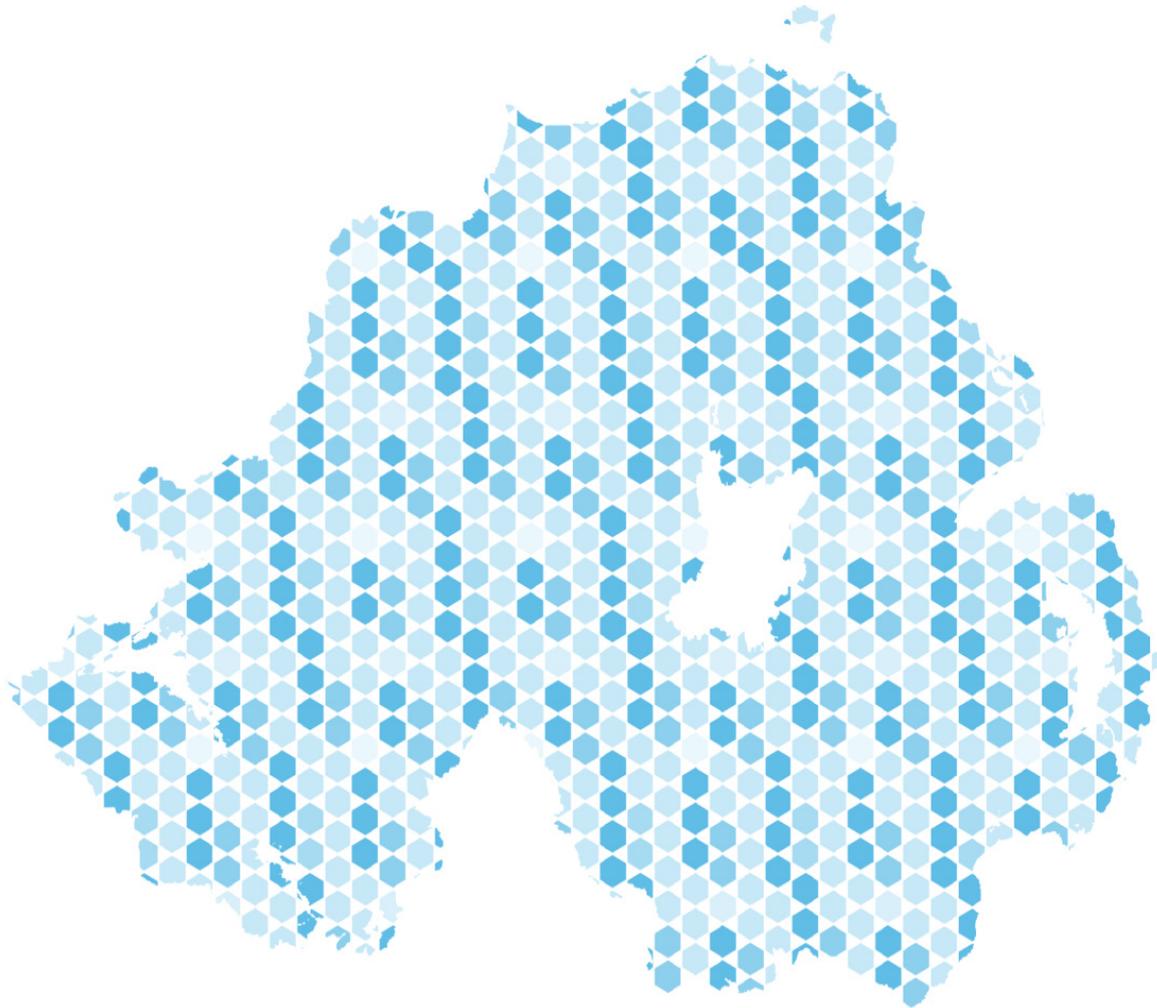


PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Parkgate Primary School,
Ballyclare

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

Parkgate Primary School is situated in the village of Parkgate, near Ballyclare in County Antrim. The children attending the school come from the village, surrounding area and beyond. The enrolment has increased in recent years and currently stands at 76. At the time of the inspection, approximately 5% of the children in the school were entitled to free school meals and 18% of the children had been identified by the school 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 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 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 (ETI) will monitor the school's progress in addressing the area for improvement.

KEY FINDINGS OF THE INSPECTION

Achievements and Standards

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

- The children are confident in talking and listening and in reading and writing across the curriculum. They have a good knowledge and understanding of important mathematical ideas and concepts and demonstrate flexibility in their thinking and application of mathematics in everyday contexts.
- In English and mathematics, most of the children attain good **standards**, which are in line with their ability.
- The school's own assessment data shows almost all of the children make good progress, including those identified **with special educational needs**.

Provision for Learning

The provision for learning is good.

- **The children's** behaviour is exemplary and they are positively disposed to learning. They are confident and articulate and when given the opportunity, work well both independently and with others.

