

# PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training  
Inspectorate

Eglinton Primary School and  
Community Nursery Unit,  
Londonderry

Report of an Inspection  
in November 2009

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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

## BASIC INFORMATION SHEET (BIS) - PRIMARY SCHOOLS

- A. i. **School: Eglinton Primary School** iii. **Date of Inspection: W/B 16/11/2009**  
 ii. **School Reference Number: 201-2245** iv. **Nature of Inspection: Focused**

B.

School Year	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
Year 1 Intake	28	31	24	23	30
<b>Enrolments</b>					
Primary	211	206	203	204	198
Reception	0	0	0	0	0
Nursery Unit	26	26	27	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): 96.2% **NI Avg Att: 94.9%**
- |  | Primary &<br>Reception | Nursery<br>Unit | Special<br>Unit | Irish Medium<br>Unit |
|--|------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------------|
|--|------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------------|
- D. i. Number of Teachers  
 (including the principal and part-time teachers): 9 1 0 0  
 (Full-time equivalent = 25 teaching hours)
- ii. PTR (Pupil/Teacher Ratio): 22 NI PTR: 20.4
- iii. Average Class Size: 28.3
- iv. Class Size (Range): 22 to 35
- v. Ancillary Support:  
 Number of Hours **Per Week:**
- |   |       |
|---|-------|
| i. Clerical support:  | 25    |
| ii. Foundation Stage Classroom Assistant Support:           | 35    |
| iii. Additional hours of other classroom assistant support: | 91.67 |
- vi. Percentage of children with statements of special educational needs: 3.54%
- vii. Total percentage of children on the Special Needs Register: 35.35%
- viii. Number of children who are **not** of statutory school age: 0
- ix. Percentage of children entitled to free school meals: 17.17%
- x. Percentage of children at the end of Key Stage 2 for 2008/09  
 who attained level 4 and above at English and maths: **English 88.89% Maths 86.11%**

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 SCHOOL CONTEXT**

Eglinton Primary School is situated in the village of Eglinton, County Londonderry. Most of the children come from the village and the immediate surrounding area. The enrolment has decreased by approximately 6% over the last five years and currently stands at 198; in addition 26 children attend the Community Nursery Unit. At the time of the inspection approximately 17% of the children in the primary school were entitled to free school meals (FSM). The school has identified 35% of children who require additional support with aspects of their learning.

### **1.2 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.

In addition, the use of information and communication technology (ICT) to support learning, and the school's arrangements for pastoral care, including child protection were evaluated.

### **1.3 THE VIEWS OF THE PARENTS, TEACHERS, GOVERNORS, SUPPORT STAFF AND CHILDREN**

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

Of the 141 questionnaires issued to the parents in the primary school; approximately 48% were returned to the Inspection Services Branch (ISB), including 25 which contained an additional written comment. Most of the responses indicated a high level of satisfaction with the provision in the school. In particular, the parents highlighted the care and support provided by the teachers, the happy and well settled children and the opportunities provided for the children to participate in a range of extra-curricular activities. A minority of the responses raised concerns particularly in relation to class size, the quality of some of the teaching and the marking of the children's work. These issues are addressed in the report.

Ten teachers and 17 members of the support staff completed the confidential online questionnaire. Six teachers and seven support staff provided an additional written comment. The responses from all the staff were highly affirmative of the work of the school. In discussions held with a group of year 6 children, they reported that they are aware of what to do if they have any worries about their safety or well-being; in addition to having access to the designated teacher for child protection, the children are able to express their opinions or concerns through a private (P-mail) post box. They spoke enthusiastically about the wide range of extra-curricular activities provided for them including art, rugby, cricket and netball. The governors spoke very positively about the child-centred ethos within the school and the commitment and vision of the Principal. They also referred to the valuable contribution made by the staff in providing a range of extra-curricular activities and the purposeful links that have been established with other local schools.

