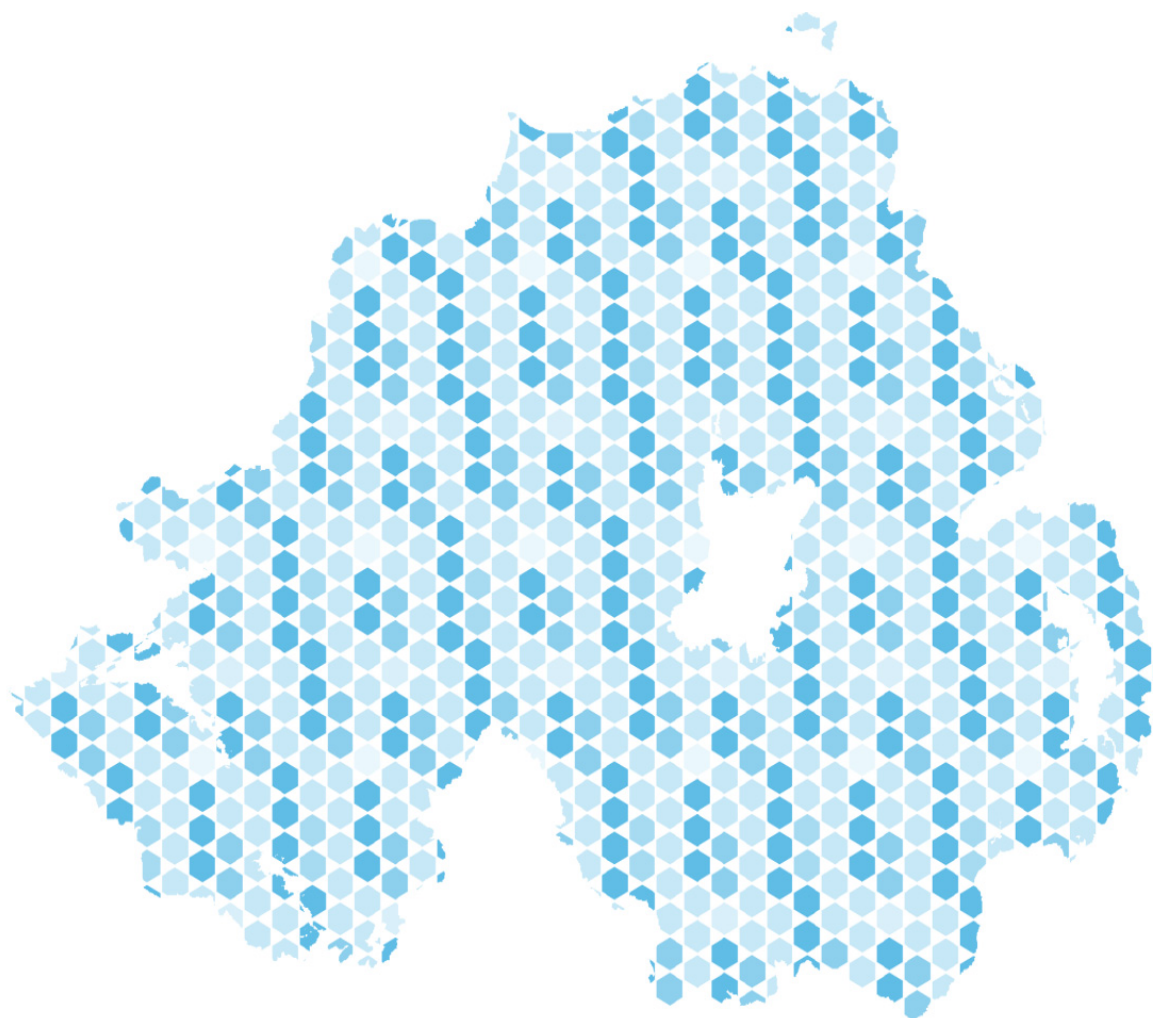


PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Ballyvester Primary School,
Donaghadee

Report of an Inspection
in February 2012

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

Ballyvester Primary School is situated just outside the village of Donaghadee in County Down. The children come from the local area and from within a ten mile radius of the school. The enrolment trend has been steady over four of the last five years; however it has increased significantly in the last year and currently stands at 87 children. Approximately 24% of the children are entitled to receive free school meals. The school has identified approximately 14% 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 the provision for learning and the quality of leadership and management, including the school's processes for self-evaluation leading to improvement.

OVERALL FINDINGS OF THE INSPECTION

In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by this school is very good. The school is meeting very effectively the educational and pastoral needs of the learners; and has demonstrated its capacity for sustained self-improvement.

KEY FINDINGS OF THE INSPECTION

Achievements and Standards

The quality of the children's achievements and standards is very good.

In English and mathematics, the children attain very good standards by the end of key stage (KS) 2. The children engage well in all aspects of their learning and achieved very good standards in the information and communication technology (ICT) accreditation undertaken last year for the first time.