- The teachers and the support staff are hard working; they know the children well and work collaboratively to create a positive environment and ethos. The quality of the **teaching** observed ranged from satisfactory to very good; most was good or very good. In the most effective practice, there were good activities to support the children's understanding of key concepts, and good use was made of practical resources to support the learning. Effective questioning enabled the children to develop their thinking and provide extended responses.
- The provision for **special educational needs** is good. The children who require additional support are identified at an early stage and most of the individual education plans have appropriate targets and are reviewed regularly. The classroom assistants work effectively to support the children with their learning.
- The quality of the arrangements for **pastoral care** is very good. During the inspection, there was a positive, inclusive atmosphere and positive working relationships were evident at all times. The children's work and achievements are celebrated throughout the school. The parents are very supportive of the life and work of the school; the Parent Teacher Association raises funds to provide valuable additional resources for the school.
- The school provides a wide range of enrichment activities and **extra-curricular** clubs which develop the children's skills and interests. There is also an active school council which encourages the children's input into decisions about aspects of school life.
- The school gives good attention to promoting **healthy lifestyles** through curriculum activities and through the encouragement of healthy eating; the children have good opportunities for sports and energetic play.
- 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 Department of Education.

Leadership and Management

The quality of leadership and management is satisfactory.

- The **Principal** holds teaching commitments in the Foundation Stage and co-ordinator roles in addition to her leadership responsibilities. She has worked diligently to foster the spirit of collegiality and collaboration that exists within the school and to develop the very good links with the community, which have raised the profile of the school and support well the children's learning.
- The school has identified appropriately the need to develop the roles of the **co-ordinators** further, to include more rigorous monitoring and evaluation of the children's progress in their learning and the more effective use of the available qualitative and quantitative data.
- Whilst the **school development plan** complies with the Education (School Development Plans) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2005, the associated action plans need to be more sharply focused on the children's learning and on identifying precise measures to bring about improvement.

- The Board of Governors is very well informed about, and plays an active role in, the life and work of the school.

It will be important that the employing authority, school governors and the staff continue to 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 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; this is the need to:

- develop further the self-evaluation processes so as to ensure systematic and rigorous monitoring and evaluation of the quality of the provision and to improve further the standards the children attain.

The ETI will monitor the school's progress in addressing the area for improvement.

BASIC INFORMATION SHEET (BIS) - PRIMARY SCHOOLS

- A. i. **School: Parkgate Primary** iii. **Date of Inspection: W/B 21/05/12**
 ii. **School Reference Number: 301-0642** iv. **Nature of Inspection: Short**

B.

| School Year | 2007/08 | 2008/09 | 2009/10 | 2010/11 | 2011/12 |
|-------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Year 1 Intake | 8 | 12 | 12 | 6 | 14 |
| Enrolments | | | | | |
| Primary | 70 | 71 | 71 | 67 | 76 |
| 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): 96.7% **NI Avg Att: 94.7%**
- Average Attendance for those children on the Special Educational Needs Register: 96.9%
- | | 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) | 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| ii. PTR (Pupil/Teacher Ratio): | 19 | NI PTR: 20.2 | | |
| iii. Average Class Size: | 19 | | | |
| iv. Class Size (Range): | 13 to 23 | | | |
| v. Ancillary Support: | | | | |
| Number of Hours Per Week : | | | | |
| i. Clerical support: | | | | 15 |
| ii. Foundation Stage Classroom Assistant Support: | | | | 22 |
| iii. Additional hours of other classroom assistant support: | | | | 54 |
| vi. Percentage of children with statements of special educational needs: | | | | 3% |
| vii. Total percentage of children on the Special Needs Register: | | | | 18% |
| viii. Number of children who are not of statutory school age: | | | | 0 |
| ix. Percentage of children entitled to free school meals: | | | | 5% |
| 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. Of the 55 questionnaires issued to the parents, 28 (51%) were returned to Inspection Services Branch including 12 which contained additional written comments.

Almost all of the parental questionnaires expressed high levels of satisfaction with the life and work of the school. In the written comments, the parents highlighted their appreciation of the welcoming and inclusive school ethos; the high expectations of the staff and their commitment to the children's holistic development; and the leadership provided by the Principal.

Almost all of the teachers and support staff completed questionnaires and the responses were very positive. The written comments highlighted the family atmosphere within the school and the welcoming ethos.

The Chair of the governors expressed his strong support for the Principal, her leadership of the school and commitment to the children, the staff and the wider community. He also acknowledged the hard work of the staff and the positive working relationships throughout the school.

The inspectors also met with a group of the year 6 children; the children talked very positively about the support provided by their teachers and the subjects and extra-curricular activities and trips they enjoy. The children reported that they felt very secure in school and knew what to do if they had any concerns about their well-being.

The inspectors reported to the Principal and the Chair of the governors the views expressed in the questionnaires and the very few matters emerging from them.

ACCOMMODATION

- The school does not have a hall for physical education (PE) or whole-school activities such as assembly. Facilities for PE are provided by use of the adjacent church hall and weekly assemblies are held in a classroom setting.
- The school does not have a dining hall. A classroom is used to serve school dinners.

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