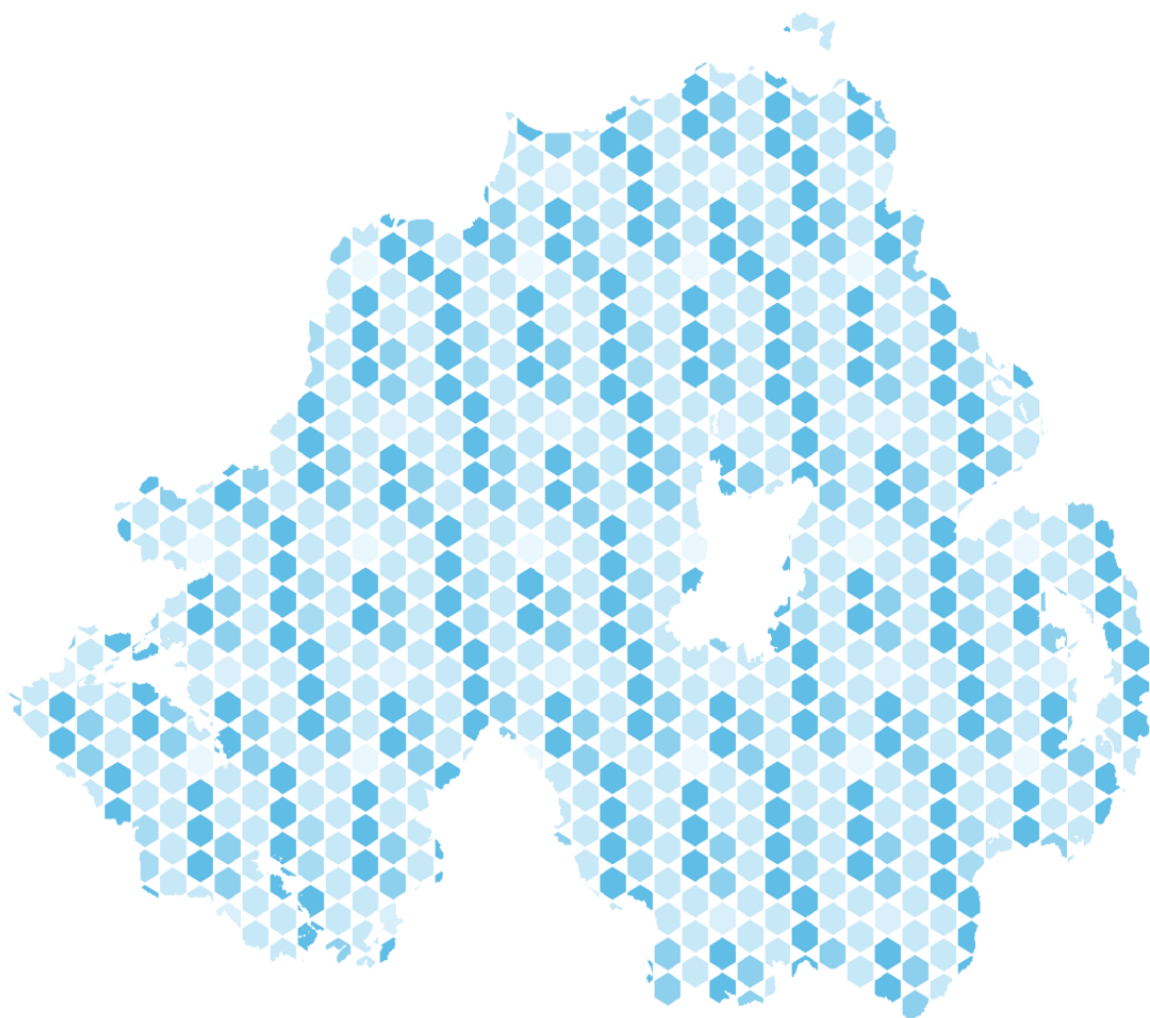


PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

St Laurence O'Toole's Primary
School, Belleek

Report of an Inspection
in September 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

St Laurence O'Toole's Primary School is situated in the village of Belleek, County Armagh. All of the children attending the school come from the village and the surrounding rural areas. The enrolment has remained steady in recent years and currently stands at 62 children. At the time of the inspection, approximately 48% of the children in the school were entitled to free school meals. The school has identified 18% of the children 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 FINDING OF THE INSPECTION

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.

