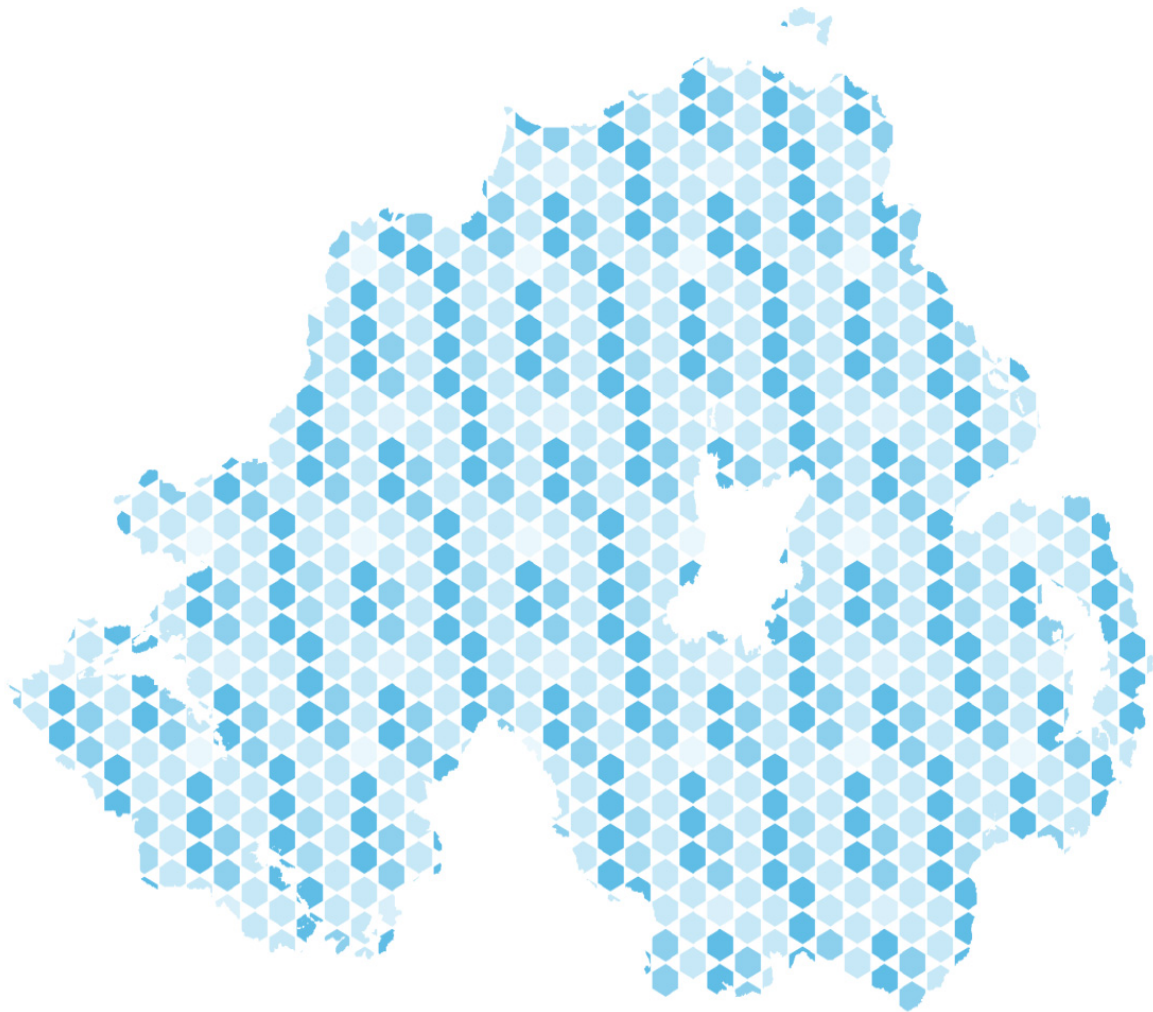


PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Milltown Primary School,
Banbridge

Report of an Inspection
in March 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

Milltown Primary School is situated in the townland of Lenaderg, close to Banbridge in County Down. The children attending the school come from the surrounding rural villages and a wide catchment area. There are 50 children currently enrolled in the primary school. Enrolment has fluctuated over the past five years ranging from 62 to 49. At the time of the inspection, there had been a recent significant increase from 8% to 32% of the children in the school who were entitled to free school meals. The school has registered 14% 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 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.

- In **English and mathematics**, the children attain very good standards in line with or above expectation. They apply their literacy and numeracy skills competently across the curriculum. The children are very confident and articulate; they co-operate well in group tasks taking various roles and responsibility within and beyond the classroom.
- The children identified with **special educational needs** make steady progress and attain standards in line with their ability. They are supported effectively through provision in class which is matched well to their needs. They experience a range of appropriate interventions, for example, the reading partnership programme, which is improving their reading skills.
- The children's thinking skills and personal capabilities are developed well through meaningful learning contexts and the promotion of whole-school Personal Development and Mutual Understanding.

