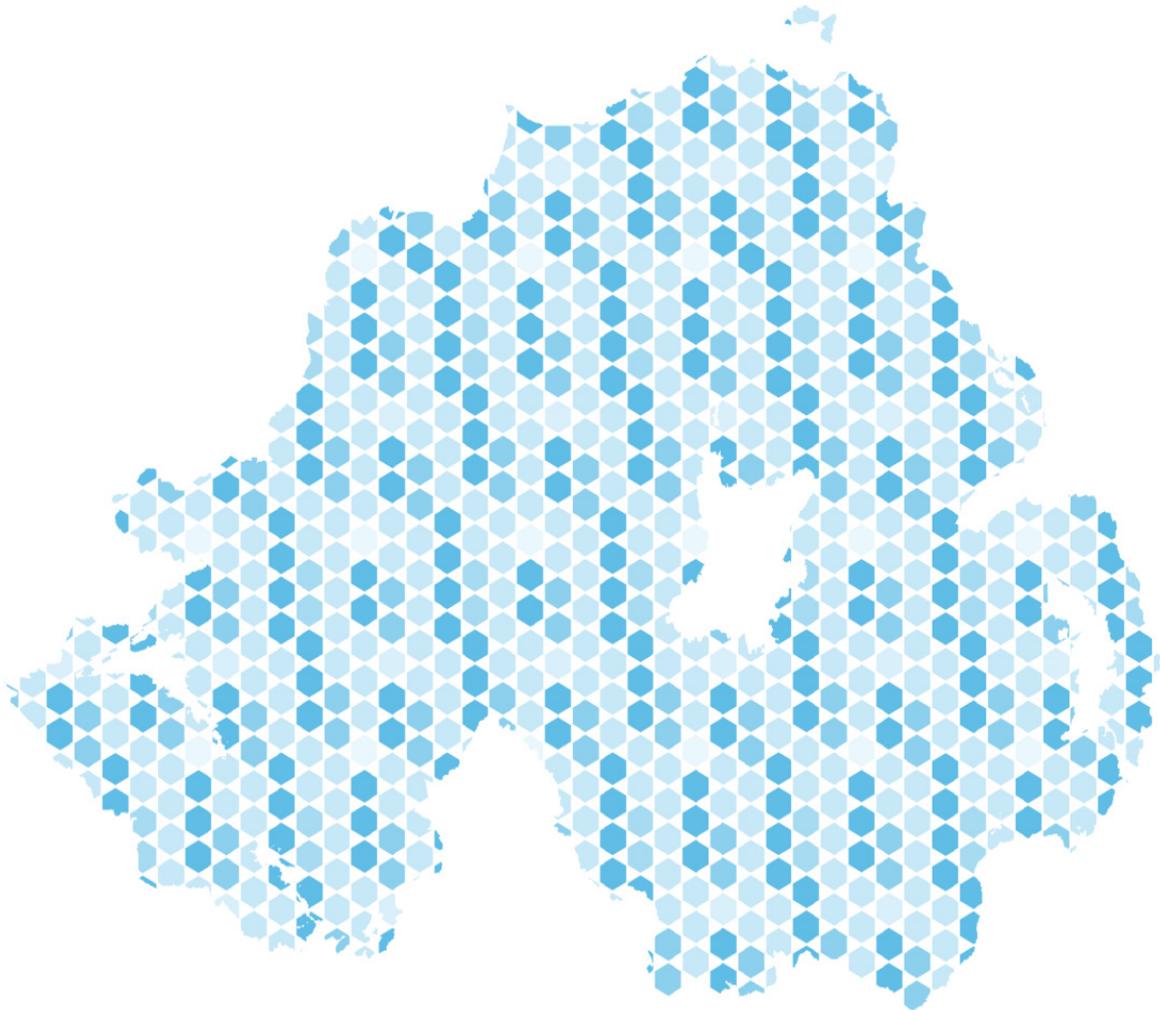


PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Forth River Primary School,
Belfast

Report of an Inspection
in January 2011

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

Forth River Primary School is situated in modern premises off the Ballygomartin Road in west Belfast. The enrolment has remained steady in recent years and stands currently at 202. All of the children attending the school come from the local area. At the time of the inspection, approximately 31% of the children were entitled to free school meals. The school has identified 21% of the children as requiring additional support with aspects of their learning, including a small number with a statement of special educational needs.

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.