The children identified with special educational needs (SEN) make very good progress in line with their abilities.

Provision for Learning

The quality of the provision for learning is good.

The children are very well-behaved, friendly, and demonstrate high levels of motivation, confidence and engagement with their work. They work well in class individually and in groups, and listen attentively to their teachers.

The quality of the teaching observed ranged from satisfactory to outstanding; the majority was very good to outstanding. The teachers are hard-working, dedicated to the children in their care and demonstrate effective team work across the school.

The provision for special educational needs (SEN) is very good. For some of the children identified with SEN, there are effective withdrawal sessions in both literacy and numeracy to support their needs. The SEN teacher works collaboratively with the class teachers to ensure that the quality of the target setting in the individual education plans (IEPs) is very good.

The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care in the school is outstanding. The ethos is warm, welcoming and inclusive and there are excellent working relationships at all levels throughout the school. The parents and the wider community are closely involved in the life and work of the school.

The school has very good comprehensive arrangements in place for safeguarding children. These arrangements reflect the child protection guidance issued by the Department of Education.

The school gives very good attention to promoting healthy eating and physical activity, for example, through the emphasis placed on healthy breaks in every classroom, and the provision of a wide range of extra-curricular activities, including sport. All of these encourage the children to adopt healthy lifestyles.

Leadership and Management

The quality of the leadership and management is very good.

The Principal provides very effective leadership and is highly committed to the school. She has made a very good start in reviewing the provision and setting a clear strategic direction for the future development of the school. She promotes a strong sense of collegiality among all the staff.

The co-ordinators for literacy, numeracy, ICT and SEN provide very good leadership and have devised appropriate action plans linked effectively to the school's priorities in the development plan. They monitor and evaluate well the quality of the provision. The school has recognised the need to develop further the collection and analysis of data in order to improve standards in both literacy and numeracy.

The whole-school self-evaluation and school development planning (SDP) processes are very good. The current SDP meets fully the requirements of the School Development Plans Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2010.

CONCLUSION

In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by this school is very good. The school is meeting very effectively the educational and pastoral needs of the learners; and has demonstrated its capacity for sustained self-improvement.

It is important that the employing authority, school governors and the staff plan for and manage issues in relation 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.

BASIC INFORMATION SHEET (BIS) - PRIMARY SCHOOLS

- A. i. **School: Ballyvester Primary** iii. **Date of Inspection: W/B 06/02/12**
- ii. **School Reference Number: 401-1265** iv. **Nature of Inspection: Short**

B.

School Year	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Year 1 Intake	7	8	7	8	18
Enrolments					
Primary	67	65	65	68	87
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): | 95.6% | NI Avg Att: 94.7% |
|----|---|-------|--------------------------|

Average Attendance for those children on the Special Educational Needs Register: 92.9%

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) | 4.6 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
|----|----|---|-----|---|---|---|

- | | | | |
|-----|----------------------------|------|--------------|
| ii. | PTR (Pupil/Teacher Ratio): | 18.9 | NI PTR: 20.2 |
|-----|----------------------------|------|--------------|

- iii. Average Class Size: 21.75

- iv. Class Size (Range): 18 to 23

- | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|---|----|
| v. Ancillary Support: | | | |
| Number of Hours Per Week : | | i. Clerical support: | 16 |
| | | ii. Foundation Stage Classroom Assistant Support: | 31 |
| | | iii. Additional hours of other classroom assistant support: | 10 |

- vi. Percentage of children with statements of special educational needs: 1%

- vii. Total percentage of children on the Special Needs Register: 13.8%

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

- | | | |
|-----|---|-------|
| ix. | Percentage of children entitled to free school meals: | 24.1% |
|-----|---|-------|

- | | | | | |
|----|--|-------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------|
| 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
87.5% | Mathematics
87.5% | Irish
N/A |
|----|--|-------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------|

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

The arrangements for the inspection included the opportunity for the parents and the staff to complete confidential questionnaires prior to the inspection. Of the 67 questionnaires issued to the parents, 31 were returned to Inspection Services Branch, including 14 which contained additional written comments. The majority of the parents expressed high levels of satisfaction with the work of the school. In the written comments, they expressed their appreciation of the quality of their children's education and the strong reputation of the school in the local community.

Five teachers and four members of the support staff responded very positively to the confidential online questionnaires. Their written comments acknowledged the strong sense of team-work amongst the staff.

Two of the school's governors met with the inspection team on the first day of the inspection and expressed strong support for the school, including the open and welcoming ethos, the high quality of the principal's leadership, the richness of the learning environment for the children and the effective involvement with the parents and the wider community.

The Education and Training Inspectorate has reported to the Principal, and representatives of the governors, the findings from the questionnaires.

The inspectors also met with a group of the children from year 6. The children stated that they feel happy and secure in school, and are aware of what to do if they have worries about their safety and well-being.

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