Provision for Learning

The provision for learning is very good.

- The **children's behaviour** is excellent and they enjoy a good rapport with their teachers. They are inquisitive and welcoming to visitors and newcomers to the school. Almost all have very positive attitudes to their learning and are keen to achieve well. There are many examples of the children's creativity and participation in the life and work of the school being developed, for example, through their work in art and their effective contributions to the Eco Council for sustainable development arrangements.
- The quality of the **teaching** observed ranged from satisfactory to outstanding. A majority of the teaching was very good or better and a minority was outstanding. The teaching and support staff are hard-working and skilful in the use of stimulating, differentiated problem-solving tasks that match the children's individual needs effectively.
- The children with **special educational needs** benefit from early identification and support. Significant features of the provision include the ongoing review and development to involve the children in setting and reviewing their own targets and progress. The school has excellent links with a range of multi-agency support teams. The classroom assistants support the children effectively and there are strong parental partnerships established to assist the children's learning and development.
- The quality of the arrangements for **pastoral care** is outstanding. The school has an inclusive ethos and all the children who enrol from other schools or countries are warmly welcomed. The staff works hard to ensure that every child is valued and listened to, and encourages links with the parents to share information about the children's progress and development.
- The school has very good comprehensive arrangements in place for **safeguarding** children. These arrangements reflect the child protection guidance issued by the Department of Education.
- The school gives excellent attention to promoting **healthy eating and physical activity**. There is a strong emphasis placed on active learning in the outdoors and an appropriate emphasis on healthy breaks and lunches.

Leadership and Management

The quality of leadership and management is **very good**.

- The teaching Principal's commitment to the continuing development of the school is very evident through the emphasis she places on providing quality experiences for the children and improving further the standards they attain. She leads and manages a range of challenges and staffing arrangements very effectively and ensures that the children are safe and secure within an attractive learning environment.
- The **Board of Governors** plays a very supportive and strategic role that is underpinned by a sound knowledge and understanding of the life and work of the school.

- **The co-ordinators** have multiple areas of responsibility and provide effective curricular leadership. They have a consistent approach to planning the curriculum, and collaborate well to monitor and evaluate progression in the children's learning.
- The school has very good processes for whole-school **self-evaluation and school development planning (SDP)**. The SDP includes effective consultation with all stakeholders in the school and is supported by effective action-planning for improvement.
- The school accommodation is maintained to a very high standard and includes a spacious outdoor learning area.
- 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 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.

BASIC INFORMATION SHEET (BIS) - PRIMARY SCHOOLS

- A. i. **School: Milltown Primary** iii. **Date of Inspection: W/B 12/03/12**
 ii. **School Reference Number: 501-1651** iv. **Nature of Inspection: Short**

B.

School Year	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Year 1 Intake	6	5	9	4	9
Enrolments					
Primary	62	49	54	50	49
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): 96.6% **NI Avg Att: 94.7%**
- Average Attendance for those children on the Special Educational Needs Register: 95.2%
- | | 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) | 3.4 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| ii. PTR (Pupil/Teacher Ratio): | 14.4 | NI PTR: 20.2 | | |
| iii. Average Class Size: | 16 | | | |
| iv. Class Size (Range): | 13 to 20 | | | |
| v. Ancillary Support: | | | | |
| Number of Hours Per Week : | | | | |
| i. Clerical support: | | | | 10 |
| ii. Foundation Stage Classroom Assistant Support: | | | | 20 |
| iii. Additional hours of other classroom assistant support: | | | | 10 |
| vi. Percentage of children with statements of special educational needs: | | | | 0% |
| vii. Total percentage of children on the Special Needs Register: | | | | 14.3% |
| viii. Number of children who are not of statutory school age: | | | | 0 |
| ix. Percentage of children entitled to free school meals: | | | | 30.6% |
| 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
100% | Mathematics
100% | Irish
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, and for a group of children from year 6 to meet the inspectors.

Thirty-two questionnaires were issued to the parents of the children in the primary school: 14 were returned to Inspection Services Branch and eight contained additional written comments. Most of the responses from the questionnaires were highly affirmative of the work of the Principal, the teaching and support staff. Generally the written comments praised the excellent provision for learning and the welcoming and caring atmosphere in the school. A few queries were raised and these were shared with the Principal.

The teachers and the support staff completed confidential questionnaires and almost all of the responses were highly positive about most aspects of the school.

The inspectors met a group of the year 6 children and they talked readily about the broad range of enjoyable learning experiences and the care and support provided by all the staff. The children are aware of what to do if they have worries about their safety and well-being. In addition, they indicated that the staff contacts their parents when they are unwell. Almost all of the children were satisfied with the amount of homework and appreciated the help given by the teaching staff to support their learning.

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