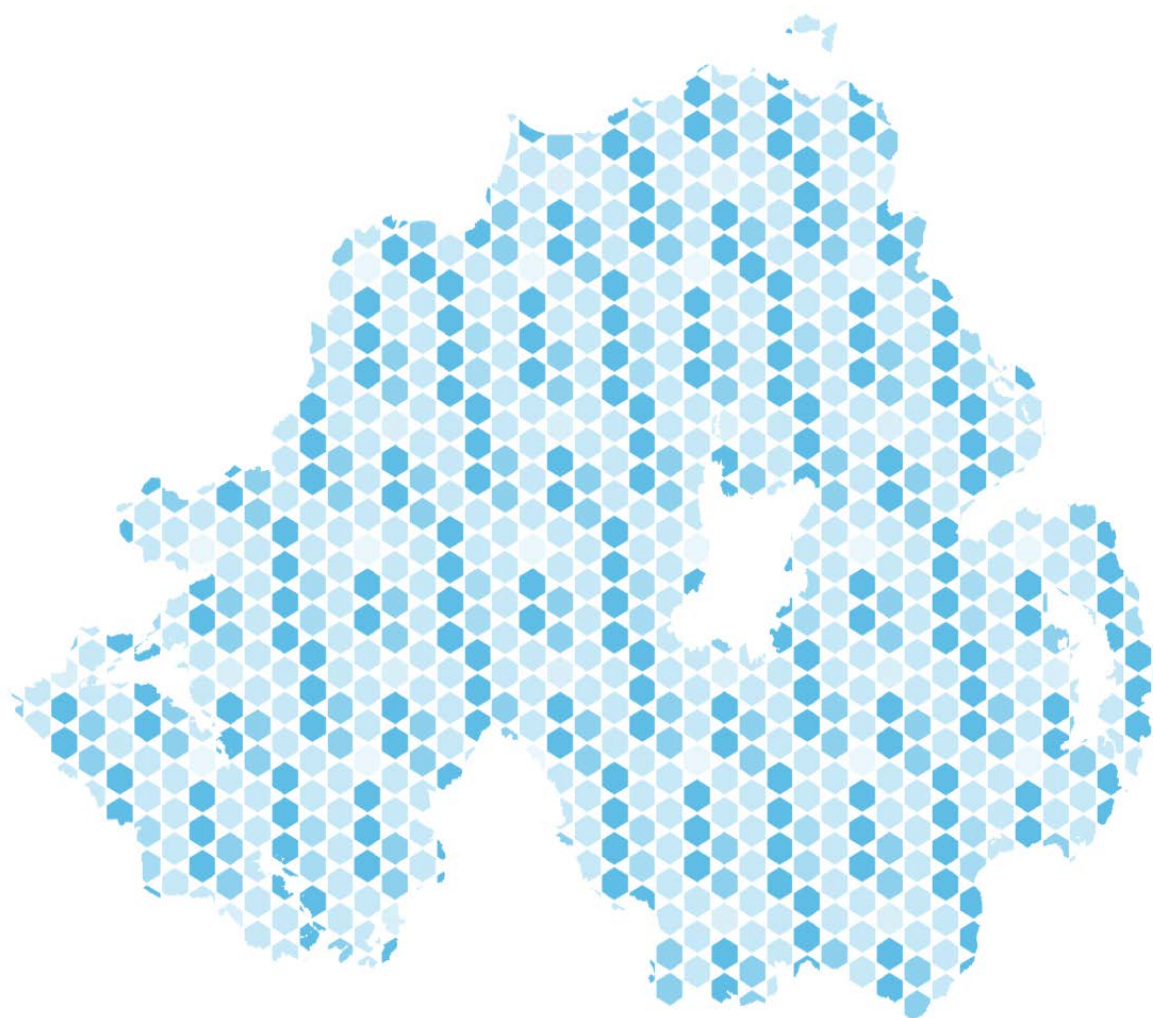


# PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training  
Inspectorate

Tullycarnet Primary School,  
Belfast

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

Tullycarnet Primary school is a controlled primary school situated in Tullycarnet Housing Estate in East Belfast. The enrolment has been steadily declining over the past four years and currently stands at 61 children; as a result there are composite classes across all year groups. At the time of the inspection, approximately 66% of the children in the school were entitled to free school meals. The school has identified 44% of the children as requiring additional support with aspects of their learning. The school also provides a nurture group.