In the nursery unit, of the 25 questionnaires which were issued to the parents, approximately 62% were returned to ISB, including nine which contained an additional written comment. All those who responded indicated a very high level of satisfaction with the provision. They paid particular tribute to the welcoming, approachable staff and expressed their gratitude for being kept well informed and involved in the life and work of the nursery unit.

The Education and Training Inspectorate (Inspectorate) has reported to the Principal and representatives of the governors the main messages emerging from the questionnaires and the discussions.

#### 1.4 PASTORAL CARE

The quality of provision for pastoral care within the school and the nursery unit is very good. The ethos within both is positive and working relationships at all levels are very good. The children are settled, well behaved, confident and happy. In the primary school, the year 7 children support the younger children well at play time through their role as 'Playground Friends'. There is effective communication with the parents about their children's learning and progress. In the nursery unit, appropriate importance is placed on the development of the children's personal, social and emotional skills, and on promoting the children's awareness of their personal safety.

#### 1.5 CHILD PROTECTION

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

The nursery unit has satisfactory arrangements in place for safeguarding children. These arrangements broadly reflect the guidance issued by DE but a named person within the nursery unit should be allocated responsibility for child protection.

#### 1.6 HEALTHY EATING AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

The school and nursery unit give very good attention to promoting healthy eating and physical activity, for example, the healthy walking bus with associated healthy eating challenges and nutrition information for parents, encourages the children to adopt healthy lifestyles. In the nursery unit, play themes, such as the Farmers' Market are used effectively to involve the parents in their children's learning and to provide the children with opportunities to work with real fruit and vegetables in order to stimulate their interest and creativity.

#### 1.7 LINKS WITH PARENTS AND THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

The school communicates regularly with the parents about the life and work of the school and there are various opportunities for them to get involved in supporting the children's learning. There is a very active Parent Teacher's Association (PTA) which has organised community events to raise considerable funds for the school. There are well-established and valued links with a number of local schools which enrich the children's educational and social experiences.

In the nursery unit there are also well-established links with the parents, local primary schools and businesses. A wide range of visitors from the local health and emergency services are regularly invited to the nursery unit and the children's learning is supported and extended effectively through visits to local shops and places of interest.

## **2. ACHIEVEMENTS AND STANDARDS**

### **2.1 LEARNING**

The children talk confidently about their work and have positive attitudes to learning. At foundation stage (FS), they learn through a range of songs, rhymes, play-based and structured activities. Whilst the children are well settled and making some progress, teachers need to take greater account of the children's pre-school experience and knowledge in order to optimise their progress and to meet more effectively their individual learning needs.

At key stage (KS) 1 and KS2, when given the opportunities, the children are able to take increasing responsibility for their own learning, for example, by setting individual targets for success, using dictionaries to check the accuracy of their work and being prepared to have a go and take risks for learning without the fear of making mistakes. Where group-work is carefully set up by the teachers, the children collaborate well by sharing, taking turns and encouraging others to achieve group goals. These examples of good practice should be disseminated and further developed throughout the school and more opportunities should be identified and planned to provide appropriate challenges for the more able children.

An analysis of the KS2 assessment data over the past four years shows that in English and mathematics, the school's performance is consistently above the Northern Ireland average. Compared with schools in the same FSM category, the levels of attainment are also above the average.

### **2.2 ENGLISH AND LITERACY**

The overall quality of provision for English and literacy is satisfactory. The quality and range of the children's work in talking and listening is good and they also achieve good standards in reading. The standards achieved by the children in writing are satisfactory.

Key strengths:

- the teachers make effective use of modelled and shared writing strategies to develop the children's writing skills. In the best practice, a variety of imaginative starting points including music and objects were used for creative writing;
- the children are responding well to the introduction of a common approach to the teaching of spelling from year 2 to year 7;
- the teachers make effective use of interactive whiteboards to help promote the development of the children's language and thinking;
- very good work has been undertaken by the literacy coordinator in developing the children's interest in reading. The children are benefiting from the development of the library and the improved variety and quality of the recently purchased reading materials; and
- there is effective involvement of the parents through the 'Paired Reading' project within KS2. Evaluations of the project indicated that most of the parents felt that their child had gained from the experience and had developed their interest in reading. A significant minority also commented that they would continue the approach at home. All of the children indicated that they had enjoyed the programme and that they felt they would now read more widely.

