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*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

## **Education and Training Inspectorate**

### **Report of a Short Inspection**

**Ballougry Primary School  
Derry**

**Inspected: October 2009**



## **BALLOUGRY PRIMARY SCHOOL, DERRY, BT48 9XN (201-2095)**

### **SCHOOL CONTEXT**

Ballougray Primary School is situated on the Mullenan Road in the Cityside area of Derry. Almost all of the children come from the local and surrounding rural area. The enrolment has risen steadily in recent years. Approximately 2% of the children are entitled to free school meals (FSM) and the school has identified 21% of the children as needing additional support with 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.

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

The arrangements for the inspection included an opportunity for the parents, the teaching and the support staff to complete a confidential questionnaire prior to the inspection. Fifty-eight questionnaires were issued to the parents; 41% were returned to the Department of Education (DE) and seven contained additional written comments. A majority of the parental questionnaires and written responses indicated high levels of satisfaction with all aspects of school life; reference was made to the approachable and dedicated staff, the good working relationships between parents, teachers and children, and to the welcoming and supportive ethos within the school. The few issues raised about communication between the school and the home, after school activities and matters relating to classwork and homework were discussed with the Principal.

All of the teaching staff responded to the online teacher questionnaire. The responses were wholly positive about all aspects of the school. One member of the support staff responded to the support staff questionnaire expressing a high level of satisfaction with the life and work of the school.

In discussions, the children from year 6 spoke very positively about their experiences in school and highlighted the care provided by the teachers and the support staff. They spoke with confidence about what to do if they have worries about their safety or well-being.

### **PASTORAL CARE**

The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care in the school is very good. The inclusive and supportive atmosphere is welcoming to all and the staff are very committed to the welfare of the children. The school recognises and celebrates the children's work through displays, a reward system and positive affirmation of their achievements. Working relationships at all levels are excellent and the children respond well to the staff's high

expectations for good behaviour. The children benefit from the good opportunities to participate in a range of extra-curricular activities including dance, yoga, sports and modern languages. There is a strong commitment to the development of education for mutual understanding and the school has very effective links with other primary and post-primary schools.

## CHILD PROTECTION

The school has satisfactory arrangements in place for safeguarding children. These arrangements reflect broadly the guidance issued by the Department of Education but the following areas need to be addressed:

- governors should participate in child protection awareness training; and
- a governor, other than the teacher governor, should assume responsibility for child protection matters and receive the appropriate training.

## HEALTHY EATING AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

The school gives very good attention to promoting healthy eating and physical activity, for example, through the promotion of the healthy lunch box scheme, the recently developed active play garden and the school's links with a local health forum all of which encourage the children to adopt healthy lifestyles.

## CONCLUSION

The strengths of the school include:

- the caring, inclusive and supportive ethos based on the very good working relationships at all levels;
- the excellent behaviour, good levels of motivation and positive attitudes towards learning shown by all of the children;
- the quality of the teaching observed during the inspection, all of which was good or better;
- the enthusiastic, hardworking and approachable teaching and support staff who work together for the benefit of the children;
- the commitment to, and support for, the children with special educational needs; and
- the hard work of the Principal and her commitment to broadening the educational experiences of the children.

The area for improvement is the need to:

- develop further the process of self-evaluation, including the more effective analysis of relevant performance data, to inform the school development planning process and to raise further the standards in literacy and numeracy achieved by the children.

In most of the areas inspected the quality of education provided in this school is satisfactory; the strengths outweigh areas for improvement in the provision. The inspection has identified an area for improvement which needs to be addressed if the needs of all the children are to be met more effectively. The Education and Training Inspectorate will monitor and report on the school's progress in addressing the area for improvement over an 18-24 month period.

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.

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

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