## 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 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.

### 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 leadership and management, standards and learning and teaching 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	Good

### KEY FINDINGS OF THE INSPECTION

## 3. Achievements and Standards

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

- Most of the children in the school are enthusiastic and well- motivated to learn. In the foundation stage (FS) and key stage (KS) 1, the children work collaboratively in pairs and groups with a developing sense of independence. As they progress through the school, the children continue to have display positive attitudes to learning.

- An analysis of the end of key stage KS 2 assessment data<sup>1</sup> over the past four years shows that the school's performance in English has been consistently below the Northern Ireland (NI) average, while, in three of the last four years, the performance in mathematics has also been below the NI average. When compared to schools in the same free school meals category, the school's performance in English and mathematics has fluctuated from well below to well above the average.
- By the end of KS2, most of the children attain satisfactory standards in English and mathematics. In English, by year 7, most of the children attain satisfactory standards in writing, and talking and listening; while a small number of the children are reading with increasing confidence and fluency, the school has identified appropriately the need to improve all the children's comprehension skills. The children's oral skills develop well through play-based learning in the FS. In mathematics, across the three key stages, the children develop a good knowledge of the range of mental mathematics strategies and they apply them with increasing confidence and competence during mathematics activities. In discussions with the KS1 children, the most able spoke positively about their mathematical experiences. They have a good understanding of: number, including basic fractions and table facts; the properties of two and three-dimensional shapes; and handling data. By the end of KS2, the majority of children can give a quick and accurate recall of mathematical facts; however, there is an inconsistency in the level of children's flexibility in their mathematical thinking, in particular as they progress through the school.
- The majority of the children who have been identified with special educational needs make good improvement in their learning, including those children provided with additional withdrawal support in literacy and numeracy.
- The nurture group supports well those children in the FS and KS1 who require particular learning support; they demonstrate growing confidence and self-esteem and make very good progress against their individual targets.

#### **4. Provision for Learning**

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

- Throughout the school, the quality of planning is satisfactory. In the most effective practice, teachers take account of the wide range of ability within the composite classes, planning for appropriate differentiation and progression. This good practice needs to be implemented consistently across the school. The teachers mark the children's work in a regular and supportive manner; however, they need to annotate and indicate more clearly and consistently both the strengths of the work and the means by which the children may improve the quality of the work.
- During the inspection, the quality of the teaching observed ranged from very good to satisfactory with the majority of the teaching being good or better. In the most effective practice, lessons are well structured, learning intentions are clearly shared with the children and effective questioning ensures that the teachers' questions are well matched to the ability of the children. In the less

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<sup>1</sup> The key stage outcomes should be interpreted with caution for small primary schools as a large percentage change from year to year can often be attributed to a very small number of children.

effective practice, the work is not well matched to the wide range of abilities and learning needs, there are missed opportunities for the children to develop their thinking and reasoning skills, and the children's responses are not built upon or developed

- In literacy, the children in the FS and KS1 acquire basic reading skills through the development of phonological awareness, as well as through shared and guided reading. The children's enjoyment of reading develops through sustained silent and independent reading in KS2 classes. The teachers need to provide more opportunities for the children to undertake extended writing with more access to ICT for research, editing and recording purposes. As the children proceed through the school, their listening skills need to be improved further and their use of evidence to justify their opinions in class discussion and group work.
- In the FS and KS1, the teachers provide the children with well-structured practical activities that consolidate and extend their understanding of number concepts, shape and space, measures and handling data. In KS2, the children have satisfactory opportunities to consolidate and extend their knowledge of mathematics, particularly through number work and measures. There is a need for the teachers to develop the processes of mathematics more fully into the daily teaching to improve the children's understanding and flexibility in mathematical thinking and to raise the children's attainments in mathematics.
- The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care in this school is good. This is evident through the positive working relationships at all levels within an inclusive and nurturing learning environment. During the inspection, the children's behaviour at all times was very good. The children have good opportunities to take on roles of responsibility, for example, through the school council and the 'Playground Pals' scheme and consultation over aspects of the curriculum.
- The quality of the provision for special educational needs is good. The school is adept at early identification and intervention to address low or underachievement. The individual education plans need to be more sharply focused on the children's learning with greater opportunities for the children to be involved in setting personal targets for learning.
- The provision in the nurture group is very good. The teacher and classroom assistants provide a stimulating and caring environment in which the development of the children's language, independence and self-esteem are well-supported. In addition, there is close co-operation between the relevant teachers to support effective integration opportunities for the children with their peers in the main stream classes.
- The school gives good attention to developing aspects of healthy eating and physical activity through, for example, the promotion of drinking water, the provision of the breakfast club, the healthy break initiative and the children participate in a wide range of extra-curricular activities that encourage them to adopt healthy lifestyles.