Key areas for improvement:

- the teachers need to develop the children's independent writing skills within the FS and disseminate the good practice within KS2 in order to raise further the standards achieved by the children in writing; and
- there needs to be more rigorous monitoring and evaluation of the impact of current initiatives on the children's learning.

## 2.3 MATHEMATICS AND NUMERACY

The overall quality of provision for mathematics and numeracy is satisfactory. The standards achieved by the children in mathematics are good.

Key strengths:

- the children are provided with valuable opportunities to develop and apply their mathematical knowledge and understanding through a range of experiences and real life contexts, for example, in the FS children sorted autumn leaves by colour and shape, while in KS2 graphs were produced to compare local and global rainfall patterns;
- most of the children achieve good standards by the end of KS2. They have a good understanding of place value and can talk confidently about mathematics, and work flexibly with numbers;
- the newly-appointed numeracy co-ordinator has undertaken sound work in the development of the programme for the teaching of mathematics throughout the school. He has piloted a number of new initiatives in his own classroom and has led workshops for the staff in order to raise awareness of how the children's mathematical thinking can be developed more effectively;
- the action plan for numeracy is appropriately detailed and clearly focused on teaching and learning; and
- there is good use made of ICT to support learning and teaching in mathematics. Teachers make effective use of programmable devices and appropriate software packages to enhance their teaching, to engage the children's interest and to promote mathematical understanding.

Key areas for improvement:

- the teachers need to develop further the children's mental maths skills throughout the school by including regular, well-paced and challenging sessions in which the children are encouraged to explain and discuss the strategies they use; and
- the teachers need to provide a wider range of appropriately challenging investigative and problem-solving activities to develop more fully the children's ability to think mathematically and raise further the standards achieved, particularly by the more able children.



### **3. THE QUALITY OF PROVISION FOR LEARNING**

#### **3.1 PLANNING**

The teachers are dedicated and plan their work conscientiously. The short-term planning identifies appropriately the intended learning outcomes for the children and the range of teaching approaches and resources to be used. In most cases the teachers identify clearly through their planning, how specific thinking skills and personal capabilities can be developed through the different areas of learning. The most effective planning contains purposeful evaluations of the progress made by the children and are used appropriately to inform future planning, teaching and learning. This practice needs to be disseminated and developed across the school.

There is a need to develop whole-school schemes of work in both English and mathematics to ensure continuity and progression throughout the school and guide the teachers in developing their medium and short term planning.

The school needs to review its provision for learning through play in order to provide a coherent programme which takes into account the children's prior learning and experiences in the nursery unit and ensures appropriate challenge and progression from FS to KS1.

#### **3.2 TEACHING**

The quality of most of the teaching observed was satisfactory or better; and in just over half of the lessons it was good or better. In a small number of lessons the quality of teaching observed was inadequate.

In the best practice observed, the lessons were characterised by a clear structure and the use of creative stimuli and real life contexts to engage the children's interests. The lessons were well paced and there was a balance of practical, individual and group work activities. The teachers employed effective questioning strategies to stimulate the children's thinking and encourage them to provide extended responses. The children were given opportunities to reflect on and discuss what they had learned and to describe the skills they had used.

In the less effective practice the lessons were over-directed by the teacher and there was a lack of challenge in the activities to extend the children's thinking and understanding. Classroom management strategies were not consistently deployed to promote positive behaviour and some group work activities were not sufficiently focused and demanding.

#### **3.3 ASSESSMENT**

The teachers use a suitable range of internal and standardised tests in order to gain an overview of the children's performance and to inform planning for the provision of additional learning support. The school has introduced data-handling software to help them track and evaluate the children's progress and has identified the need to use this information more rigorously to inform their self-evaluation processes.

