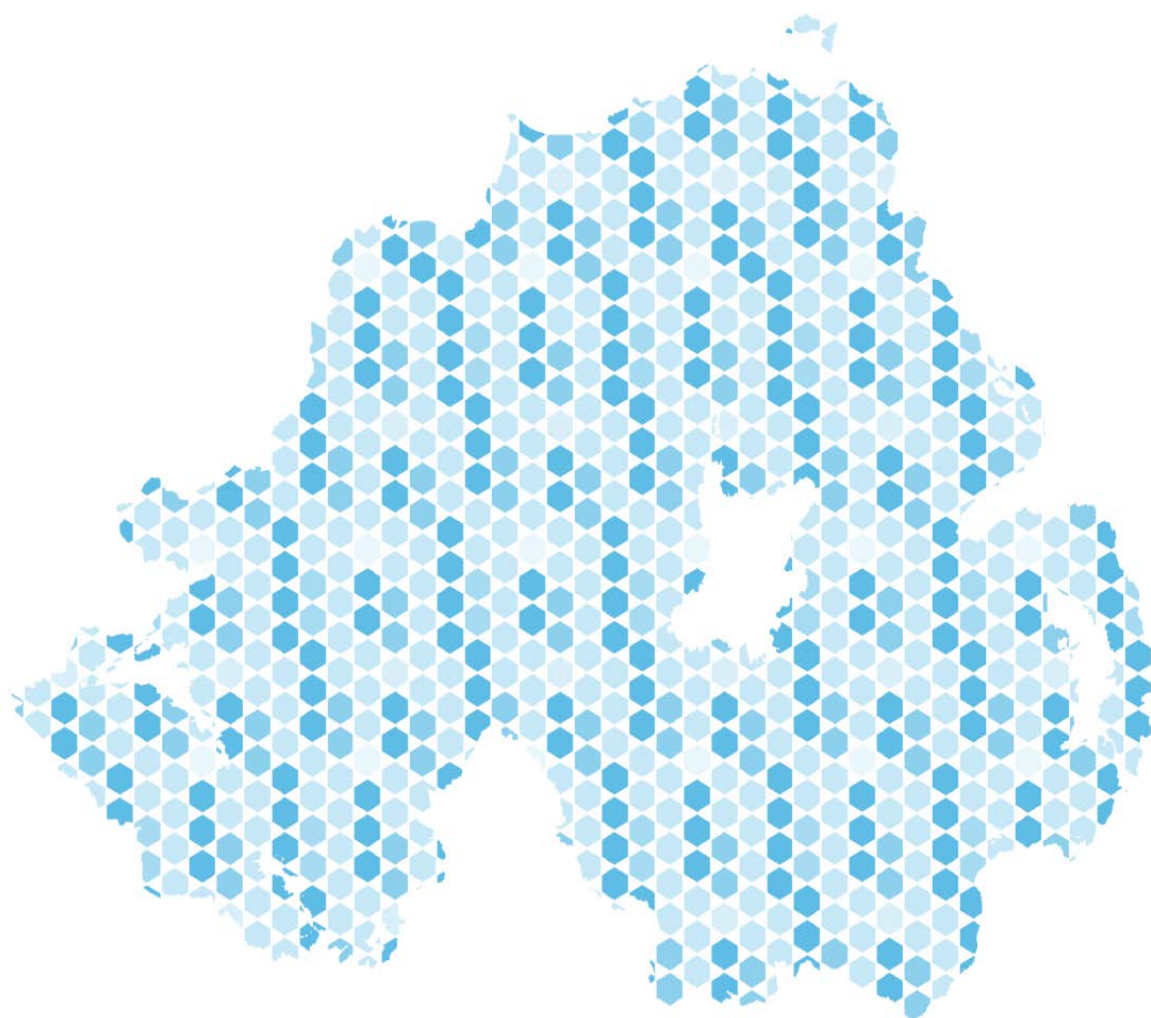


# PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training  
Inspectorate

St Francis' Primary School,  
Castlewellan

Report of an Inspection  
in February 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:

<b>DESCRIPTOR</b>
Outstanding
Very Good
Good
Satisfactory
Inadequate
Unsatisfactory

## SCHOOL CONTEXT

St Francis' Primary School is situated in Drumaroad, in the parish of Drumaroad and Clanvaraghan. The children come from the surrounding local area. With a steadily increasing intake to year 1 over the last four years, the enrolment has risen from 52 to 82 children. At the time of the inspection, 28% of the children were entitled to free school meals. The school has identified almost 23% of the children as having additional needs in 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.

## OVERALL FINDING OF THE INSPECTION

In the areas inspected, the quality of the education provided by this 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 its capacity to address. The Education and Training Inspectorate will monitor the school's progress in this area for improvement.

