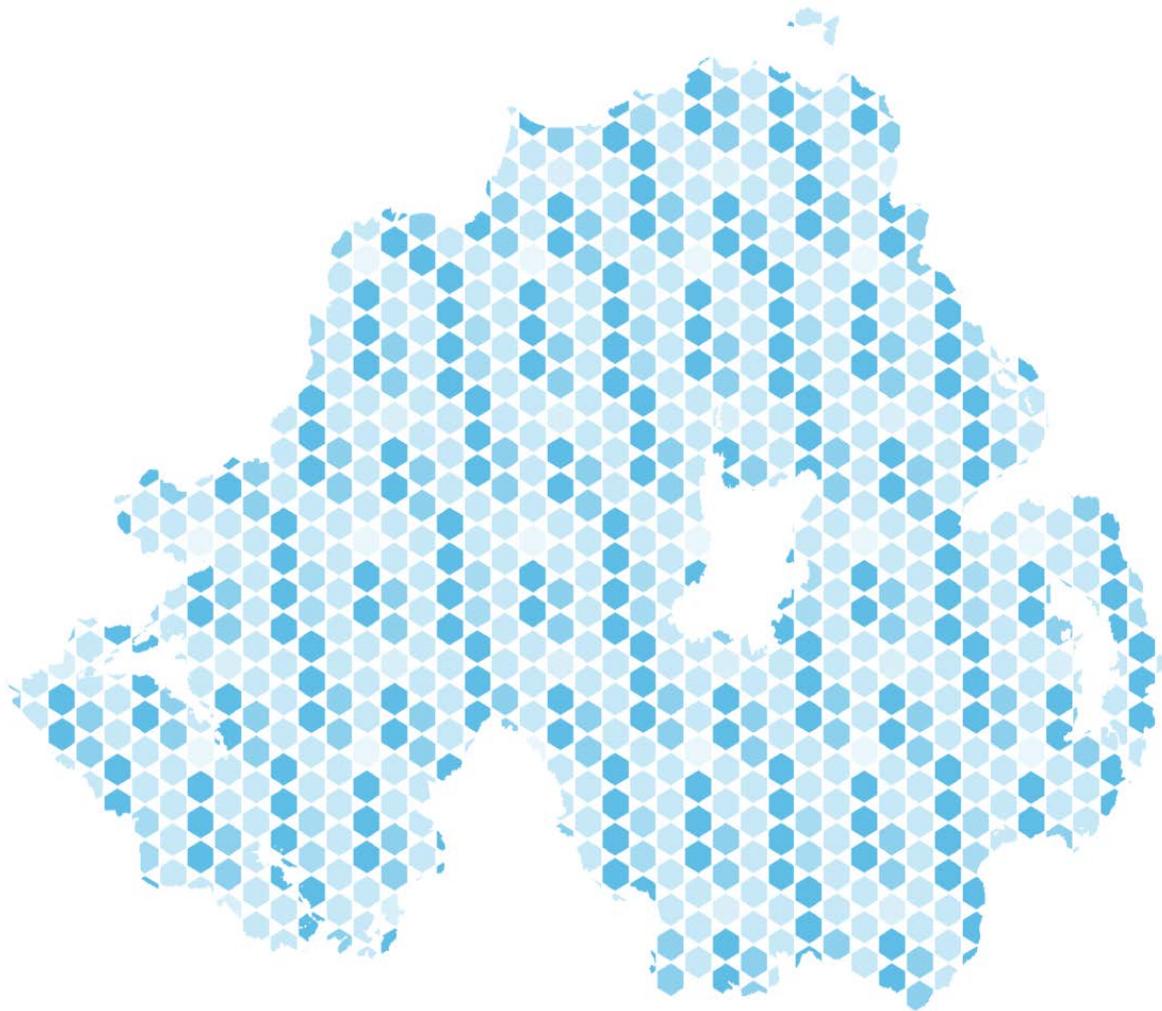


# PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training  
Inspectorate

Armoy Primary School,  
Ballymoney

Report of an Inspection  
in June 2013



Providing Inspection Services for  
Department of Education  
Department for Employment and Learning  
Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure

CUSTOMER  
SERVICE  
EXCELLENCE



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 |

## SCHOOL CONTEXT

Armoyn Primary School is situated on the Gracehill Road, in the village of Armoyn in County Antrim. The children attending the school come from the surrounding rural area and the village. The enrolment has increased over the past three years and currently stands at 58. At the time of the inspection, approximately 47% the children in the school were entitled to free school meals. The school has identified 31% of the children as requiring additional support with aspects of their learning.

