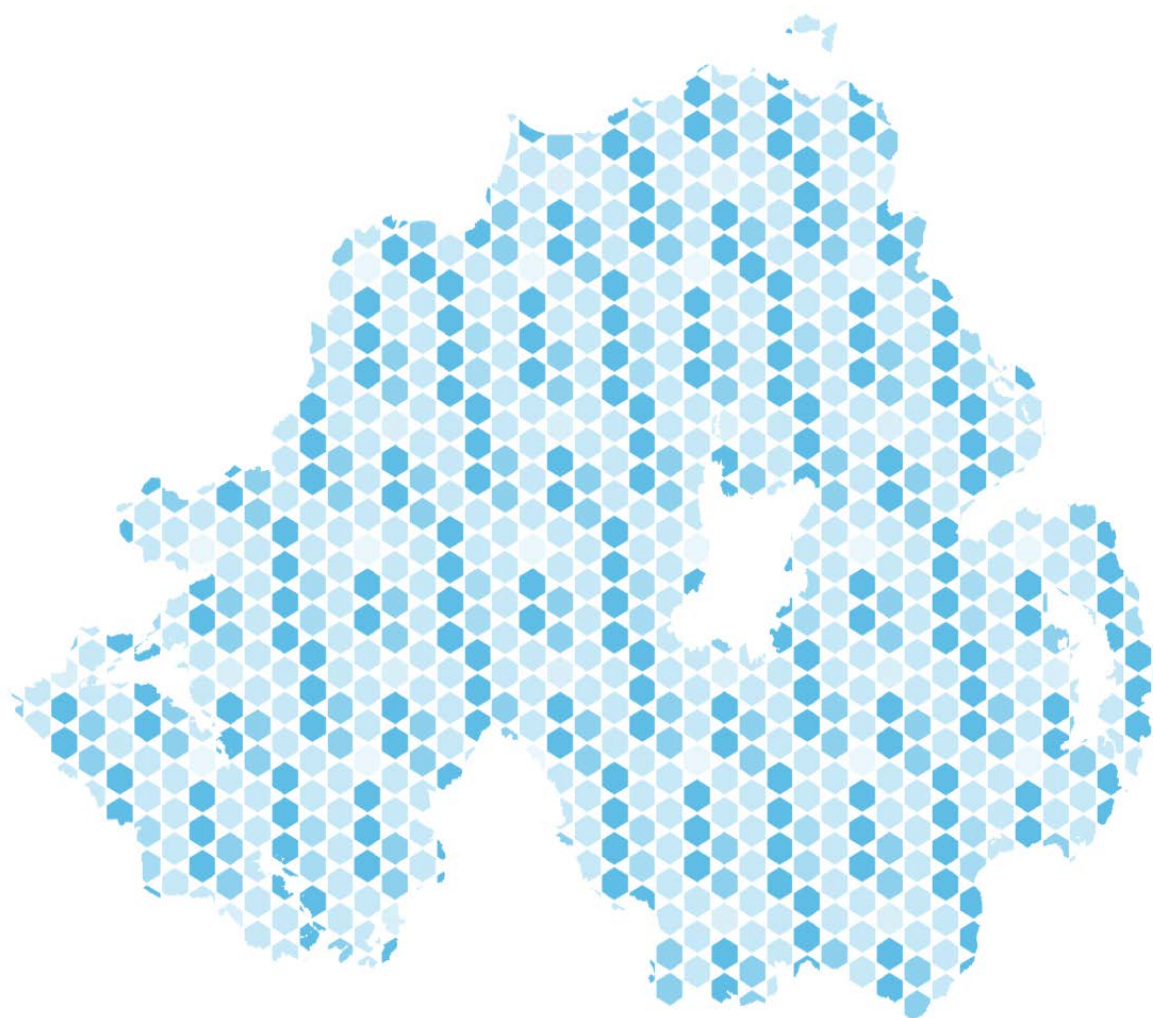


PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

St Peter's Primary School,
Belfast

Report of an Inspection
in May 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

St Peter's Primary School is situated in the lower Falls area of Belfast. The enrolment has remained steady over the last four years and is currently 275 children. At the time of the inspection, almost 80% of the children were entitled to free school meals and around 17% of the children were identified as requiring help with aspects of their learning. The children come mainly from the immediate locality. There has been major renovation work carried out in the school in the period leading up to the inspection; while the staff have worked hard to minimise the disruption to the children it has impacted negatively on both the indoor learning environment and the outdoor space available to the children.

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 in the school; and
- the quality of leadership and management, including the arrangements for child protection.

