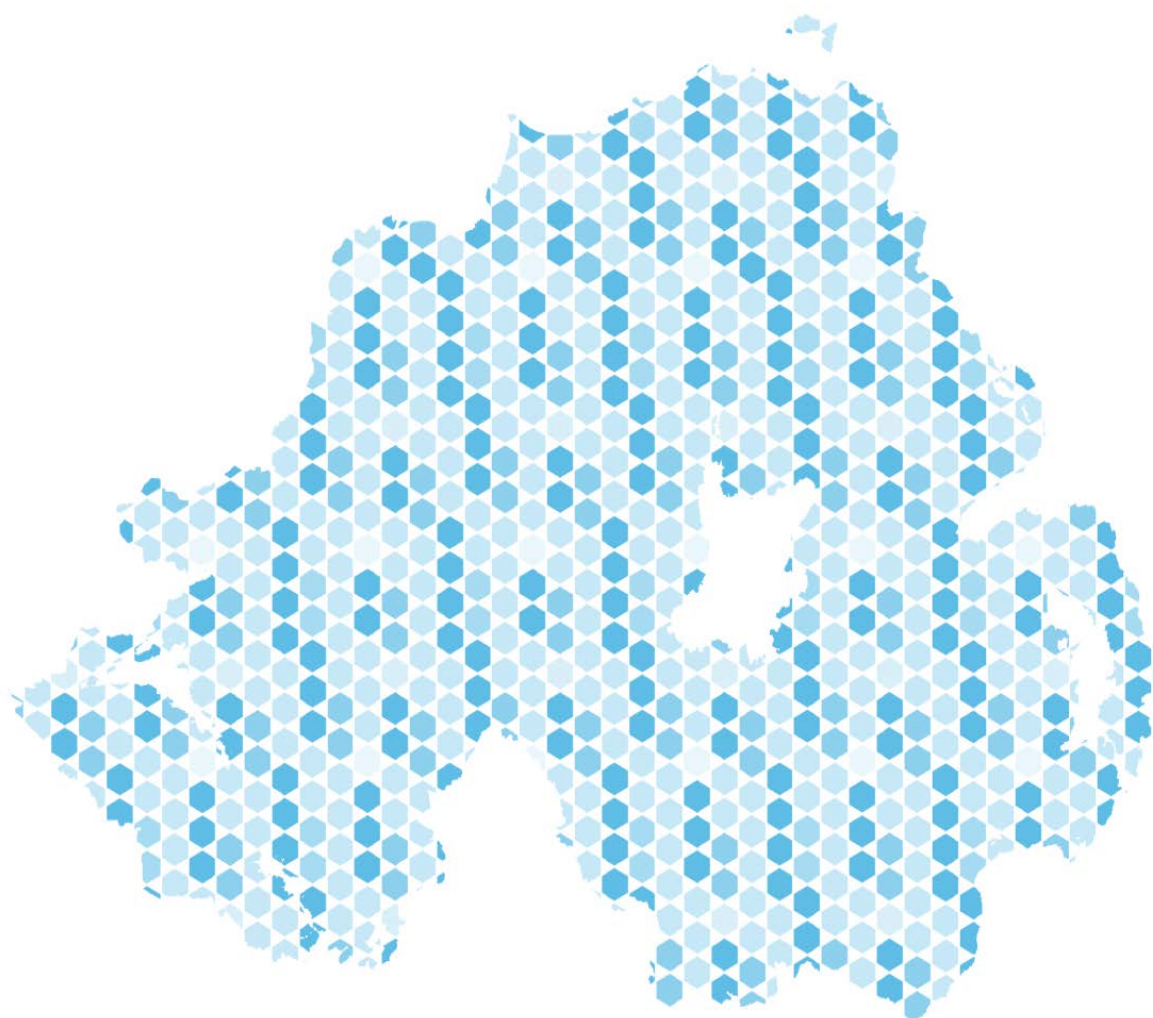


# PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training  
Inspectorate

Markethill Primary School,  
Armagh

Report of an Inspection  
in October 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

All of the children attending the school come from the town and the surrounding rural area. The enrolment has increased in recent years and currently stands at 305 children. At the time of the inspection, approximately 21% of the children in the school were entitled to free school meals. The school has identified 19% of the children as requiring additional support with aspects of 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, 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 this school is very good. The school is meeting very effectively 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 very good.**

- Most of the children attain **standards** in line with their ability. The school demonstrated, using a range of qualitative and quantitative evidence, that the children make very good progress in literacy and numeracy. The teachers make effective use of a wide range of assessment tools to identify underachievement and are implementing appropriate intervention strategies which are having a positive impact on the children's learning and the standards which they attain.
- Most of the children identified with **special educational needs** make very good progress in their learning and reach the standards of which they are capable by the end of year 7.

### Provision for Learning

**The provision for learning is very good.**

- The **children** are encouraged to reflect on their own learning and that of their peers; they are enthusiastic learners, welcoming to visitors and engage willingly with the learning assistants and the teachers.