OVERALL FINDINGS OF THE INSPECTION

In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by this school is good. The school has important strengths in most of its educational provision and very good pastoral provision.

KEY FINDINGS OF THE INSPECTION

Achievements and Standards

The quality of achievements and standards is satisfactory.

- In English and mathematics the children attain satisfactory **standards** in line with their ability. The standards attained by the majority of children are improving.
- The children identified with **special educational needs** (SEN) make very good progress and reach the standards of which they are capable.

Provision for Learning

The quality of provision for learning is very good.

- The school provides a **calm and secure environment** in which the children are valued.
- The **children's behaviour** is excellent; they are highly motivated to learn and they respond positively to the high expectations set by the teachers.
- The **teachers** work hard and are committed to continuous improvement. The **quality of the teaching** observed ranged from satisfactory to outstanding. A majority of the teaching was very good or outstanding.

- The provision for SEN is very good. Individual education plans containing suitable targets are devised for the children. The lessons provide effective challenge to extend the children's learning. A range of literacy approaches is used which integrate holistically the four skills of talking and listening, and reading and writing.
- The quality of **pastoral care** is very good. This is evident through the distinctive community ethos fostered by the school. There is a strong focus on involving the parents in the life and work of the school, and in particular, in the children's learning.
- The school has very good comprehensive arrangements in place for safeguarding children. The arrangements reflect the **child protection** circulars issued by the Department of Education.

Leadership and Management

The quality of leadership and management is very good.

- The **Principal** has a clear vision for the future direction of the school. She knows well the children and their families. She has created a cohesive management team and introduced an appropriate programme of continuous professional development which is influencing positively the staff. She receives very good support from the **Vice-principal**.
- The recently appointed **co-ordinators** and the **special educational needs co-ordinator** provide competent leadership in their areas of responsibility. They set high expectations for the whole school community and they are dedicated to providing high standards of education for all the children.
- Whole school **self-evaluation** and development planning processes are very good. Appropriate priorities are identified in the **school development plan** and they focus on learning, teaching, self-evaluation and on raising further the standards achieved by the children in literacy and numeracy. A good start has been made to **using data** effectively to monitor pupil performance and to continue to improve standards of pupil achievement.

CONCLUSION

In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by this school is **good**. The school has important strengths in most of its educational provision and very good 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 in the area for improvement. The area for improvement is:

- to focus more specifically on meeting the learning needs of all of the children and to share the good practice that already exists among the staff.

BASIC INFORMATION SHEET (BIS) - PRIMARY SCHOOLS

- A. i. **School: Forth River Primary Belfast** iii. **Date of Inspection: W/B 31/01/11**
 ii. **School Reference Number: 101-0205** iv. **Nature of Inspection: Short**

B.

School Year	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
Year 1 Intake	29	29	29	2=31	31
Enrolments					
Primary	198	200	201	205	202
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): 92.7% **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) | 9 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| ii. PTR (Pupil/Teacher Ratio): | 22.4 | NI PTR: 20.7 | | |
| iii. Average Class Size: | 29 | | | |
| iv. Class Size (Range): | 26 to 31 | | | |
| v. Ancillary Support: | | | | |
| Number of Hours Per Week : | i. Clerical support: | | 31.5 | |
| | ii. Foundation Stage Classroom Assistant Support: | | 45 | |
| | iii. Additional hours of other classroom assistant support: | | 152 | |
| vi. Percentage of children with statements of special educational needs: | 3.5% | | | |
| vii. Total percentage of children on the Special Needs Register: | 21% | | | |
| viii. Number of children who are not of statutory school age: | 0 | | | |
| ix. Percentage of children entitled to free school meals: | 31% | | | |
| 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
70% | Mathematics
67% | | |

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 103 questionnaires issued to the parents, 30 (29%) were returned to Inspection Services branch, including 19 which contained additional written comments. Most of the parental questionnaires expressed high levels of satisfaction with the life and work of the school. In the written comments, the parents praised the teachers for their commitment to achieving positive educational outcomes for the children. They highlighted also the leadership of the Principal in raising the standing and reputation of the school in the area. The few issues raised were discussed with the Principal.

One governor met with the inspection team on the first day of the inspection and expressed strong support for the work of the school.

Eight teachers and three 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 spoke about their school experiences and their opportunities to participate in the wide range of activities and clubs. They value the support and encouragement they receive from all of the staff. The children are aware of what to do if they have worries about their safety and well-being.

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