In addition, the use of information and communication technology (ICT) to support learning, and the school's arrangements for pastoral care 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, 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	Good 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 good.

- Most of the children are well motivated, have a positive attitude towards their learning and take pride in the presentation of their work. They can work together collaboratively during group and paired activities in a mature and supportive manner. Many of the younger children are creative and imaginative in their use of the play resources.

- An analysis of the key stage (KS) 2 assessment data over the past four years shows that the school's performance in mathematics has been above the Northern Ireland (NI) average for three out of the last four years, and in English for two of the last four years. The results in both English and mathematics are consistently above the average when compared with schools in a similar free school meals band.
- The standards achieved by the children in literacy are good. The younger children enjoy books, are able to re-count stories and have developed their language and early writing skills well. The children are confident to share their ideas although a small number of children in the Foundation Stage (FS) and KS1 still require more effective support to develop their listening skills. The children are able to write with increasing independence and proficiency as they move through the school; they produce a good breadth of writing on a range of subjects which provides suitable contexts for their personal responses. By the end of KS2, most of the children read with fluency and are able to talk confidently about their chosen texts.
- The standards achieved by the children in mathematics are good. By the end of KS2, the most able children have a secure knowledge of a wide range of mathematical concepts, have good flexibility in using a range of strategies and can apply them in real life contexts. In the best practice, the children engage well in open- ended investigations and make choices about how to present their work. By the end of KS1, the most able children are not as confident in their use of mathematics and in particular, their use of mental strategies.
- There is evidence that a number of the children who are identified with special educational needs (SEN) are making progress in their learning. There are limited systems in place to ensure that all the children who require support are making sufficient progress.
- Throughout the whole school, the children attain good standards in ICT. They are competent in using programmable devices and a range of interactive software to support their learning. The older children make good use of their skills to research, plan and present their work. The children in years 4 and 7 are entered for the Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA) Information Technology (IT) Accreditation Scheme. Almost all of the children entered achieve the expected level of attainment.

4. Provision for learning

The quality of the provision for learning is satisfactory.

- The quality of the teaching observed ranged from outstanding to inadequate. The majority of the teaching is good or better; just over one third of the teaching requires improvement. In the best practice the teachers are clear about the learning to be developed and convey this skilfully to the children; they match appropriately the level of work to the needs and abilities of all of the children and use very effective questioning to extend the children's language, thinking and learning. The teachers have high expectations of the children's capabilities and self-management skills resulting in good levels of independence and decision making in their learning.

- In the less effective practice, inadequate classroom management leads to a lack of attentiveness by and poor learning outcomes for the children. The pace of the lesson is too slow and the questioning and work provided either lacks sufficient guidance for the children who need support or sufficient challenge for the more able.
- Overall the children are provided with a broad and balanced curriculum. Good progress has been made in developing the teacher's medium-term planning to identify learning outcomes. In the best practice the teachers evaluate effectively the learning which has taken place and identify connections across the curriculum. Considerable work has been done to include whole-school approaches to the development of literacy and to improve the learning promoted during play-based learning in the FS. This good work needs to be extended to the whole school planning in all areas of the curriculum, and in particular, mathematics in order to provide a better, shared understanding of suitable levels of work among the teachers, support connections in learning more fully and ensure steady progression in the children's learning. The effective implementation of the planning and evaluation of learning is inconsistent across the school. There is good marking for improvement and peer and self assessment are developing well.
- The school has identified appropriately the need to develop the area of problem solving and investigations within mathematics. It will be important to also develop the teaching of mental mathematics to ensure that the children, particularly, those in the FS and KS1 are more confident in using a range of mental mathematics strategies in order to apply them in problem solving contexts.
- The school's main approach to meeting the needs of the children identified as having specific learning difficulties is through differentiated activities in class and additional support provided by a range of external professionals. The classroom assistants make a good contribution in supporting many of these children. The systems in place for identifying, supporting and tracking the progress of children with additional needs to be reviewed and improved. There is, overall, insufficient differentiation in the learning and teaching to support fully the children who need additional support.
- The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care is very good. The whole school community is highly committed to the welfare of the children and to promoting high aspirations. The children are almost all very well behaved and respectful of their teachers, one another and visitors to the school. They take a pride in their achievements and enjoy taking responsibility through, for example, membership of the schools council, eco club and as prefects. The very good range of extra-curricular clubs and activities and success in competitive team sports contribute significantly to the children's wider personal development.
- The school gives very good attention to promoting healthy eating and physical activity through, for example, the regular physical education lessons and team sports, attention to dental care and the wider curriculum. The school is developing the range of outdoor experiences for the children.

