access to the outdoor provision and shared resource area.
- The shared resource area which is being used as a permanent class base within the school is not a suitable environment for learning and teaching.
- The use of the outdoor provision needs to be risk assessed and zoned for safe play with adequate adult supervision in all areas used by the children during play-based learning.

BASIC INFORMATION SHEET (BIS) - PRIMARY SCHOOLS

- A. i. **School: St Macartan's Primary** iii. **Date of Inspection: W/B 29/04/13**
 ii. **School Reference Number: 203-6659** iv. **Nature of Inspection: Focused**

B.

School Year	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
Year 1 Intake	-	-	-		9
Enrolments					
Primary					128
Reception	-	-	-		9
Nursery Unit					
Special Unit					
Irish Medium Unit					

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: 99.7%

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): 7 0 0 0
 (Full-time equivalent = 25 teaching hours)
- ii. PTR (Pupil/Teacher Ratio): 23 NI PTR: 20.2
- iii. Average Class Size: 23
- iv. Class Size (Range): 19 to 26
- v. Ancillary Support:
 Number of Hours **Per Week**:
- | | |
|---|----|
| i. Clerical support: | 30 |
| ii. Foundation Stage Classroom Assistant Support: | 22 |
| iii. Additional hours of other classroom assistant support: | 87 |
- vi. Percentage of children with statements of special educational needs: *
- vii. Total percentage of children on the Special Needs Register: 18%
- viii. Number of children who are not of statutory school age: 9
- ix. Percentage of children entitled to free school meals: 25%
- 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 |
|---------|-------------|-------|
| | | N/A |
- xi. If there is a composite class with reception children in it, please indicate the numbers of children in the other year groups:
- | Year 1 | Year 2 | Year 3 |
|--------|--------|--------|
| 17 | 0 | 0 |

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