



*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

Education and Training Inspectorate

Report of a Focused Inspection

**Donaghey Primary School
Co Tyrone**

Inspected: May 2009

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BASIC INFORMATION SHEET (BIS) - PRIMARY SCHOOLS

- A. i. **School: Donaghey Primary School** iii. **Date of Inspection: W/B 18/05/2009**
- ii. **School Reference Number: 501-6224** iv. **Nature of Inspection: Focused**

B.

School Year	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09
Year 1 Intake	15	11	17	11	21
Enrolments					
Primary	105	106	108	105	105
Reception	-	-	-	-	-
Nursery Class/Classes	-	-	-	-	-
Special Unit	-	-	-	-	-

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): 96.8%

Primary & Reception	Nursery Unit	Special Unit
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- | | | | | |
|----|-------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|---------------|
| D. | i. | Number of Teachers
(including the principal and part-time teachers):
(Full-time equivalent = 25 teaching hours) | 5.2 | |
| | ii. | PTR (Pupil/Teacher Ratio): | 20.2 | NI PTR: 20.8% |
| | iii. | Average Class Size: | 26.2 | |
| | iv. | Class Size (Range): | 21 to 32 | |
| | v. | Ancillary Support:
Number of Hours Per Week : | | |
| | | i. Clerical support: | 7.5 | |
| | | ii. Official Making A Good
Start Support: | 20 | |
| | | iii. Additional hours of other
classroom assistant support: | 70 | |
| | vi. | Percentage of children with statements of special educational needs: | 3.8% | |
| | vii. | Total percentage of children on the Special Needs Register: | 23.8% | |
| | viii. | Number of children who are not of statutory school age: | 0 | |
| | ix. | Percentage of children entitled to free school meals: | 7.6% | |

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 SCHOOL CONTEXT

Donaghey Primary School is situated in the town land of Donaghey two miles from the village of Sandholes, Co Tyrone. The majority of the children who attend the school come from the surrounding rural area. The enrolment has remained steady over the last five years and currently stands at 105. Approximately 8% of the children are entitled to free school meals (FSM). The school has identified approximately 24% of the children as requiring additional support with aspects of their learning.

1.2 FOCUS

The inspection focused on the quality of the children's experiences in literacy and numeracy and the use of information and communication technology (ICT) in promoting and supporting learning and teaching. The school's arrangements for pastoral care, including child protection, were also evaluated.

1.3 THE VIEWS OF THE PARENTS, TEACHERS, GOVERNORS AND CHILDREN

The arrangements for the inspection included the opportunity for the parents and the teaching staff to complete a confidential questionnaire prior to the inspection, as well as meetings with representatives from the Board of Governors (governors) and a group of children from year 6.

Sixty five questionnaires were issued to parents; approximately 66% of the parental questionnaires were returned to the Department of Education (DE). Eighteen returns contained additional written comments. Most of the responses indicated a high level of satisfaction with the provision in the school. In particular, the parents highlighted the strong sense of community in the school, the happy and well cared for children and the hard-working and dedicated staff.

Four teachers completed the confidential online questionnaire with three containing an additional written comment. All of the responses were affirmative of the work of the school. An analysis of the questionnaires and the written comments made by the parents and the staff were shared with the Principal and the governors.

The governors spoke very highly of the school, the staff and the leadership of the Principal. In particular, they value the commitment of the parents to the school and the hard work and dedication of all the staff in support of the children's learning.

The group of children who met with members of the inspection team spoke enthusiastically about the support they receive from their teachers and their enjoyment of the wide range of extra-curricular activities. The children know what to do and who to speak to if they have any concerns about their safety and well-being.

1.4 PASTORAL CARE

The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care in the school is excellent; the Principal and the staff are dedicated to the children in their care. The positive working relationships at all levels foster an inclusive and supportive ethos throughout the school and within the local and wider community. The children are friendly and courteous, and respond well to the staff's expectations; their behaviour is exemplary. The school regularly awards achievement incentives to encourage the children's sense of self-esteem and self-confidence. The children make a valuable input to the life and work of the school; their views and opinions on a range of issues are sought and valued. A large number of children benefit from the opportunity to participate in a wide range of extra-curricular activities which include music and sporting activities. In addition, their learning and social development are enhanced through regular visits to places of educational interest and visitors to the school. The school contributes to selected charities and an appropriate emphasis is placed on the importance of caring for others in the wider community.

1.5 CHILD PROTECTION

The school has comprehensive arrangements in place for safeguarding children. These arrangements reflect the guidance issued by DE.

1.6 HEALTHY EATING AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

The school gives excellent attention to promoting healthy eating and physical activity, for example through the promotion of healthy breaks, ease of access to drinking water and involvement in a range of regular physical activity programmes, which encourage the children to adopt healthy lifestyles. The provision of a range of outdoor classroom and play facilities contributes significantly to the children's health and well-being.

