



*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**



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Education and Training Inspectorate

Report of a Short Inspection

**St Bernard's Primary School
Belfast**

Inspected: May 2009

BASIC INFORMATION SHEET (BIS) - PRIMARY SCHOOLS

- A. i. **School: St Bernard's Primary School** iii. **Date of Inspection: W/B 11/05/2009**
ii. **School Reference Number: 403-1676** iv. **Nature of Inspection: Short**

B.

School Year	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09
Year 1 Intake	52	60	54	55	56
Enrolments					
Primary	394	394	388	394	393
Reception	-	-	-	-	-
Nursery Class/Classes	-	-	-	-	-
Special Unit	-	-	-	-	-

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): 97.6%

Primary & Reception	Nursery Unit	Special Unit
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- | | | | | | |
|----|----|---|----|---|---|
| D. | i. | Number of Teachers
(including the principal and part-time teachers):
(Full-time equivalent = 25 teaching hours) | 17 | 0 | 0 |
|----|----|---|----|---|---|

- ii. PTR (Pupil/Teacher Ratio): 24.5 NI PTR: 20.8

- iii. Average Class Size: 28

- iv. Class Size (Range): 25 to 31

- | | | | |
|----|----------------------------------|------|---|
| v. | Ancillary Support: | | |
| | Number of Hours Per Week: | i. | Clerical support: 36 |
| | | ii. | Official Making A Good Start Support: 70 |
| | | iii. | Additional hours of other classroom assistant support: 67.5 |

- vi. Percentage of children with statements of special educational needs: 1.3%

- vii. Total percentage of children on the Special Needs Register: 10.6%

- viii. Number of children who are **not** of statutory school age: -

- ix. Percentage of children entitled to free school meals: 2%

ST BERNARD'S PRIMARY SCHOOL, BELFAST, BT6 0JS (403-1676)

St Bernard's Primary School is located off the Upper Knockbreda Road, Belfast. The enrolment has remained constant over the past four years and currently stands at 393. At the time of the inspection, approximately 2% of the children were entitled to free school meals and approximately 10% of the children were on the special educational needs register.

The arrangements for the inspection included the opportunity for the parents to complete a confidential questionnaire prior to the inspection. Of the 131 questionnaires issued to the parents, 60 (46%) were returned to the Department of Education (DE), including 36 which contained an additional written comment. The majority of the parental questionnaires and written comments indicated very high levels of satisfaction with the provision in the school; in particular the parents highlighted the strong community spirit in the school, the commitment and hard work of the Principal and staff and the wide range of extra-curricular provision. The few concerns raised were discussed with the Principal. Two members of the Board of Governors met with a representative of the inspection team and reported their full support for and confidence in the Principal and his vision for the school. The inspectors met with a group of year 6 children who spoke highly of their experiences in school. They praised the support they receive from their teachers and they reported that they enjoy a good variety of extra-curricular activities. The children are aware of what to do if they have any concerns about their safety and well-being. Teachers also had an opportunity to fill in a questionnaire and the responses were positive and supportive.

The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care in the school is very good. The pupils are mannerly and demonstrate exemplary behaviour. The teachers have high expectations of the children and there are good examples of whole-school celebration of the children's achievements in assembly and throughout the school. The classroom assistants and support staff contribute significantly to promoting and maintaining a positive working environment for the children.

The school has good arrangements in place for safeguarding children. These arrangements broadly reflect the guidance issued by the relevant Department. The school needs to ensure parents are informed of the school's safe use of the internet policy.

The school gives very good attention to promoting healthy eating and physical activity.

The strengths of the school include:

- the high levels of engagement and motivation of the children whose behaviour was always exemplary;
- the high standards achieved by the children in literacy and numeracy;
- the quality of the teaching observed which ranged from satisfactory to outstanding with most of it being very good;
- the highly effective leadership of the Principal ably supported by the senior management team;

- the school's processes of self evaluation leading to development and improvement; and
- the inclusive culture of the school as exemplified through the provision it makes for those children with additional learning needs.

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

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