KEY FINDINGS OF THE INSPECTION

Achievements and Standards

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

- Almost all of the children attain **standards** in line with their ability. Whilst the end of Key Stage outcomes in English and mathematics are in the lower quartile, the school demonstrated, using a range of qualitative and quantitative evidence, that the children are making very good progress across the curriculum. The teachers use strategies to address underachievement which are having a positive impact on the children's learning and the standards which they attain.
- The presentation and quality of the work produced by the children during the inspection was of a high standard.
- The children identified with **special educational needs** make very good progress in their learning across the curriculum and almost all reach the standards of which they are capable by the end of year 7.

Provision for Learning

The provision for learning is very good.

- The **children's** behaviour was exemplary throughout the inspection. They are enthusiastic and participative learners; they enjoy reflecting on their own learning and that of their peers; they ask questions of their teachers and of one another; and the classroom environment is founded on mutual respect.

- The teachers and support staff are very conscientious and hard-working. A key feature of the work of the school is the outstanding teamwork of the teachers which has effected significant improvements in all aspects of the life and work of the school over the last year. The quality of the **learning and teaching observed** during the inspection was very good.
- The provision for **special educational needs** is very good. Over the last year the teachers have put in place assessment arrangements to identify the children's needs at an early stage. Comprehensive education plans are in place, and programmes of support are monitored and evaluated regularly.
- The quality of the arrangements for **pastoral care** in the school is outstanding. This is evidenced by: the happy and safe environment created by the staff; the recently established school council and eco council which allow the children to contribute to decisions which affect their life in school; and the active parent association which has provided important support and resources for the school.
- On the basis of the evidence 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 very good.

- The **Principal** has provided excellent strategic and pastoral leadership since her appointment in 2011. She has established a shared and reflective approach to leadership across the school which has resulted in significant improvements in the quality of the overall provision, including: the active involvement of the children and their parents; raised expectations of what the children can achieve in literacy and numeracy; updating of resources and the school environment; and the embedding of the Northern Ireland Curriculum.
- The whole-school **self evaluation and school development planning (SDP) processes** are very good. The Principal and teachers make effective use of a wide range of quantitative and qualitative data to track the children's progress and to set realistic targets to ensure that the children achieve their potential.
- All of the co-ordinators work together as a leadership team to provide valuable support and guidance to one another and to share best practice. The significant improvements in the school over the last year can be directly attributed to the exceptional quality of the work of this team.

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.

CONCLUSION

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 the capacity for sustained self-improvement.

BASIC INFORMATION SHEET (BIS) - PRIMARY SCHOOLS

- A. i. **School:** St Laurence O'Toole's Primary iii. **Date of Inspection:** W/B 19/09/12
 ii. **School Reference Number:** 503-6130 iv. **Nature of Inspection:** Short

B.

School Year	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
Year 1 Intake	6	5	5	12	8
Enrolments					
Primary	51	44	52	62	61
Reception	5	5	7	6	1
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): 94.50% **NI Avg Att: 94.7%**

Average Attendance for those children on the
 Special Educational Needs Register: 94.63%

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): 4 0 0 0
 (Full-time equivalent = 25 teaching hours)
- ii. **PTR (Pupil/Teacher Ratio):** 15.5 NI PTR: 20.2
- iii. **Average Class Size:** 20.7
- iv. **Class Size (Range):** 19 to 24
- v. **Ancillary Support:**
Number of Hours Per Week:
- | | |
|---|----|
| i. Clerical support: | 10 |
| ii. Foundation Stage Classroom Assistant Support: | 20 |
| iii. Additional hours of other classroom assistant support: | 25 |
- vi. **Percentage of children with statements of special educational needs:** 3.2%
- vii. **Total percentage of children on the Special Needs Register:** 17.8%
- viii. **Number of children who are **not** of statutory school age:** 1
- ix. **Percentage of children entitled to free school meals:** 48%
- 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 | Mathematics | Irish |
| 55.6% | 66.8% | N/A |

THE VIEWS OF THE PARENTS, TEACHERS, 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, and for a group of children from year 6 to meet the inspectors. In addition a group of parents and governors requested a meeting with the inspectors to express their support for and satisfaction with all aspects of school life.

Forty questionnaires were issued to the **parents**: 23 (58%) were returned to Inspection Services Branch (ISB) and nine contained additional written comments. Almost all of the responses from the questionnaire and all of the written comments were extremely positive and praised highly the Principal and the staff for their collegial approach to the to the education, care and well-being of their children and in particular the significant improvements over the last year.

All of the teachers and the support staff completed confidential questionnaires, the responses were highly positive about all aspects of the school.

The inspectors also met with a group of the year 6 children; the children talked happily and enthusiastically about their school, and the support and encouragement they receive from all of the staff. The children are aware of what to do if they have worries about their safety and well-being.

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