## 5. Leadership and Management

The quality of leadership and management is good.

- The Principal, who has been in post since 2011, has taken the lead in a wide range of performance analysis which has informed and identified appropriate targets and priorities to improve further the standards in both English and mathematics. The school's internal data indicates that the support strategies put in place are already effecting improvement with a majority of children performing in line with or above expectation. With the support of her staff she has worked hard to cultivate the nurturing and supportive learning environment and promotes very effectively the school in the local and wider community.
- While the school's development plan is not currently compliant with the School Development Plans (SDP) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2010, the Principal, supported by Curriculum Advisory Support Services, is developing a SDP through a process which actively engages all the teachers. The current action plans reflect the staff's effective self-evaluation processes and identify, appropriately, further improvements in the children's comprehension skills, word problem-solving skills and their levels of competence in ICT are appropriate areas of the curriculum for development.
- There are effective procedures in place to keep the parents informed about their children's progress and how they might support their children's learning. The school liaises effectively with a range of educational, health and statutory agencies, in particular The Tullycarnet Family Project run by Barnardo's in order to support individual children.
- The governors are very supportive of the work of the school. They carry out their role conscientiously and are well informed about and engaged in, for example, the standards achieved by the children and the provision of special needs.
- 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 Department of Education.

## 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 leadership and management, standards and learning and teaching 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:

- raise the standards in literacy and numeracy through a more consistent approach to differentiation and progression; and
- improve the quality of both oral and written feedback to the children about the standard of their work and how to improve it and to involve them in setting their personal learning targets.

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	50
Number of Questionnaires Returned	19
Percentage of Returns	38%
Number of Comments	9

Fifty questionnaires were issued to the parents of the primary school; approximately 38% were returned to the Inspection Services Branch (ISB) and nine contained additional written comments. The majority of the comments were highly positive and included appreciation of the hard work and commitment of the staff who know their children well. The very small number of issues raised have been shared with the Principal and representatives of the governors.

In discussions with the governors, they expressed their appreciation of the work of the whole staff and, in particular, the work of the Principal in promoting the school.

The inspectors also met with a group of the year 6 children. The children reported that they feel happy and safe in school and that they are aware of what to do if they have any concerns. They also spoke positively about school life.

TEACHERS QUESTIONNAIRES	
Number of Questionnaires Returned	4
Number of Comments	4

SUPPORT STAFF QUESTIONNAIRES	
Number of Questionnaires Returned	9
Number of Comments	2

All of the teaching staff and nine support staff responded positively to the online questionnaires and supplied written comments highlighting the supportive, happy relationships within the school, its caring ethos, and the leadership of the principal and her efforts to promote the school in the local and wider community.



**HEALTH AND SAFETY**

- The security of the school site needs to be reviewed.
- There is a broken pane of glass in the fire exit door.

## BASIC INFORMATION SHEET (BIS) - PRIMARY SCHOOLS

- A. i. **School:** Tullycarnet Primary iii. **Date of Inspection:** W/B 21/01/13
- ii. **School Reference Number:** 401-3038 iv. **Nature of Inspection:** Focused

B.

School Year	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
Year 1 Intake	8	13	14	8	16
<b>Enrolments</b>					
Primary	78	80	80	60	61
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): 94.3% **NI Avg Att: 94.7%**

Average Attendance for those children on the  
Special Educational Needs Register: 93.5%

<b>Primary &amp; Reception</b>	<b>Nursery Unit</b>	<b>Special Unit</b>	<b>Irish Medium Unit</b>
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- D. i. Number of Teachers  
(including the principal and part-time teachers): 4 0 0 0  
(Full-time equivalent = 25 teaching hours)
- ii. PTR (Pupil/Teacher Ratio): 15.25 NI PTR: 20.2
- iii. Average Class Size: 20.33
- iv. Class Size (Range): 17 to 23
- v. Ancillary Support:  
Number of Hours **Per Week:**
- |                                                             |      |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| i. Clerical support:                                        | 25   |
| ii. Foundation Stage Classroom Assistant Support:           | 22.5 |
| iii. Additional hours of other classroom assistant support: | 70   |
- vi. Percentage of children with statements of special educational needs: 8.2%
- vii. Total percentage of children on the Special Needs Register: 44.26%
- viii. Number of children who are **not** of statutory school age: 0
- ix. Percentage of children entitled to free school meals: 65.6%
- 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> | <b>Mathematics</b> | <b>Irish</b> |
| 77.78%         | 100%               | N/A          |

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