- The quality of the learning and teaching observed during the inspection was always good or better; in almost half of the lessons it was outstanding. The teachers provided numerous opportunities for the children to develop independence in their learning. A particular feature of much of the work observed was the extent to which the children took the lead in lessons; the teachers empowered the children to lead the learning, and to reflect on, and articulate, their thinking in a creative and enjoyable way.
- The learning assistants work very effectively with the teachers and the Principal to support the children in their learning.
- The provision for **special educational needs** is very good. The withdrawal support sessions are focused well on the individual literacy and numeracy needs of the children. The education plans identify the strengths and outline the targets for improvement for each of the children. The monitoring and evaluation of the provision for special educational needs is excellent.
- The quality of the arrangements for **pastoral care** in the school is outstanding. This is evidenced by: the opportunities for the children to express their feelings and emotions; the open communication between the staff and the children; and, the sound, well-planned ethos which creates a nurturing culture and removes barriers to learning. The school promotes actively the children's spiritual, social and emotional wellbeing as a key foundation for effective learning; the holistic development of each child is paramount to the work of this school.
- On the basis of the evidence at the time of the inspection, the school has comprehensive arrangements in place for **safeguarding** children. These arrangements reflect the guidance issued by the Department of Education.

### **Leadership and Management**

**The quality of leadership and management is outstanding.**

- The **Principal** provides inspirational leadership to the staff in the school and to the wider community. He provides a clear vision for the further development of the school which is based on the collaborative and reflective culture which has been fostered at all levels throughout the school. A key priority of all of the developmental work in the school is the clear focus given to the continuous improvement of learning and teaching. Under the leadership of the Principal, the development process is underpinned by a sound evidence base which is drawn from extensive research on the characteristics of effective learning. The teachers have a clear understanding of the pedagogical skills required to ensure all of the children in their class achieve their full potential.
- The whole-school **self evaluation and school development planning (SDP) processes** are outstanding. The Principal and teachers make very effective use of a wide range of quantitative and qualitative data, including observations of the learning, to improve the standards achieved by all children.
- The curricular and pastoral leadership teams work collaboratively and very effectively. The Vice-principal provides strong leadership and leads by example to promote high quality learning experiences for all of the children.

## **CONCLUSION**

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

## BASIC INFORMATION SHEET (BIS) - PRIMARY SCHOOLS

- A. i. **School: Markethill Primary** iii. **Date of Inspection: W/B 15/10/12**  
 ii. **School Reference Number: 501-6436** iv. **Nature of Inspection: Short**

B.

School Year	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
Year 1 Intake	47	49	41	42	44
<b>Enrolments</b>					
Primary	287	286	286	295	305
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): 95.8% **NI Avg Att: 94.7%**
- Average Attendance for those children on the  
 Special Educational Needs Register: 95.4%
- |   | Primary &<br>Reception | Nursery<br>Unit           | Special<br>Unit     | Irish Medium<br>Unit |
|---|------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------|----------------------|
| D. i. Number of Teachers<br>(including the principal and part-time teachers):<br>(Full-time equivalent = 25 teaching hours)   | 14                     | 0                         | 0                   | 0                    |
| ii. PTR (Pupil/Teacher Ratio):  | 25.4                   | NI PTR: 20.2              |                     |                      |
| iii. Average Class Size:  | 27.7                   |                           |                     |                      |
| iv. Class Size (Range):   | 21 to 32               |                           |                     |                      |
| v. Ancillary Support:<br>Number of Hours <b>Per Week</b> :  |                        |                           |                     |                      |
| i. Clerical support:  | 35                     |                           |                     |                      |
| ii. Foundation Stage Classroom<br>Assistant Support:  | 18.75                  |                           |                     |                      |
| iii. Additional hours of other<br>classroom assistant support:  | 55                     |                           |                     |                      |
| vi. Percentage of children with statements of special educational needs:  | 0.2%                   |                           |                     |                      |
| vii. Total percentage of children on the Special Needs Register:  | 19%                    |                           |                     |                      |
| viii. Number of children who are <b>not</b> of statutory school age:  | 0                      |                           |                     |                      |
| ix. Percentage of children entitled to free school meals:   | 21%                    |                           |                     |                      |
| x. Percentage of children at the end of Key Stage 2 for 2010/11<br>who attained level 4 and above in English and mathematics,<br>and Irish (in Irish-medium schools): | <b>English</b><br>73%  | <b>Mathematics</b><br>78% | <b>Irish</b><br>N/A |                      |

### THE VIEWS OF THE PARENTS, TEACHERS, 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, and for a group of children from year 7 to meet the inspectors.

One hundred and forty-eight questionnaires were issued to the **parents**: 47 (32%) were returned to Inspection Services Branch (ISB) and 27 contained additional written comments. Almost all of the responses from the questionnaire and the written comments were extremely positive and praised highly the Principal and the staff for their hard work and commitment to the education, care and well-being of their children and in particular the significant improvements across the school in recent years. The small number of concerns raised by the parents was discussed with the Principal.

Almost all of the teachers and four support staff completed confidential questionnaires, the responses were very positive about all aspects of the school.

The inspectors also met with a group of the year 7 children; the children were articulate and expressed their enjoyment of their experiences at school, and 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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