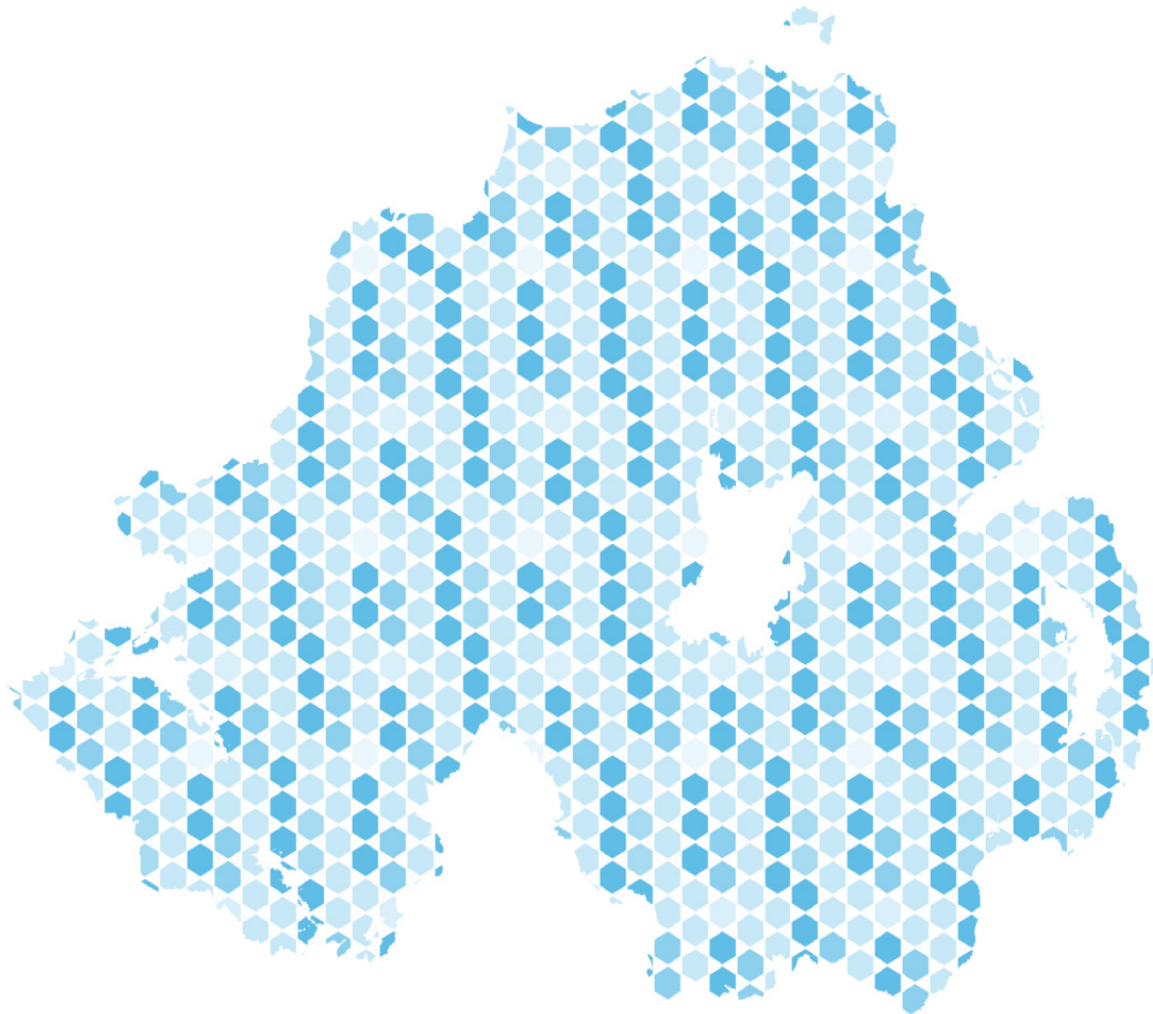


PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Straidbilly Primary School,
Ballymoney

Report of an Inspection
in November 2010

eti

*The Education and Training Inspectorate -
Promoting Improvement*

Providing Inspection Services for

Department of Education
Department for Employment and Learning
Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



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

Straidbilly Primary School is situated just outside the village of Liscolman, approximately four miles southeast of Bushmills. Almost all of the children attending the school live in the rural community within a radius of five miles of the school. The enrolment has risen in recent years and currently stands at 98. At the time of the inspection, approximately 25% of the children in the school were entitled to free school meals. The school has identified 18 children who require 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 outstanding; the quality of pastoral care is also outstanding.

KEY FINDINGS OF THE INSPECTION

Achievements and Standards

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

- In English and mathematics, the children attain standards in line with, or above, their ability, and, over the last four years, the school's performance is well above the Northern Ireland average for schools within the same free meals band¹.
- The children identified with special educational needs make good progress and reach the standards of which they are capable.

Provision for Learning

The provision for learning is very good.

- The children's behaviour is excellent; they are fully engaged in their work and respond well to the challenging activities planned for them. They demonstrate high levels of independence and work enthusiastically at individual, pair or group activities.