## FOCUS

The inspection focused on:

- the children's achievements and standards in literacy and numeracy;
- the quality of provision for learning; and
- the quality of leadership and management, including the school's processes for self-evaluation leading to improvement.

## OVERALL FINDING OF THE INSPECTION

In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by this school is good. The school has important strengths in most of its educational and pastoral provision. The inspection has identified an area for improvement which the school has demonstrated the capacity to address.

## KEY FINDINGS OF THE INSPECTION

### Achievement and Standards

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

- In English and mathematics, the majority of the children attain **standards** in line with their age and ability. In English, by the end of key stage (KS) 2, the majority of the children read with fluency and with an increasing understanding of the meaning of the text. Across the three key stages, the children produce writing of a good standard using a wide range of forms and for a variety of audiences. In mathematics, by the end of KS2, the children have a sound knowledge of key mathematical concepts such as place value, shape and space, and measures, but they are less secure and confident in applying and explaining a range of mental strategies. It is appropriate that the school is making the development of the children's mental mathematics and problem solving skills a priority.
- The children identified with **special educational needs** integrate fully into all aspects of school life; they work well alongside their peers and make satisfactory progress in their learning.
- By the end of key stage KS 2, all the children achieve the expected standard in **information and communication technology** (ICT).

## Provision for learning

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

- The **children** have positive attitudes to learning. In the foundation stage, the children are very well settled and they take responsibility for their own learning through the highly effective use of the task board approach in English, mathematics and play-based learning. The purposeful plenary sessions develop well the children's talking and active listening skills. Throughout the school, the children work well independently. They have respect for others and co-operate well on group tasks.
- The quality of the **teaching observed** ranged from satisfactory to outstanding, with most of it being good or better. In the most effective practice, the children's independence and self-management skills are very well developed and the teachers put the learning into topical and meaningful contexts for them. In the less effective practice, there is insufficient challenge in the learning activities especially for the children with higher ability. The **classroom assistants** make a valuable contribution to developing the children's learning.
- The provision for **special educational needs** is good. There is an effective range of appropriate programmes of support in place to raise attainment in literacy and numeracy. The provision of recent special educational needs withdrawal sessions is informed appropriately by the careful analysis of performance data. Increasingly, the children are setting and reviewing their own targets and progress.
- The quality of the arrangements for **pastoral care** is very good. This is evident through the very good working relationships at all levels, the welcoming and family ethos in the school, and the opportunities provided for the children to take on roles and responsibilities, for example, as playground leaders and members of the School Council.
- The children benefit well from the wide range of **learning experiences** provided beyond the classroom. Their participation in the Extended Schools programme and the well-established cross-community partnerships with three other schools in the Primary Integrating/Enriching Education Programme (PIEE) develops appropriately their personal and social skills.
- The school gives very good attention to promoting **healthy eating and physical activity**. The promotion of healthy breaks and lunches and the children's involvement in a range of physical activities including swimming and lifesaving skills encourages them to adopt healthy lifestyles.

## Leadership and Management

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

- The school has experienced a number of changes in the leadership over the past four years. In the short time he has been in post, the teaching-**Principal** has developed a collegial approach to whole-school improvement. He has implemented a series of strategic changes which are focusing sharply on developing the quality of the children's learning experiences and raising further the standards attained across all areas of learning.

- The **school development planning** process includes consulting with the parents and the effective use of performance data to inform and revise the action plans. The co-ordinators provide good curricular leadership and monitor and evaluate the quality of aspects of the provision within their areas of responsibility. In developing this role further, they need to evaluate more rigorously the quality of planning, learning and teaching, and assessment across the school, in order to ensure greater consistency, address underachievement and raise further the children's standards in literacy and numeracy.
- There is effective leadership given to developing the Primary Integrating/Enriching Education Programme (PIEE), which benefits the children and their families, supports purposeful staff development and promotes good community relations and shared education.
- On the basis of 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 (DE).
- It will be important that the employing authority, school governors and the staff plan for, and manage, issues related to the sustainability of the school provision and school budget, in order to address the current and future needs of the children and the staff.