2. ACHIEVEMENTS AND STANDARDS

2.1 LEARNING

Most of children are keen and interested learners; they engage readily in the activities and work steadily with perseverance. By the end of key stage (KS) 2, most of the children have an enthusiastic attitude to their work and are prepared to attempt more difficult and challenging learning activities.

2.2 ENGLISH AND LITERACY

During the inspection, the children's learning experiences in language and literacy observed were of a good quality. In all key stages, the children are motivated and keen to talk about their work. They express their thoughts and ideas confidently and articulately. The effective use of active learning strategies and the emphasis on providing opportunities for the children to interact with teachers and with peers encourage the development of good talking and listening skills across the school. The current focus on implementing key aspects of assessment for learning such as the use of learning intentions and success criteria is affecting positively the quality of the experiences for the children throughout the school.

In the foundation stage (FS) and KS1 the children are exposed to a range of different genre; this promotes their interest in books and the written word. There is a customised phonics programme to help the children acquire basic reading skills and effective use is made of practical equipment, for example, individual whiteboards to support the development of word recognition. The school plans to implement a whole school linguistics phonics programme to develop this good practice further.

The school has invested in a wide range of reading materials to promote the children's language and learning. Well-stocked class libraries and an attractive central library are used to encourage and promote an interest in books. A book borrowing scheme which is organised by the children in years 6 and 7 and a Book Buddies programme are popular with the children.

Reading support programmes are provided from year 1, and Reading Recovery in years 2 and 3; there is also a Better Reading Partnership Programme for the children in years 3 to 7. This additional support is having a positive impact on the children's ability to read with increasing confidence and enjoyment.

In KS2, the children have regular opportunities to develop their reading skills through for example class novels and library books; most can read with fluency, expression and understanding and can talk, with confidence, about their reading habits. Guided reading has been identified by the staff as an area for development.

The standard of written work achieved by the children is good. In the FS, the children become familiar with different forms of print and experiment with informal writing. In KS1, basic conventions such as simple sentence structure are developed through shared writing activities and work sheets. In KS2, there are also examples of good extended writing across the curriculum.

Information and communication technology is integrated effectively in the classroom activities across the school and in KS2 the children employ it as a tool to improve the quality of their written work. The children are provided with opportunities to write for a variety of purposes and audiences and the use of real-life contexts makes this work more meaningful to the children.

At the time of the inspection the school did not have a literacy policy. The school needs to address this issue as a priority in order to ensure breadth, consistency of practice, continuity and progression in the literacy programme across the whole school.

By the end of KS2, most of the children achieve the expected level of attainment in English/literacy for children of their age, and a minority achieve the highest level of attainment. This profile is equivalent to other schools with similar FSM entitlement.

2.3 MATHEMATICS AND NUMERACY

Under the direction of the very effective numeracy co-ordinator, the school's programme for mathematics is suitably broad and provides the children with a wide range of experiences over the seven years.

In all classes, the mathematics lessons incorporate an appropriate range of teaching approaches, practical activities and discussion sessions; a very good range of resources is used creatively to support the learning and teaching. All of the mathematics lessons include sessions of mental mathematics in which the children respond well to a variety of interesting and challenging activities. In some of the lessons, the children are provided with appropriate opportunities to apply their mathematical thinking in other areas of the curriculum. During the inspection, the children worked well in groups, sharing their ideas and reasoning to develop further their mathematical thinking.

In FS and KS1, the children gain a good understanding of number and basic number operations, common two- (2D) and three-dimensional (3D) shapes and are given opportunities to present their work in an appropriate form. Much of this work is linked well to the children's everyday experiences. By the end of KS1, the children have a good level of understanding of number, shape and space.

As they progress through KS2, the children's learning is developed further, and by year 7 they have gained a broad range of mathematical knowledge and skills; most have a good understanding of number, fractions and place value, are able to calculate accurately, recognise and know the properties of 2D and 3D shapes, estimate and measure in different units, and interpret and present data in a variety of forms. The teachers use skilful questioning techniques that encourage the children to think and talk critically and confidently about their mathematical learning.

By the end of KS2, most of the children achieve or surpass the expected level of attainment in mathematics, and a majority achieve the highest level of attainment. This profile is above the average for schools with similar FSM entitlement.

The teachers make effective use of ICT to support learning and teaching in numeracy. Aspects of number, shape and measurement are consolidated regularly with appropriate programmes, and programmable devices such as 'Beebot' and 'Roamer'; simple Logo programs help the children to develop their understanding of direction, scale and control. Data-handling packages are used well to assist the children to collect, analyse and present data in a variety of forms; appropriately, the data used is related to the children's experiences and interests. The two recently acquired interactive whiteboards located in the KS2 classrooms are used well to support the children's learning and the teachers continue to enhance their confidence and competence in their use. There is good use of ICT resources including the mobile laptop computers to provide extension and challenge for the children and to encourage them as independent learners.