¹ 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.

- The teachers are hard-working and committed and have high expectations for the standard of the children's work. The quality of the teachers' planning is excellent, particularly its focus on the evaluation of the children's previous learning. The quality of the teaching observed was always good or better; in one-third of the lessons, it was outstanding. During the inspection, there were examples of the interactive white boards being used effectively to engage the children and consolidate their learning.
- The provision for SEN is very good. The children's needs are identified early and they are provided with effective support for both literacy and numeracy through in-class and withdrawal sessions. A key strength of the provision is the quality of the teachers' planning for those children who require additional support with their learning, as evidenced in the group and individual education plans and in the teachers' medium-term planning.
- The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care is outstanding. This is evident through the highly supportive ethos within the school, the children's participation in extra-curricular activities, the well-established school council and the cross-community links. There is a high level of communication and consultation with parents on aspects of the pastoral and curricular provision, including the effective use of the school's website.
- The school has very good comprehensive arrangements in place for safeguarding children. These arrangements reflect the guidance issued by the Department of Education.
- The school gives very good attention to promoting healthy eating and physical activity through, for example, the information provided for parents and children and the effective use of opportunities integrated across the curriculum, which encourage the children to adopt healthy lifestyles.

Leadership and Management

The quality of leadership and management is outstanding.

- The Principal is highly committed to the life and work of the school. She has led the school very effectively in developing innovative approaches to learning; in particular, the school regularly provides examples of best practice in the development of thinking skills for other schools. She promotes a collegial approach to school improvement and receives very good support from the staff.
- The whole-school self-evaluation and school development planning processes are outstanding. There are effective inclusive processes for identifying the targets for development each year and, importantly, there are rigorous procedures for monitoring and evaluating the work in the children's books, the teachers' planning, the teaching and learning in the classrooms and the standards achieved by the children. Appropriately, there are action plans for literacy and numeracy that are based on enabling the school to achieve its performance targets in these two areas of learning.

- The leadership and management of SEN is very good. Comprehensive records for the children who require additional support with their learning are maintained and these facilitate the effective management of the identification, support and review processes. The leadership and management of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology is highly effective.

CONCLUSION

In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by this school is outstanding; the quality of pastoral care is also outstanding. The school has demonstrated its capacity for sustained self-improvement.

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.

BASIC INFORMATION SHEET (BIS) - PRIMARY SCHOOLS

- A. i. **School: Straidbilly Primary Ballymoney** iii. **Date of Inspection: W/B 22/11/10**
 ii. **School Reference Number: 301-0804** iv. **Nature of Inspection: Short**

B.

School Year	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
Year 1 Intake	4	12	15	20	13
Enrolments					
Primary	74	81	81	91	95
Reception	4	6	5	2	3
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): 95.9% **NI Avg Att: 94.9%**
- | | 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) | 6 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| ii. PTR (Pupil/Teacher Ratio): | 16.3 | NI PTR: 20.7 | | |
| iii. Average Class Size: | 19.6 | | | |
| iv. Class Size (Range): | 16 to 26 | | | |
| v. Ancillary Support: | | | | |
| Number of Hours Per Week : | i. Clerical support: | | 17.5 | |
| | ii. Foundation Stage Classroom Assistant Support: | | 25 | |
| | iii. Additional hours of other classroom assistant support: | | 80.5 | |
| vi. Percentage of children with statements of special educational needs: | 4% | | | |
| vii. Total percentage of children on the Special Needs Register: | 18.3% | | | |
| viii. Number of children who are not of statutory school age: | 3 | | | |
| ix. Percentage of children entitled to free school meals: | 24.7% | | | |
| x. Percentage of children at the end of Key Stage 2 for 2009/10 who attained level 4 and above in English and mathematics: | English
90% | Mathematics
90% | | |
| 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
13 | Year 2
0 | Year 3
0 | |

APPENDIX 2

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 support staff to complete a confidential questionnaire prior to the inspection. Of the 70 questionnaires issued to the parents, 34 were returned to Inspection Services Branch, including six which contained additional written comments. Almost all of the parental questionnaires expressed very high levels of satisfaction with the life and work of the school. In the written comments, the parents praised strongly the caring attitude of the staff and remarked on the very friendly school community.

Two governors met with the inspection team on the first day of the inspection and expressed strong support for the work of the Principal and the rest of the staff. They reported that they were kept well-informed of the work of the school, including the standards achieved by the children. The governors raised their concerns about the accommodation available for the current number of classes.

Four parents also met with the inspection team on the first day of the inspection. They reported their appreciation of the staff and the experiences their children receive. They also praised the arrangements in place to help them support their children's work, particularly the information available on the school's website.

All of the teachers and four members of the support staff responded very positively to the staff questionnaires.

The inspectors also met with a group of the year 6 children; they talked enthusiastically of the friendly ethos, their enjoyment of the extra-curricular activities and the opportunities to express their opinions through the school council. The children are aware of what to do if they have worries about their safety and well-being.

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