

# PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training  
Inspectorate

St Columban's Primary School,  
Belcoo, Enniskillen

Report of an Inspection  
in April 2010

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 |

## BASIC INFORMATION SHEET (BIS) - PRIMARY SCHOOLS

- A. i. **School: St Columban's Primary Belcoo** iii. **Date of Inspection: W/B 26/04/10**  
ii. **School Reference Number: 203-6213** iv. **Nature of Inspection: Short**

B.

| School Year       | 2005/06 | 2006/07 | 2007/08 | 2008/09 | 2009/10 |
|-------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Year 1 Intake     | 18      | 17      | 13      | 13      | 17      |
| <b>Enrolments</b> |         |         |         |         |         |
| Primary           | 142     | 132     | 125     | 127     | 115     |
| Reception         | 2       | 1       | 1       | 4       | 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<br>(expressed as a percentage): |  | 95.8%                              | <b>NI Avg Att:</b> 94.9% |                              |
|    |   |  | <b>Primary &amp;<br/>Reception</b> | <b>Nursery<br/>Unit</b>  | <b>Special<br/>Unit</b>      |
|    |   |  |                                    |                          | <b>Irish Medium<br/>Unit</b> |
| D. | i.  | Number of Teachers<br>(including the principal and part-time teachers):<br>(Full-time equivalent = 25 teaching hours)      | 6.4                                | 0                        | 0                            |
|    | ii.   | PTR (Pupil/Teacher Ratio):   | 18                                 | NI PTR: 20.4             |                              |
|    | iii.  | Average Class Size:  | 19                                 |                          |                              |
|    | iv.   | Class Size (Range):  | 16 to 22                           |                          |                              |
|    | v.  | Ancillary Support:<br>Number of Hours <b>Per Week</b> :  |                                    |                          |                              |
|    |   | i. Clerical support:   |                                    | 20                       |                              |
|    |   | ii. Foundation Stage Classroom<br>Assistant Support:   |                                    | 20                       |                              |
|    |   | iii. Additional hours of other<br>classroom assistant support:   |                                    | 5                        |                              |
|    | vi.   | Percentage of children with statements of special educational needs:   |                                    | 3%                       |                              |
|    | vii.  | Total percentage of children on the Special Needs Register:  |                                    | 30%                      |                              |
|    | viii.   | Number of children who are <b>not</b> of statutory school age:   |                                    | 0                        |                              |
|    | ix.   | Percentage of children entitled to free school meals:  |                                    | 12.17%                   |                              |
|    | x.  | Percentage of children at the end of Key Stage 2 for 2008/09<br>who attained level 4 and above in English and mathematics: |                                    | <b>English</b><br>81.4%  | <b>Mathematics</b><br>81.4%  |

## **ST COLUMBAN'S PRIMARY SCHOOL, BELCOO, CO FERMANAGH, BT93 5DS (203-6123)**

### **SCHOOL CONTEXT**

St Columban's Primary School is situated in the town of Belcoo, 12 miles from Enniskillen, in south west Fermanagh. All of the children come from the local and surrounding rural area. The enrolment in the primary school has remained steady over recent years and currently stands at 115. At the time of the inspection, approximately 12% of the children were entitled to free school meals and 30% of the children were identified 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.

The school's arrangements for pastoral care and child protection were also evaluated.

### **THE VIEWS OF THE PARENTS, TEACHERS, SUPPORT STAFF AND CHILDREN**

The arrangements for the inspection included an opportunity for the parents, the teaching staff and the support staff to complete confidential questionnaires prior to the inspection. Of the 76 questionnaires issued to the parents, 45% were returned to the Inspection Services Branch and 19 contained additional written comments. The responses from the questionnaires indicated that the parents value the child-centred ethos, the leadership of the Principal, the very caring, hard-working and supportive staff, the children's enjoyment of learning and their time in school. The one issue arising from the parental questionnaires was shared with the Principal.

All seven members of the teaching staff responded to the online questionnaire and three included written comments about the life and work of the school. The responses were wholly positive about all aspects of school life including the leadership of the Principal, the caring community ethos evident and the provision made for a broad and balanced curriculum.

Eight members of the support staff responded to the online questionnaire, including two who included a written comment. Almost all of the responses were extremely positive and complimented highly the strong sense of respect shown to them by the children and their involvement in the life and work of the school. A small number of the staff indicated that they would appreciate further training and development for their specific roles. The Chair of the Board of Governors (governors) also met with the inspectors on the first day of the inspection and expressed his confidence in the leadership and management of the school.

The inspectors also met with a group of children from years 6 and 7. The children reported that they are aware of what to do if they have concerns about their safety or well-being. They spoke with confidence about their learning experiences and the many aspects of school life that they enjoyed, including the development of their School Council, the caring and helpful teachers, the emphasis placed on good behaviour and learning being fun.

## PASTORAL CARE

The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care in the school is outstanding.

The strengths of the provision include:

- the leadership provided by the Principal and the Vice-principal in the development of a mutually respectful ethos across the whole school community;
- the outstanding level of care and commitment to the children's all-round development;
- the strength of the working relationships at all levels, and
- the exemplary behaviour of the children.

## CHILD PROTECTION

The school has very good arrangements in place for safeguarding children. These arrangements reflect the guidance issued by the Department of Education.

## HEALTHY EATING AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

The school gives very good attention to promoting healthy eating and physical activity through, for example, the development of the school's healthy eating programme in consultation with the parents and children, and the strong emphasis placed on participation in a wide range of sports.

## CONCLUSION

The strengths of the school include:

- the children's very high levels of motivation, engagement and enjoyment of learning;
- the good standards achieved by the children in literacy and numeracy and the very good development of the children's skills in information communication and technology, thinking skills and personal capabilities across the school curriculum;
- the hardworking teachers and the quality of their teaching which was, in the majority of the lessons observed, very good or outstanding;
- the very good processes established by the mathematics and literacy co-ordinators for review and development leading to improvement;
- the high quality leadership provided by the Principal who has embedded an effective approach to school development planning which involves the children, staff, parents, governors and the wider community; and
- the excellent links established with the community and external agencies to support and enhance the children's experiences.

The area for improvement is the need to:

- develop further the planning for and the assessment of the children's learning in order to meet more effectively the wide range of individual educational needs.

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 organisation has demonstrated the capacity to address. The Education and Training Inspectorate will monitor the school's progress on the area for improvement.

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