5. Leadership and management

- The quality of leadership and management is satisfactory. The parents clearly value the approachability of the senior leadership and the hard work of the teaching staff and a good start has been made to developing a self-evaluative culture within the school. Increased consultation with the teachers, parents and children and the wide range of data collected to track children's progress contribute well to the school development planning process.
- While many aspects of the school development planning are developing well, the whole school systems currently in place for analysing performance data, action planning and monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the provision, need to be more systematic, rigorous and robust.
- The school has effective links with a range of schools, partnerships and other agencies. The senior leadership team has prioritised the need to develop stronger curricular links with the parents to support their children's development and learning at home.
- Based on the evidence at the time of the inspection, the parents, staff and school community can have confidence in the aspects of governance evaluated. The governors contribute effectively to many aspects of the school. They bring a high degree of commitment and enthusiasm to their role. They have indicated that they would welcome opportunities for extending their level of communication with the staff and middle management.
- On the basis of the evidence available at the time of the inspection the school has satisfactory arrangements in place for safeguarding children. These arrangements broadly reflect the guidance issued by the relevant Department but the following minor areas need to be addressed: an appropriate system of record keeping for staff training and development needs to be developed; and the governors kept up to date with relevant circulars.

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 in 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

- provide consistently high quality teaching in all the classes throughout the school;
- review and improve the provision for special educational needs; and
- develop more robust processes for monitoring and evaluation to improve further the standards and achievements, particularly, those in KS1.

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 to the school (Based on 09/10 Enrolment)	109
Number of Questionnaires Returned	80
Percentage of Returns	73%
Number of Comments	32

The very positive responses from the parental questionnaires indicated a high level of satisfaction with the educational and pastoral provision within the school. In particular, the parents reported their appreciation of the high standard of education their children receive, the approachability of the leadership, the hard work of the teachers and their children's enjoyment of school life.

TEACHERS QUESTIONNAIRES	
Number of Questionnaires Returned	15
Number of Comments	1

The teacher's questionnaires indicated a high level of agreement that they set high standards of attainment and behaviour for the children, and celebrate the children's successes. A minority of responses and additional written comment indicated less satisfaction with a number of areas of school life.

SUPPORT STAFF QUESTIONNAIRES	
Number of Questionnaires Returned	15
Number of Comments	1

The responses from most of the support staff indicated that they enjoy working in the school and feel valued in their role. A majority of the responses indicated less satisfaction with their opportunities for training and development, and a minority with other aspects of school life.

The small number of concerns raised have been discussed with the governors and the Principal.

In discussions with a group of year 6 pupils they talked about their enjoyment of history topics, school clubs and their involvement in the school council. They reported that they were confident about how to raise any concerns and indicated that they felt safe and happy in school.

The governors expressed their confidence in all aspects of the school, commented on the value of the school in the local community and indicated a strong commitment to their continued commitment to the children and staff.

BASIC INFORMATION SHEET (BIS) - PRIMARY SCHOOLS

- A. i. **School: St Peter's Primary** iii. **Date of Inspection: W/B 13/05/13**
 ii. **School Reference Number: 103-6620** iv. **Nature of Inspection: Focused**

B.

School Year	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
Year 1 Intake	38	34	43	46	38
Enrolments					
Primary	275	277	274	276	276
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 are based on the total of the primary and reception enrolments only.

- C. Average Attendance for the Previous School Year
 (expressed as a percentage): 92.9% **NI Avg Att: 94.7%**

Average Attendance for those children on the
 Special Educational Needs Register: 91.9%

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): 14 0 0 0
 (Full-time equivalent = 25 teaching hours)
- ii. PTR (Pupil/Teacher Ratio): 19.57 NI PTR: 20.2
- iii. Average Class Size: 21.07
- iv. Class Size (Range): 15 to 31
- v. Ancillary Support:
 Number of Hours **Per Week:**
- | | |
|---|-------|
| i. Clerical support: | 36 |
| ii. Foundation Stage Classroom Assistant Support: | 60 |
| iii. Additional hours of other classroom assistant support: | 117.5 |
- vi. Percentage of children with statements of special educational needs: 3.28%
- vii. Total percentage of children on the Special Needs Register: 18.98%
- viii. Number of children who are **not** of statutory school age: 0
- ix. Percentage of children entitled to free school meals: 79.65%
- x. Percentage of children at the end of Key Stage 2 for 2011/12 who attained level 4 and above in English and mathematics, and Irish (in Irish-medium schools):
- | | | |
|----------------|--------------------|--------------|
| English | Mathematics | Irish |
| 81% | 81% | 0 |

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