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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

**Ballycraigy Primary School
Muckamore**

Inspected: December 2009

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: Ballycraigy Primary Muckamore** iii. **Date of Inspection: 01/12/09**
 ii. **School Reference Number: 301-3331** iv. **Nature of Inspection: Short**

B.

School Year	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
Year 1 Intake	15	17	12	23	16
Enrolments					
Primary	111	115	98	97	102
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): 93.11%

	Primary & Reception	Nursery Unit	Special Unit	Irish Medium Unit
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- | | | | | | | |
|----|-------|---|--------------------------|---|----|---|
| D. | i. | Number of Teachers
(including the principal and part-time teachers):
(Full-time equivalent = 25 teaching hours) | 5.4 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | ii. | PTR (Pupil/Teacher Ratio): | 18.9 | NI PTR: 20.4 | | |
| | iii. | Average Class Size: | 20.4 | | | |
| | iv. | Class Size (Range): | 16 to 24 | | | |
| | v. | Ancillary Support:
Number of Hours Per Week : | i. | Clerical support: | 25 | |
| | | | ii. | Foundation Stage Classroom
Assistant Support: | 30 | |
| | | | iii. | Additional hours of other
classroom assistant support: | 40 | |
| | vi. | Percentage of children with statements of special educational needs: | 2% | | | |
| | vii. | Total percentage of children on the Special Needs Register: | 36.27% | | | |
| | viii. | Number of children who are not of statutory school age: | 0 | | | |
| | ix. | Percentage of children entitled to free school meals: | 38% | | | |
| | x. | Percentage of children at the end of Key Stage 2 for 2008/09 who attained level 4 and above in English and mathematics: | English
69.23% | Mathematics
79.92% | | |

BALLYCRAIGY PRIMARY SCHOOL, MUCKAMORE, ANTRIM, BT41 1PU (301-3331)

SCHOOL CONTEXT

Ballycraigy Primary School is situated in the Ballycraigy housing estate, off the main Antrim to Muckamore Road. The enrolment has fallen over the last ten years but has recently stabilised at approximately 100. At the time of the inspection, approximately 38% of the children were entitled to free school meals and 36% of the children were on the special needs register.

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 inspection also evaluated the school's arrangements for pastoral care and child protection.

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), a group of parents and a group of children from year 6. Seventy-five questionnaires were issued to the parents; 44% were returned to the Department of Education (DE) and 15 of these contained additional written comments. The responses from the questionnaires indicated that all of the parents appreciate the professional and approachable staff, the care and support provided for their children, the high standard of behaviour expected by the staff and the opportunities provided for the children to participate in extra-curricular activities. The very few issues arising from the parental questionnaires were shared with the staff and the governors.

The governors reported that they were kept fully informed about the work of the school. They also commented on the caring and supportive ethos, the dedication of the Principal and staff to continuous improvement and the effective links established with the community. The parents expressed their strong support for the work of the school and their appreciation for how they are informed about how to support their children's learning. In addition, they praised the work of the classroom assistants for their support in meeting the needs of individual children.

All of the teaching staff responded to the online teacher questionnaire. The responses were wholly positive about all aspects of the school.

The year 6 children talked very positively about aspects of school life they enjoy, including the extra-curricular activities, the support from their teachers and the opportunities to participate in decision-making processes in school. They are aware of 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. Among the strengths are the positive working relationships at all levels which foster a welcoming and happy ethos throughout the school, the effective cross-community links and the well-established class and school councils. In addition, the school has gained the Rights Respecting School Award and places a strong focus on the development of the children's personal and social skills in an atmosphere of mutual respect.

CHILD PROTECTION

The school has very good comprehensive arrangements in place for safeguarding the children and these reflect fully the guidance issued by DE.

HEALTHY EATING AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

The school gives very good attention to promoting healthy eating and physical activity, for example, in arranging for the sale of fruit bags at break time, which encourages the children to adopt healthy lifestyles.

CONCLUSION

The strengths of the school include:

- the development of the children's personal and social skills, through, for example, the Rights Respecting School Award;
- the quality of the teaching, which was good or better in most of the lessons observed;
- the comprehensive school development planning processes, including the regular inclusive evaluation of progress in meeting the agreed priorities;
- the good start made to rigorous monitoring and evaluating at all levels;
- the enthusiastic and effective leadership of the Principal, and her commitment to the life and work of the school; and
- the support of the parents and governors and the strong links established with the wider community.

An area for improvement is the need:

- to improve the standards achieved by the children in literacy and numeracy through, for example, a sharper focus on planning and teaching for progression in the children's learning.

In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by the school is good. The school has important strengths in most of its educational and pastoral provision. The inspection has identified an area for improvement which the school has demonstrated the capacity to address.

The Education and Training Inspectorate will monitor the school's progress on the area for improvement.

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.

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