3. THE QUALITY OF PROVISION FOR LEARNING

3.1 PLANNING

The staff have identified the need to develop whole school planning and have recently introduced a revised format to address the requirements of the curriculum. The inspection endorses this development work as a priority. Currently, the medium-term planning is content driven and the quality of the teachers' short-term planning is variable. In order to ensure continuity and progression in the development of the children's learning and to

facilitate the effective monitoring and evaluation of the curriculum, there needs to be a more comprehensive and collaborative approach to whole school planning. There is also a need to establish clear links between the long-term and medium-term planning and the priorities set out in the School Development Plan (SDP).

3.2 TEACHING

During the inspection, all the teaching observed was consistently very good. This effective practice included the well-paced and structured lessons, the promotion of independent learning among the children and the effective integration of ICT to support learning in both literacy and numeracy. The staff work hard to embrace the underlying principles of the Northern Ireland Curriculum and employ a wide range of teaching strategies to develop active learning. During the inspection, the teachers used the learning intentions and success criteria effectively throughout the lessons to focus the children's attention and to consolidate their learning.

3.3 ASSESSMENT

The analysis of whole school data is at an early stage of development; although the Principal and teachers have begun to analyse a range of assessment outcomes, including standardised test scores and end of KS results there is a need for the school to develop this work further so that the outcomes are used more effectively to inform future planning and learning and teaching.

The school has recently implemented a useful assessment policy. The teachers mark the children's work regularly, often with positive and supportive comments. In the best practice, there are clear indications of what the children have to do to improve their work. Importantly the children are also given opportunities to discuss their own work and that of their peers during class time.

The parents have regular opportunities to meet with the teachers to discuss their children's progress; written reports, detailing each child's achievements are sent home annually.

3.4 SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

Approximately 24% of the children have been identified as requiring additional support with aspects of their learning or behaviour. The school is committed to an inclusive approach and these children are educated with their peers in mainstream classes.

The arrangements for special educational needs (SEN), under the effective guidance of the recently appointed special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO), are systematic and well focused. A comprehensive range of documentation to guide the work in SEN is in place. The school has good links with various external support agencies including the Southern Education and Library Board's Autism Advisory and Intervention Service, the Literacy Support Service and the Sensory Support Service; these provide valuable assistance to individual children. The school deploys and utilises well the very effective support provided by the classroom assistants.

Appropriate Individual Educational Plans which outline targets for improvement and the support strategies to be used are being systematically developed, these have been drawn up for all the children with special educational needs. The Principal, SENCO and teachers monitor and review the children's progress on a regular basis. They liaise closely with, and involve, the parents at the review stages.

A small number of children are benefiting from a well-structured Reading Recovery Programme and the introduction of the Catch-Up programme for Numeracy.

4. LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

4.1 LEADERSHIP

The Principal has been in post for nine years; she is caring, hardworking and displays a strong personal commitment to the school and the children's welfare. Under her direction the school has worked through a number of important pastoral and curricular initiatives. She sets a positive tone throughout the school and her consultative approach promotes a strong sense of collegiality amongst the staff; in her work she is well supported by the teachers. Roles and responsibilities within the school are clearly defined.

Much work has gone into an agreed SDP which sets out appropriate areas for improvement, including aspects of numeracy and literacy. The school needs to develop further the targets set in order to be able to demonstrate, in a measurable way, ongoing school improvement.

The school does not have effective processes to evaluate the quality of its provision. It needs to address this issue in order that priorities for future development are identified appropriately.

5. CONCLUSION

5.1 The strengths of the school include:

- the caring and supportive atmosphere which permeates the school and contributes well to the exemplary behaviour of the children and their positive attitude to learning;
- the quality of the teaching observed which is consistently very good and contributes to the good standards achieved by most of the children, particularly in numeracy;
- the inclusive nature of the work in support of those children with special educational needs;
- the hard working, caring and committed teachers, classroom assistants and other support staff;
- the support from the parents and governors to the life and work of the school; and
- the effective use of the outdoor classroom and play provision to support learning and promote a strong sense of place and identity.

5.2 The areas for improvement include the need to:

- develop further the whole school planning to ensure that the children's skills and experiences are promoted progressively within and across both key stages; and
- develop further the procedures at all levels for monitoring and evaluating the work of the school and to make more effective use of the available performance data to inform the teachers' planning, classroom practice and priorities for improvement to be included in the SDP.

In most of the areas inspected the quality of education provided in this school is satisfactory; the strengths outweigh the areas for improvement in the provision. The inspection has identified important areas for improvement in aspects of leadership and management which need to be addressed if the needs of all the learners are to be met more effectively.

The Education and Training Inspectorate will monitor and report on the school's progress in addressing the areas for improvement.

APPENDIX

HEALTH AND SAFETY

- There is limited car-parking space at the school and as a result many of the children have to walk around parked cars on a narrow road to gain access to and from the school.

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