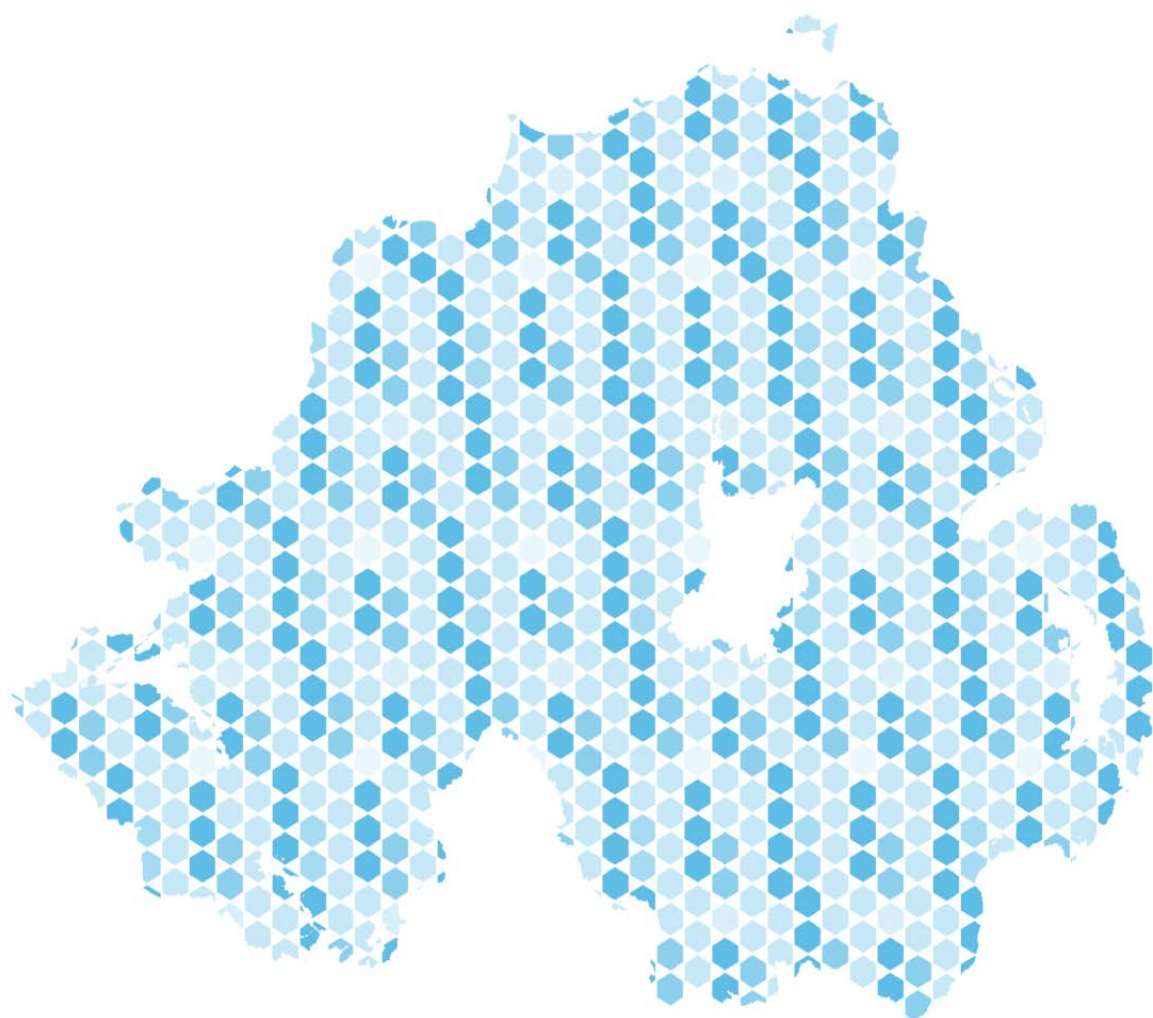


# PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training  
Inspectorate

Gilford Primary School and  
Nursery Unit, Co Down

Report of an Inspection  
in January 2013

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

Gilford Primary School and nursery unit is situated in the village of Gilford, Co Down. The enrolment has remained steady and stands currently at 104, including 26 children in the nursery unit. At the time of the inspection, 28% of the children in the school were entitled to free school meals. The school and nursery unit have identified 16.5% of the children who require additional support with aspects of their learning. This inspection completes work that began in May 2012. The inspection was incomplete at that stage due to action being taken by the staff not to co-operate with the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) on advice from their teaching union.

## 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 FINDINGS OF THE INSPECTION

In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by the school is good. The school has important strengths in most of its educational and pastoral provision.

## KEY FINDINGS OF THE INSPECTION

### Achievements and Standards

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

- In **English and mathematics**, most of the children attain standards in line with their ability or above expectation. They participate well in class discussion, read with a good degree of fluency and write independently across a range of genre and contexts. The children demonstrate a good ability to think mathematically and apply their mathematical knowledge in meaningful contexts. The children attain very good standards in information and communication technology (ICT).
- The majority of the children identified with **special educational needs** (SEN) make good progress in line with their ability. A significant minority of the children would benefit from more focused support during class teaching.
- Most of the children in the **nursery unit** make satisfactory progress in their language development and early mathematical skills.

