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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

Education and Training Inspectorate

Report of a Short Inspection

**St Joseph's Primary School
Strangford**

Inspected: October 2009

BASIC INFORMATION SHEET (BIS) - PRIMARY SCHOOLS

- A. i. **School: St Joseph's Primary School** iii. **Date of Inspection: W/B 19/10/2009**
 ii. **School Reference Number: 403-3005** iv. **Nature of Inspection: Short**

B.

School Year	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
Year 1 Intake	5	10	10	5	4
Enrolments					
Primary	51	56	57	48	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): 96.2%

	Primary & Reception	Nursery Unit	Special Unit	Irish Medium Unit
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|----|-------|---|---------|------------------------|----------------------|---|
| D. | i. | Number of Teachers
(including the principal and part-time teachers):
(Full-time equivalent = 25 teaching hours) | 3` | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | ii. | PTR (Pupil/Teacher Ratio): | 16.3 | NI PTR: 20.4 | | |
| | iii. | Average Class Size: | 6.83 | | | |
| | iv. | Class Size (Range): | 4 to 11 | | | |
| | v. | Ancillary Support:
Number of Hours Per Week: | | | | |
| | | i. Clerical support: | | 15 | | |
| | | ii. Foundation Stage Classroom Assistant Support: | | 10 | | |
| | | iii. Additional hours of other classroom assistant support: | | 15 | | |
| | vi. | Percentage of children with statements of special educational needs: | | 4% | | |
| | vii. | Total percentage of children on the Special Needs Register: | | 20% | | |
| | viii. | Number of children who are not of statutory school age: | | 0 | | |
| | ix. | Percentage of children entitled to free school meals: | | 4% | | |
| | x. | Percentage of children at the end of Key Stage 2 for 2008/09 who attained level 4 and above at English and maths: | | English
100% | Maths
100% | |

ST JOSEPH'S PRIMARY SCHOOL, STRANGFORD, CO DOWN, BT30 7LZ (403-3005)

SCHOOL CONTEXT

St Joseph's Primary School is situated in the village of Strangford in County Down. The enrolment has fallen in recent years and is currently 49. At the time of the inspection, approximately four per cent of the children were entitled to free school meals and 20% of the children were identified as requiring additional support with aspects of their learning. During the inspection, the Principal was absent owing to illness.

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 VIEWS OF THE PARENTS, TEACHERS, GOVERNORS AND CHILDREN

The arrangements for the inspection included the opportunity for the parents and the teaching staff to complete a confidential questionnaire prior to the inspection as well as meetings with representatives from the Board of Governors (governors) and a group of children from years 6 and 7. Thirty-five questionnaires were issued to the parents; 60% were returned to the Department of Education (DE) and 12 of these contained additional written comments. The responses from the questionnaires indicated that almost all of the parents appreciate the professional and approachable staff, the care and support provided for their children and the progress they make. The very few issues arising from the parental questionnaires were shared with the staff and the governors.

The governors reported that they were kept fully informed about the work of the school and were very appreciative of the work of the Principal and staff in ensuring that the children were happy and made good progress in their learning.

A majority of the teaching staff responded to the online teacher questionnaire. The responses were positive about all aspects of the school.

The year 6 and 7 children talked enthusiastically about many of their experiences at school. They are aware of what to do if they have worries about their safety and well-being.

PASTORAL CARE

The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care in the school is outstanding. Among the strengths are the supportive ethos throughout the school, the quality of the key school policies and the use of praise and encouragement to motivate the children. There are excellent working relationships between the staff and children and the behaviour of the children is very good.

CHILD PROTECTION

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

HEALTHY EATING AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

The school gives outstanding attention to promoting healthy eating and physical activity, for example, through the very effective monitoring and evaluation of the programmes for food in school, and the long-standing success in associated award schemes that encourage the children to adopt healthy lifestyles.

CONCLUSION

The strengths of the school include:

- the outstanding quality of the pastoral care provision and the whole-school focus on inclusion;
- the quality of teaching observed which was very good or outstanding on most occasions;
- the high standards attained by the children in literacy and numeracy, arising from the hard work, high expectations and enthusiasm of all the staff;
- the comprehensive school development plan and detailed action plans;
- the very effective self-evaluation processes, including the use of data, which have led to improvement; and
- the very good quality of the collaborative leadership of the staff.

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.

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.

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

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