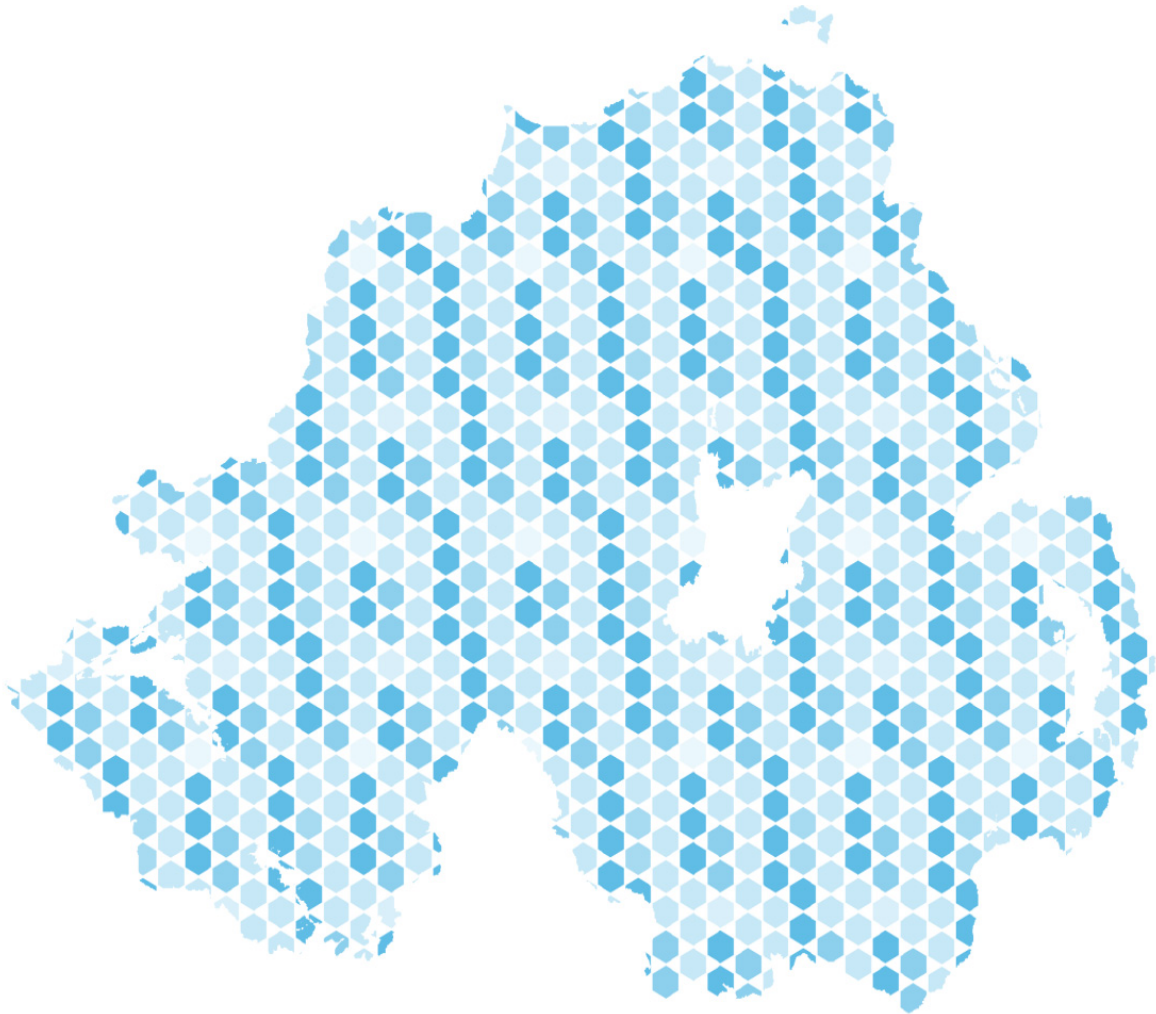


PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

St Malachy's Primary School,
Ballymoyer, Co Armagh

Report of an Inspection
in October 2011



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 Malachy's Primary School is situated in Ballymoyer, County Armagh. Almost all of the children attending the school come from the surrounding rural area. The enrolment has remained steady over the past five years and currently stands at 82. At the time of the inspection, 40.2% of the children in the school were entitled to free school meals. The school has identified 16 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 the school is **outstanding**; the quality of pastoral care is also outstanding. The school 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.