Most of the children's written work is marked regularly; the marking is personalised and supportive. In the best practice the teachers identify suitable targets to help the children improve the quality of their work and to encourage them to take increasing responsibility for their learning. This good practice needs to be developed and applied more consistently across the school to help raise further the standards achieved by the children. The parents are kept well informed of their children's progress through parental interviews and annual written reports. In addition parents are encouraged to meet with the teachers on a formal and informal basis to discuss the child's educational and pastoral needs.

### 3.4 SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

The overall quality of the provision for children with special educational needs is good. The school is strongly committed to meeting the needs of the children who require additional support with aspects of their learning. A full range of information is used appropriately to identify children's needs as early as possible; this includes the records received from the nursery unit and other pre-school centres, evaluations from teachers and classroom assistants, parental inputs and the outcomes of formal and informal tests.

A full-time Learning Support Teacher (LST) provides effective withdrawal support for children individually and in small groups. This support is available both on a regular basis and in more intense, specifically targeted sessions according to the children's needs at a particular time. The withdrawal support reinforces appropriately the classroom based learning. Currently, this support is centred on the literacy needs of the children. The LST has created a welcoming, caring and supportive ethos in the withdrawal sessions. The quality of these sessions for individual pupils is very good and focuses appropriately on developing their organisational and self-management skills. The LST liaises closely with and supports the teaching staff, and provides detailed evaluations of the progress made by the children to their teachers and parents. There is evidence that a majority of the children who receive withdrawal support are making progress in their learning.

The recently appointed special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) has worked diligently and systematically to develop further the provision for special educational needs. She has audited the provision and identified specific and suitable actions to promote further improvement, including, updating the policy, making additional resources available and working closely with the teaching staff, classroom assistants and parents in order to provide guidance and formalise communications.

Individual Education Plans (IEPs) are drawn up by the teachers, classroom assistants and where appropriate the LST. The majority of the targets set for the children are clear, focused and short-term. The plans identify appropriate teaching strategies and suggestions for parental involvement. The SENCO has identified appropriately the need for closer monitoring of the IEPs to ensure a more consistent approach to the setting of targets by all staff.

The classroom assistants, working in partnership with the teachers, provide valuable support for the children. In the best practice the teachers provide suitably differentiated learning opportunities, matched appropriately to the needs of all the children.

The school maintains very good links with various external support agencies and these provide valuable assistance to individual children requiring specialist help, for example, through the services of the Reading Centre, the Western Education and Library Board Behavioural Support Team and Rossmar Special School.

## 4. LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

### 4.1 LEADERSHIP

The Principal has been in post for six years. She has led the school effectively through significant changes particularly within the last two years, during which time there has been a substantial change in staff due to a number of retirements and periods of statutory leave. These changes have necessitated employing a number of teachers on a temporary basis and reallocating posts of responsibility. The Principal sets a positive tone for the work of the school through her very good working relationships with the children and staff. She encourages a collegiate approach to decision-making within the school. She is ably assisted

by the newly appointed Vice-principal who needs to become more fully involved in the strategic leadership of the school. The school needs to review and develop the role of the subject and key-stage co-ordinators, to include the regular monitoring and evaluation of the quality of provision and learning across the school.

#### 4.2 PLANNING FOR IMPROVEMENT

A collegial approach to school development planning has been established which involves the staff in the audit of provision and in the setting of priorities. The school development plan (SDP) is compliant with the DE School Development Plan Regulations/Schedule 2005/19. However, it needs to be focused more specifically on key targets for literacy and numeracy and used by the management team to plan, monitor and evaluate improvement more effectively.

#### 4.3 RESOURCES, FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE

The governors are fully involved in the strategic planning and policy development for the school.

### 5. CONCLUSION

#### 5.1 The strengths of the school include:

- the children's very good behaviour and positive attitudes towards learning;
- the inclusive and child-centred ethos which promotes mutual respect and develops the children's confidence and self-esteem;
- the good or better teaching in over half of the lessons observed;
- the good standards achieved by most of the children in numeracy and literacy by the end of KS2;
- the good quality of the provision for the children with special educational needs and the progress made by them; and
- the hard-working and dedicated Principal, supported by the teaching and non-teaching staff, in the development of a collegiate approach to decision making about the life and work of the school.

