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*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



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Education and Training Inspectorate

Report of a Short Inspection

Spa Primary School
Ballynahinch

Inspected: February 2007

BASIC INFORMATION SHEET (BIS) - PRIMARY SCHOOLS

- A. i. **School: Spa Primary School** iii. **Date of Inspection: W/B 26.02.07**
Ballynahinch
 ii. **School Reference Number: 401-6123** iv. **Nature of Inspection: Short**

B.

School Year	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07
Year 1 Intake	31	27	31	17	18
Enrolments					
Primary	183	188	193	194	183
Reception	0	0	0	0	0
Nursery Class/Classes	0	0	0	0	0
Special Unit	5	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):

96.4%

Primary & Reception	Nursery Unit	Special Unit
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- D. i. Number of Teachers
 (including the principal and part-time teachers): 8.48 0 0
 (Full-time equivalent = 25 teaching hours)
- ii. PTR (Pupil/Teacher Ratio): 21.6 NI PTR: 20.5
- iii. Average Class Size: 26
- iv. Class Size (Range): 16 to 32
- v. Ancillary Support:
 Number of Hours **Per Week**:
- | | |
|--|----|
| i. Clerical support: | 27 |
| ii. Official Making A Good Start Support (MAGS): | 10 |
| iii. Making A Good Start funding additional hours and other classroom assistant support: | 10 |
- vi. Percentage of children with statements of special educational needs: 1.6%
- vii. Total percentage of children on the Special Needs Register: 11.4%
- viii. Number of children who are **not** of statutory school age: 0
- ix. Percentage of children entitled to free school meals: 2%

SPA PRIMARY SCHOOL, BALLYNAHINCH, CO DOWN, BT24 8QB (401-6123)

Spa Primary School is situated in the centre of Spa. A majority of the children attending the school come from the town and the surrounding rural area. The enrolment has fluctuated over the last five years; it is currently 183. The school has identified that approximately 11 per cent of the children require support with their learning, and 2% of the children are entitled to free school meals.

The arrangements for the inspection of pastoral care and child protection included the opportunity for the parents to complete a confidential questionnaire prior to the inspection, as well as meetings with a group of children from year 6. Of the 122 questionnaires issued to parents, 52% were returned to the Department of Education (DE) and 36 contained written comments. The responses from the parental questionnaires indicated that the parents regard highly the dedicated and professional teachers, the caring and friendly atmosphere, and the leadership of the Principal. The concerns of a small number of parents were shared with the Principal. The children talked enthusiastically about the school and from discussion there was evidence that they were aware of what to do if they had any worries about their safety and well-being.

There are major strengths in the quality of the arrangements for pastoral care and child protection. The school has procedures in place, which implement fully the guidance outlined in DE Circulars. The governors, staff, parents and children are fully aware of the school's procedures and had the opportunity to contribute to a range of helpful policies, which guide the work of the school.

The school gives excellent attention to promoting health and well-being and has appropriate policies and programmes in place to encourage the children to adopt healthy lifestyles including, a healthy break and an active School Council. There is evidence of commitment on the part of the staff to promoting healthy eating and to improving children's eating habits. There are excellent opportunities for all children to participate in a range of physical activities before, during and after school. The children demonstrate an excellent knowledge and understanding of the importance of making healthy life choices, and can confidently articulate the functions and benefits of nutrients.

The strengths of the school include:

- the caring and supportive atmosphere, and the strong sense of a school community;
- the good support provided by the parents and the active parent/teacher association;
- the welcoming, motivated and well-behaved children;
- the attractive displays of the children's work, which celebrate particularly their creative work and achievements;
- the quality of the pastoral provision which promotes the children's confidence and self-esteem;

- the hard-working and dedicated teaching staff;
- the consistently good teaching observed in the majority of lessons;
- the valuable contribution made by the non-teaching staff;
- the start made to the integration of the phonics programme in year 1;
- the very good leadership and management of the Principal, who is ably supported by the Vice-principal;
- the collegial and professional approach to decision-making;
- the collection and use made of a range of quantitative data; and
- the management and the involvement of the co-ordinators in the well-developed self-evaluative process used across the curriculum.

In the areas inspected, the school has major strengths in its educational and pastoral provision. The educational and pastoral needs of the learners are being well met. The parents and the local community can have confidence in the school's capacity for sustained self-improvement.

No follow-up inspection is required.

A number of quantitative terms are used in the report. In percentages, the terms correspond as follows:-

- More than 90% - almost/nearly all
- 75%-90% - most
- 50%-74% - a majority
- 30%-49% - a significant minority
- 10%-29% - a minority
- Less than 10% - very few/a small number.

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