## CONCLUSION

In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by this school is good. The school has important strengths in most of its educational and pastoral provision. The inspection has identified an area for improvement which the school has demonstrated the capacity to address.

The key area identified for improvement is the need for:

- the co-ordinators to evaluate more rigorously the quality of planning, learning and teaching and assessment in order to raise further the children's standards in literacy and numeracy.

There is no follow-up inspection. The District Inspector will monitor progress on the area for improvement during normal district visits.

## BASIC INFORMATION SHEET (BIS) - PRIMARY SCHOOLS

- A. i. **School: Armoy Primary** iii. **Date of Inspection: 05/06/13**  
 ii. **School Reference Number: 301-6040** iv. **Nature of Inspection: Short**

B.

| School Year       | 2008/09 | 2009/10 | 2010/11 | 2011/12 | 2012/13 |
|-------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Year 1 Intake     | 8       | 6       | 6       | 12      | 7       |
| <b>Enrolments</b> |         |         |         |         |         |
| Primary           | 53      | 51      | 47      | 55      | 58      |
| 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): 95.7% **NI Avg Att: 94.7%**
- Average Attendance for those children on the Special Educational Needs Register: 93%
- |   | 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)   | 5   | 0                  | 0             | 0                 |
| ii. PTR (Pupil/Teacher Ratio):  | 14.5  | NI PTR: 20.2       |               |                   |
| iii. Average Class Size:  | 19  |                    |               |                   |
| iv. Class Size (Range):   | 18 to 21  |                    |               |                   |
| v. Ancillary Support:   |   |                    |               |                   |
| Number of Hours <b>Per Week</b> :   | i. Clerical support:  | 10                 |               |                   |
|   | ii. Foundation Stage Classroom Assistant Support:           | 20.5               |               |                   |
|   | iii. Additional hours of other classroom assistant support: | 17.5               |               |                   |
| vi. Percentage of children with statements of special educational needs:  |   |                    |               | 0%                |
| vii. Total percentage of children on the Special Needs Register:  |   |                    |               | 31%               |
| viii. Number of children who are <b>not</b> of statutory school age:  |   |                    |               | 0                 |
| ix. Percentage of children entitled to free school meals:   |   |                    |               | 46.6%             |
| 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): | <b>English</b>  | <b>Mathematics</b> | <b>Irish</b>  |                   |
|   | 83.3%   | 83.3%              | 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:                              | <b>Year 1</b>   | <b>Year 2</b>      | <b>Year 3</b> |                   |
|   | 7   | 11                 | 7             |                   |

**THE VIEWS OF THE PARENTS, TEACHERS, GOVERNORS, SUPPORT STAFF AND CHILDREN**

The arrangements for the inspection included the opportunity for the parents, the teaching and the support staff to complete a confidential questionnaire prior to the inspection.

Of the 44 questionnaires issued to the parents, 14 (32%) were returned to Inspection Services Branch, including six which contained additional written comments. Almost all of the parental questionnaires expressed high levels of satisfaction with the life and work of the school. The parents commented positively on the welcoming ethos, the well-settled children, the opportunities for the children to participate in a range of after school activities and the work of the recently appointed Principal.

The teachers and the support staff responded very positively to the staff questionnaires and indicated high levels of satisfaction with all aspects of school life. A summary of the findings and the written comments were shared with the Principal and the representatives of the Board of Governors.

The inspectors also met with a group of the year 6 children; they talked enthusiastically about the range of aspects of school life and learning they enjoy. They value the work of the School Council and the opportunities to take on positions of responsibility at lunchtime. They indicated strongly that they feel safe in school and know who to go to if they have any concerns about their safety or well-being.

A representative of the Board of Governors met with the inspection team. He expressed the full support of the governors for the work of the Principal, the staff and the Parents Association.

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