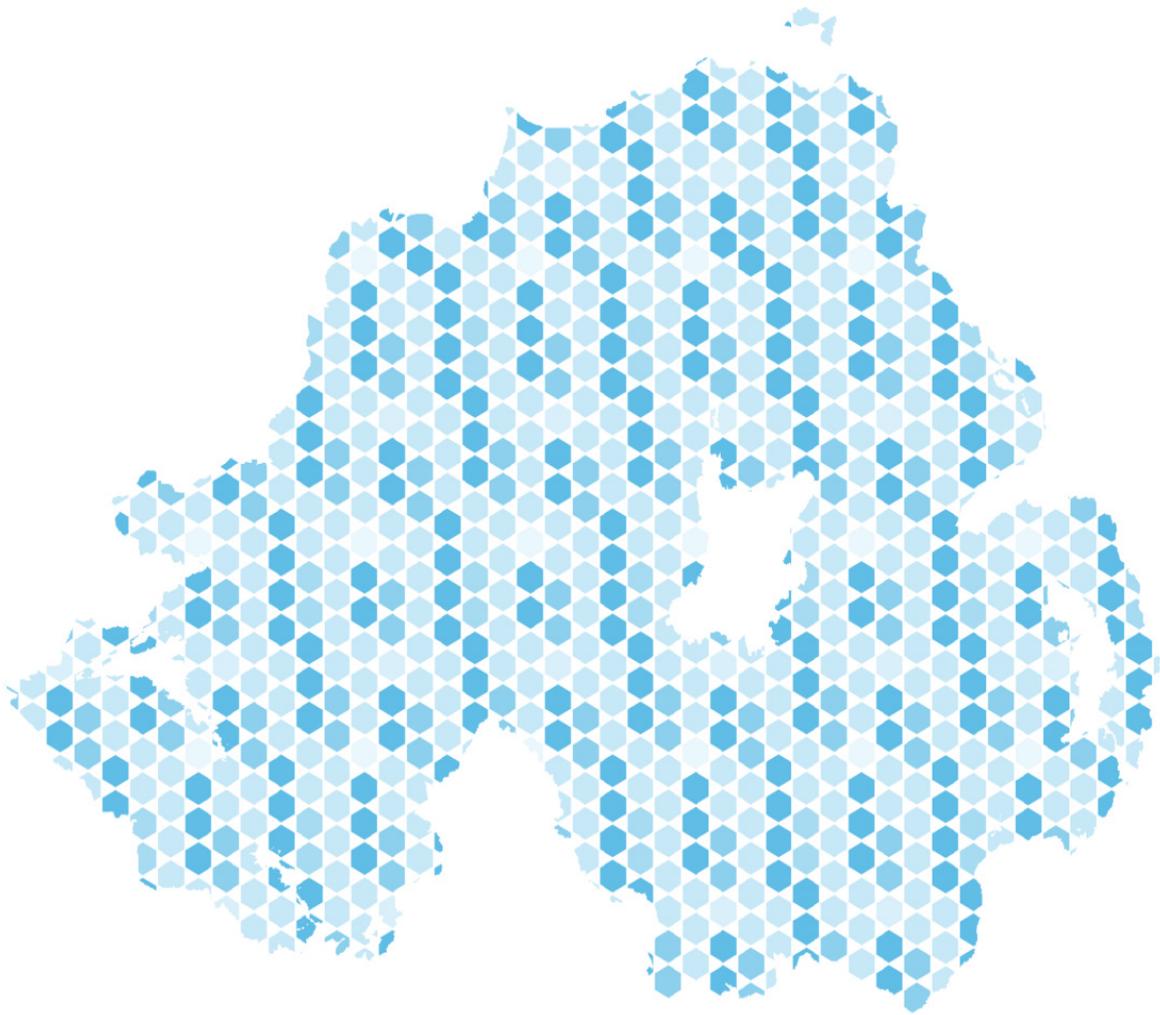


PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Groggan Primary School,
Randalstown

Report of an Inspection
in May 2012



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

Groggan Primary School is situated in a rural location on the outskirts of Randalstown, County Antrim. Almost all of the 91 children attending the school come from the surrounding rural area. The enrolment has increased slightly in recent years. At the time of the inspection, 11% of the children were entitled to free school meals. The school has registered 17% of the children as having 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 leading to improvement .

OVERALL FINDING OF THE INSPECTION

In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by the school is **very good**; the quality of pastoral care is **outstanding**. The school is meeting the educational and pastoral needs of the children and has demonstrated its capacity for sustained self-improvement.

KEY FINDINGS OF THE INSPECTION

Achievements and Standards

The quality of the children's achievements and standards is good.

- The children attain good **standards** in English and mathematics. By the end of key stage (KS) 2 they make very good progress in applying their literacy, numeracy and information and communication (ICT) skills across the curriculum.
- The children identified with **special educational needs** reach good standards by the end of year 7.

Provision for Learning

The provision for learning is very good.

- The children engage in their learning with very good levels of interest and enjoyment. They have developed good group work skills; they organise themselves into appropriate roles, and take responsibility for their learning. The school builds on these important skills outside the classroom through, for example, a very active student council and the 'Eco' council where the children make considered decisions about aspects of school life.
- The teachers and support staff are hard working; they know the children well and provide effective individual support; and, there is a strong, inclusive family ethos in which each child and adult is respected and valued.