## 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 make good progress year on year and attain **standards** in line with their ability. By the end of year 7, the children's oral and written communication is of a good standard and they display a good understanding of most mathematical processes. The school has appropriately identified the need to develop the rigorous and consistent use of performance data to track the children's progress more effectively and improve further the standards they attain.
- Most of the children identified with **special educational needs** work well alongside their peers and make good progress towards their individual targets in English and mathematics.

### Provision for Learning

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

- The **children's** behaviour is excellent; they are respectful to one another, work effectively in pairs or groups and interact well with adults. They engage fully in their lessons and display a positive disposition to their learning.

- The quality of the **teaching** observed ranged from very good to satisfactory, with the majority of the lessons being good. In the most effective practice, the teachers establish excellent working relationships with the children and use skilful questioning to extend the children's thinking and consolidate their learning. In the less effective practice, there is a lack of differentiation and challenge; consequently, the work is not consistently well matched to the needs and the abilities of all of the children.
- The provision for **special educational needs** is good. The withdrawal sessions are effective, in particular, in supporting the children's progress in reading. Overall, the short-term targets in the children's individual education plans require further refinement in order to measure the children's progress incrementally.
- The quality of the arrangements for **pastoral care** is very good. The inclusive and welcoming ethos is characterised by mutually respectful relationships at all levels within the school. The children's views are sought in evaluating and developing aspects of the curriculum.
- On the basis of the evidence available at the time of inspection, the school has satisfactory arrangements in place for **safeguarding** children. These arrangements reflect the child protection guidance issued by the Department of Education (DE). The members of the Board of Governors need to update their safeguarding training.
- The school gives good attention to promoting **healthy eating** and physical activity, in particular, through the healthy breaks policy and the extended opportunities for play at break- and lunch-time.

### **Leadership and Management**

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

- The **Principal** provides very good pastoral leadership and has overseen the development and growth of the school. He has established a collegial ethos in which all members of the staff are involved in decision-making; he has led effectively the development work in, and evaluation of, English and mathematics.
- The **co-ordinators** have recently taken up their curricular responsibilities and are currently participating in a leadership development programme. It will be important to develop their role in monitoring and evaluating the quality of the learning and teaching in order to raise further the standards attained by the children.
- The whole-school **self-evaluation** and **school development planning** processes are good. There are appropriate processes for consulting the parents and the children about aspects of curricular development. The action plans are well informed by the effective analysis and use of performance data.
- It will be important that the employing authority, 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 the education provided by this school is good. The school has important strengths in its educational and pastoral provision. The inspection has identified areas for improvement which the school has demonstrated its capacity to address. The Inspectorate will monitor the school's progress in the areas for improvement.

The key areas identified for improvement are the need for:

- the co-ordinators to develop their role in monitoring and evaluating the quality of learning and teaching, to ensure that the work is well matched to the needs and abilities of all of the children; and
- the senior leadership team to develop further the rigorous and consistent use of performance data to track the children's progress more effectively, in order to raise further the standards they attain.

## BASIC INFORMATION SHEET (BIS) - PRIMARY SCHOOLS

- A. i. **School:** St Francis' Primary iii. **Date of Inspection:** W/B 25/02/13  
 ii. **School Reference Number:** 403-1531 iv. **Nature of Inspection:** Short

B.

School Year	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
Year 1 Intake	11	13	9	14	18
<b>Enrolments</b>					
Primary	52	58	62	70	82
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: 95.1%

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

- D. i. Number of Teachers  
 (including the principal and part-time teachers): 5 0 0 0  
 (Full-time equivalent = 25 teaching hours)
- ii. PTR (Pupil/Teacher Ratio): 16.4 NI PTR: 20.2
- iii. Average Class Size: 20.5
- iv. Class Size (Range): 9 to 18
- v. Ancillary Support:  
 Number of Hours **Per Week:**
- i. Clerical support: 10
  - ii. Foundation Stage Classroom Assistant Support: 20
  - iii. Additional hours of other classroom assistant support: 75
- vi. Percentage of children with statements of special educational needs: 4.87%
- vii. Total percentage of children on the Special Needs Register: 23%
- viii. Number of children who are **not** of statutory school age: 0
- ix. Percentage of children entitled to free school meals: 28%
- 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 100%    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, the teaching and support staff to complete a confidential questionnaire prior to the inspection. Of the 58 questionnaires issued to the parents, 15 (26%) were returned to Inspection Services Branch, including 7 which contained additional written comments. Almost all of the parental questionnaires expressed high levels of satisfaction with the life and work of the school. In the written comments, the parents expressed their appreciation of the school's place in the community; the welcoming ethos; the staff's effective support for children with additional needs in their learning; and the leadership of the Principal.

Ten members of staff, including the teachers and the support staff, responded very positively to the staff questionnaires. The key messages from all of the questionnaires have been shared with the Principal and a representative of the Board of Governors.

The inspectors also met with a group of the year 6 and 7 children; they talked very positively about: the helpful staff; the very good opportunities for physical activity during the school day and in extra-curricular activities; and their active participation in the school council. They reported that they feel very secure in school and know what to do if they have any concerns about their safety and well-being.

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