## Provision for Learning

### The provision for learning is good.

- The **children's** behaviour is exemplary; they are welcoming and helpful to each other, staff and visitors. The children are attentive and engage fully in their learning. As they progress through the key stages, they develop their self-confidence through the opportunities to participate in the school council, a buddy system, an 'Eco' council and the wide range of enrichment activities.
- The quality of the **learning and teaching** observed ranged from satisfactory to very good across the primary school and nursery unit. In the majority of the lessons observed, the teaching was good or better; in over two-fifths of the lessons, it was very good. In the most effective practice, the teachers use precise learning intentions, plan challenging and engaging learning activities, use skilful questioning to extend the children's thinking and evaluate the learning of individual children to inform future planning. This effective practice needs to be consistent across the school and nursery unit.
- The teachers plan a **broad and balanced curriculum** to engage the children in their learning and they make very good connections across the curriculum. The children have very good opportunities to develop their reading, writing and ICT skills across the curriculum. The children, however, would benefit from greater opportunities to evaluate their own learning, set personal targets, and to develop their talking and listening skills further.
- The provision for **SEN** is satisfactory. The school has identified appropriately the need to develop better differentiated learning experiences across the key stages in order to raise the standards further. The inspection findings endorse this as a key priority.
- The quality of the provision for learning in the **nursery unit** is satisfactory. The children are well settled as a result of the care and commitment of the staff and they enjoy the attractive learning environment, including the high quality outdoor play area. The staff, however, need to improve the quality of their interactions with the children and to review the organisation of snack and dinner routines in order to maximise the children's learning experiences.
- The quality of the arrangements for **pastoral care** in the school, including the nursery unit is very good. The children benefit from the positive learning environment and the ethos of mutual respect promoted by the caring and committed staff. The children's personal and social skills are enhanced through the extended schools provision, including the targeted support for literacy and numeracy and the strong links established with the parents, external agencies and the local community, including the cross-community links with other schools.
- The school, including the nursery unit, gives very good attention to promoting **healthy eating and physical activity**.

## Leadership and Management

The quality of leadership and management is good.

- The Principal and the literacy and numeracy co-ordinators provide effective **leadership**. They have implemented successfully changes in learning and teaching approaches focused on raising the standards the children attain. The Principal has developed a collegial approach to school improvement and she has paced the necessary changes to the work of the school appropriately.
- The whole-school **self-evaluation** and **school development-planning processes** are good in the primary school. The Principal, co-ordinators and staff make effective use of a wide range of internal and external data to set appropriate targets, through the action-planning process, in order to improve the outcomes for the children. They use a good range of strategies to monitor, evaluate and review the quality of the provision to bring about improvement in the children's learning. The action plan, however, that guides the development work within the nursery unit needs to be focused more sharply on developing the quality of the learning provision in order to raise the standards the children attain.
- On the basis of the evidence available at the time of the inspection the school and nursery unit have comprehensive arrangements in place for **safeguarding** children. These arrangements reflect the guidance issued by the Department of Education.
- It will be important that the employing authority, school governors and the staff plan for, and manage, issues related to the size of the school provision in order to address the current and future needs of the children and staff.

## CONCLUSION

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

- provide better differentiated learning experiences across the key stages in order to raise further the standards attained by all the children; and
- improve the quality of the provision for learning in the nursery unit in order to raise the standards the children attain.

The ETI will monitor the school's progress on the areas for improvement.

## BASIC INFORMATION SHEET (BIS) - PRIMARY SCHOOLS

- A. i. **School: Gilford Primary** iii. **Date of Inspection: W/B 08/01/13**  
 ii. **School Reference Number: 501-1596** iv. **Nature of Inspection: Short**

B.

School Year	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
Year 1 Intake	3	14	5	11	15
<b>Enrolments</b>					
Primary	80	85	78	78	77
Reception	0	0	0	0	0
Nursery Unit	27	26	26	26	26
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): 96% **NI Avg Att: 94.7%**

Average Attendance for those children on the Special Educational Needs Register: 93.4%

**Primary & Reception    Nursery Unit    Special Unit    Irish Medium Unit**

- D. i. Number of Teachers (including the principal and part-time teachers): 6    1    0    0  
 (Full-time equivalent = 25 teaching hours)
- ii. PTR (Pupil/Teacher Ratio): 19.25    NI PTR: 20.2
- iii. Average Class Size: 19
- iv. Class Size (Range): 14 to 24
- v. Ancillary Support:  
 Number of Hours **Per Week**:  
 i. Clerical support: 25  
 ii. Foundation Stage Classroom Assistant Support: 20  
 iii. Additional hours of other classroom assistant support: 5
- vi. Percentage of children with statements of special educational needs: 2.6%
- vii. Total percentage of children on the Special Needs Register: 13%
- viii. Number of children who are **not** of statutory school age: 0
- ix. Percentage of children entitled to free school meals: 21%
- 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 80%    Mathematics 80%    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 14    Year 2 10    Year 3 7**

## APPENDIX 2

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

The arrangements for the inspection included the opportunity for the parents, the teaching and support staff to complete a confidential questionnaire prior to the inspection, and for a group of year 6 children to meet the inspectors. In addition, the chairperson of the Board of Governors (governors) met with the inspectors and praised the work of the Principal and the staff and highlighted the strong links which the school promotes with its local community.

Eighty-four questionnaires were issued to the **parents in the school and nursery unit**: 20 (23.8%) were returned to Inspection Services Branch (ISB) and eight contained additional written comments. Most of the responses from the questionnaires were positive about the work of the school and the nursery unit. The responses indicated the appreciation of parents for the support given by the staff to their children. The few issues that were raised in the questionnaires have been reported to and discussed with the Principal.

Six of the **teachers** and four of the **support staff** completed confidential questionnaires and most of the responses were affirmative about the work of the school.

The inspectors also met with a group of year 6 children; the children talked happily about their experiences at school, their enjoyment of their learning and the range of enrichment activities. The children are aware of what to do if they have worries about their safety and well-being.

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