- The **quality of teaching observed** was consistently good or very good; in two-thirds of the lessons, it was very good. The teachers have differentiated the work with appropriate challenge for the more able children; they build effectively upon previous learning. There are very good practical activities to support the children's understanding. Skilful questioning allows the children to organise and clarify their thinking and to extend their responses. Across the curriculum, there are many good activities to promote the development of the children's thinking skills and personal capabilities.
- The provision for **special educational needs** is very good. The children who require additional support with aspects of their learning are identified early and a range of well-targeted intervention programmes effectively meets their needs effectively. Almost all of the children overcome barriers to their learning and develop literacy, numeracy and important social skills, which enables them to achieve good standards.
- The quality of the arrangements for **pastoral care** is outstanding. In an atmosphere of mutual respect, the children are encouraged to care for and support one another. They understand fully, and implement effectively, the various strategies and initiatives both within and outside the classroom to include others in their learning and leisure activities. The staff work very hard to provide a wide range of curricular and extra-curricular activities designed to develop the children's confidence.
- On the basis of the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the school has comprehensive arrangements in place for **safeguarding** children. These arrangements reflect the guidance issued by the relevant Department.
- The school gives excellent attention to promoting **healthy eating and physical activity**. There is a strong emphasis on sport and on a wide range of after-school activities, in which the school has been highly successful. The children are encouraged to eat healthy breaks; the uptake of healthy options is monitored by the student council.

Leadership and Management

The quality of leadership and management is very good.

- The **Principal** carries out KS2 teaching commitments in addition to her leadership responsibilities. She is highly supportive of her staff and places an important priority on encouraging them to avail of professional development opportunities which are directly beneficial to the needs of the children. She has an excellent knowledge of the children's personal, social and academic needs. Her caring and thoughtful approach sets a clear strategic direction for the future development of the school.
- The teachers have made a good start to using performance data to inform planning and to effect further improvements in the children's learning and the standards they attain. All of the staff have contributed effectively to **the developing culture of self-evaluation** in the school.

- There is a comprehensive **school development plan** (SDP) with appropriate action plans that is underpinned by increasingly rigorous self-evaluation.
- The **governors** play a very active role in the curricular and social life and work of the school. They are very knowledgeable regarding the improvement agenda and support very well the Principal and teachers in the implementation of the SDP.
- 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.

CONCLUSION

In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by the school is very good; the quality of pastoral care is outstanding. The school is meeting very effectively the educational and pastoral needs of the children; and has demonstrated its capacity for sustained self-improvement.

BASIC INFORMATION SHEET (BIS) - PRIMARY SCHOOLS

- A. i. **School: Groggan Primary** iii. **Date of Inspection: W/B 14/05/12**
 ii. **School Reference Number: 301-0822** iv. **Nature of Inspection: Short**

B.

School Year	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Year 1 Intake	9	14	11	15	16
Enrolments					
Primary	95	92	87	87	91
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): 96.3% **NI Avg Att: 94.7%**

Average Attendance for those children on the
 Special Educational Needs Register: 97.4%

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): 6 0 0 0
 (Full-time equivalent = 25 teaching hours)
- ii. PTR (Pupil/Teacher Ratio): 17.1 NI PTR: 20.2
- iii. Average Class Size: 22.75
- iv. Class Size (Range): 16 to 25
- v. Ancillary Support:
 Number of Hours **Per Week**:
- | | |
|---|------|
| i. Clerical support: | 15 |
| ii. Foundation Stage Classroom Assistant Support: | 27.5 |
| iii. Additional hours of other classroom assistant support: | 3 |
- vi. Percentage of children with statements of special educational needs: 3.3%
- vii. Total percentage of children on the Special Needs Register: 16.5%
- viii. Number of children who are **not** of statutory school age: 0
- ix. Percentage of children entitled to free school meals: 10.9%
- x. Percentage of children at the end of Key Stage 2 for 2010/11 who attained level 4 and above in English and mathematics, and Irish (in Irish-medium schools):
- | | | |
|----------------|--------------------|--------------|
| English | Mathematics | Irish |
| 67% | 73% | N/A |

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 66 questionnaires issued to the parents, 29 (44%) were returned to the Inspection Services Branch, including 13 which contained additional written comments. Almost all of the parental questionnaires and written comments expressed very high levels of satisfaction with the life and work of the school, particularly with the wide range of extra-curricular activities, the approachable staff, the good sense of community and the helpful response from staff when any concerns are raised.

Two members of the board of governors met with the inspection team on the first day of the inspection and expressed their strong support for the work of the school, especially the child-centred ethos, the manner in which the children are prepared for the next stage of their education and the very hard work of all of the staff.

All of the staff responded very positively to the questionnaires.

The inspectors also met with a group of the children from year 6. The children talked enthusiastically about their experiences in school and of the care and support they receive from all of the teachers to do their best. They spoke with maturity about the good opportunities they have to discuss their ideas and to make a practical contribution to the life of the school. In particular they like creative writing and the opportunities to take part in sports. The children are aware of what to do if they have worries about their safety and well-being.

APPENDIX 3

The school is at the side of a busy road on which there is a growing volume of traffic. With limited space in the school grounds for parking at the beginning and end of the day, the speed at which cars travel on the busy road present a hazard.

The Principal's office is very small and does not allow for the privacy of confidentiality needed when speaking to agencies parents or carers on personal matters.

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