#### 5.2 The areas for improvement include the need to:

- develop systematic processes for monitoring and evaluating the quality and effectiveness of the children's learning across the curriculum to inform more effectively the school development planning; and
- provide greater differentiation and challenge, to meet more effectively the needs of all of the children particularly the more able, and raise further the standards they attain.

5.3 In 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 areas for improvement which need to be addressed if the needs of all the children are to be met more effectively. The Inspectorate will monitor and report on the school's progress in addressing the areas for improvement.

## 6. THE NURSERY UNIT

6.1 The main strengths within the nursery unit's educational and pastoral provision are as follows:

- there is a caring and inclusive ethos in the nursery unit which promotes effectively the children's confidence, self-esteem and good behaviour. The children are well settled; they respond positively to the adults' high expectations and are developing an understanding of turn-taking and fair play. During the inspection, there were a number of instances of sustained, purposeful play when the children demonstrated good levels of concentration and perseverance;
- there are very good learning opportunities within the playroom and outdoor area to promote learning in all areas of the pre-school curriculum. The children are demonstrating good levels of creativity and imagination in their play and their language and early mathematical ability are both developing well;
- the daily session is well organised, with effective, purposeful use of all the time available; there is a good balance between uninterrupted free play and activities led by the adults. The routines and transitions are effectively managed and contribute significantly to the children's growing independence;
- the adults interact effectively with the children to build on their interests, to extend their thinking and to develop their curiosity of the world around them;
- the children's learning is significantly enhanced through the extensive range of planned visitors to the nursery unit and the opportunities for the children to visit local shops, businesses and amenities. The children have a growing understanding of the roles of people in the primary school and the local community; and
- there is strong team-work at all levels in the nursery unit; the staff work together effectively to create a stimulating, well organised learning environment; they know the children and families very well and they are committed to creating high quality provision for the children.

6.2 The inspection identified the following area for improvement:

- the development of a more strategic approach to self evaluation to inform the identification of priorities for the continued development of the nursery unit.

6.3 In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by the nursery unit is good. The nursery unit has important strengths in most of its educational provision. The inspection has identified an area for improvement which the staff have demonstrated the capacity to address. The Education and Training Inspectorate will monitor the nursery unit's progress on the area for improvement.

# STATISTICAL INFORMATION ON THE COMMUNITY NURSERY UNIT IN EGLINTON PRIMARY SCHOOL (201-2245)

## 1. Details of Children

<b>Number of children:</b>	<b>Class 1</b>	<b>Class 2</b>
Attending full-time	0	0
Attending part-time	26	0
Under 3 years of age*	0	0
With statement of SEN**	0	0
At CoP stages 3 or 4***	0	0
At CoP stages 1 or 2***	2	0
With English as an additional language	0	0

\* On 1 July.

\*\* Special Educational Needs.

\*\*\* The stages refer to those set out in the Code of Practice for the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs.

Percentage qualifying under DE admission criteria 1 or 2.	7.7%
Average attendance for the previous year.	91.9%

## 2. Duration of Sessions

<b>Full-time</b>	<b>Part-time: am</b>	<b>Part-time: pm</b>
-	3 hours	-

## 3. Details of Staff

<b>Number of:</b>	<b>Full-Time</b>	<b>Part-Time</b>
Teachers		1 (20 hours)
Nursery Assistants		0
Qualified Nursery Assistants		1 (20 hours)

<b>Number of: ****</b>	
Students	3
Trainees	0

\*\*\*\* Total placements since September of current year

## 4. Parental Questionnaires (to be completed by Inspection Services Branch)

Number issued	25
Percentage returned	62
Number of written comments	9

### **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

- The side door to the main building does not have a secure access system. This needs to be addressed in the interests of the children's safety.

### **ACCOMODATION**

- In one large class the insufficient space available in the classroom inhibits the opportunities for the teacher to facilitate effective group work and active learning approaches.



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