- The children attain very good **standards** in English and mathematics. By the end of key stage 2 they make very good progress in applying their literacy, numeracy and information and communication skills across the curriculum.
- The children identified with **special educational needs** reach very good standards by the end of year 7.

Provision for Learning

The provision for learning is very good.

- The teachers are very dedicated and work conscientiously to provide for the children's educational needs, social development and emotional well-being.
- The classroom assistants, other support staff and parents support effectively the children's learning.
- The historical and geographical context of the school is used effectively to enthuse and motivate the children in their learning.

- The **quality of teaching observed** ranged from good to outstanding; in half of the lessons it was very good or outstanding. Where the teaching is very good or outstanding, the children are actively involved in their learning, information and communication technology is used appropriately to engage and support the children in their learning, and the well-planned activities help promote the children's thinking skills and personal capabilities.
- The provision for **special educational needs** is outstanding. The children who require additional support with aspects of their learning are identified early and an extensive range of intervention programmes target effectively their individual needs. Almost all of the children overcome barriers to learning including difficulties experienced in literacy and numeracy, enabling them to achieve very good standards.
- The quality of the arrangements for **pastoral care** is outstanding. This is evident through: the highly inclusive ethos in which all members of the school community are valued, the frequent opportunities provided for the children to develop confidence and self-esteem including whole school participation in a major drama production, the excellent behaviour of the children, and the ongoing opportunities provided for them to contribute to important aspects of school life to enhance environmental responsibility and cultural awareness.
- The school has very good, comprehensive arrangements in place for **safeguarding** children. These arrangements reflect the guidance issued by the Department of Education.
- The school gives outstanding attention to promoting **healthy eating and physical activity**.

Leadership and Management

The quality of leadership and management is outstanding.

- The **Principal** carries out a substantial teaching commitment in addition to his leadership responsibilities. In his role as principal he provides highly effective leadership and leads successfully the school improvement agenda. His collegial, caring and strategic approach inspires respect and confidence amongst the staff and the local community and sets a clear direction for the work of the school and the standards the children achieve.
- There is a comprehensive **school development plan** (SDP) that is underpinned by rigorous self-evaluation. Appropriate action plans support the SDP, and a wide range of data is used effectively to identify priorities for development.
- The **governors** are fully involved in the strategic planning for the work of the school. They carry out their associated challenge function very well and support the Principal and teachers in the implementation of the SDP.
- **The co-ordinators**, across all the key stages, work diligently and supportively as a team and are highly effective in their roles. They monitor and evaluate appropriately the quality of the provision across the school.

- 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 the school is outstanding; the quality of pastoral care is also outstanding. The school has demonstrated its capacity for sustained self-improvement.

BASIC INFORMATION SHEET (BIS) - PRIMARY SCHOOLS

- A. i. **School: St Malachy's Primary** iii. **Date of Inspection: W/B 26/10/11**
 ii. **School Reference Number: 503-0975** iv. **Nature of Inspection: Short**

B.

School Year	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Year 1 Intake	12	9	12	8	14
Enrolments					
Primary	87	80	80	77	82
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): 93.4% **NI Avg Att: 94.7%**
- Average Attendance for those children on the
 Special Educational Needs Register: 91.8%
- | | Primary &
Reception | Nursery
Unit | Special
Unit | Irish Medium
Unit |
|--|------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------------|
|--|------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------------|
- D. i. Number of Teachers
 (including the principal and part-time teachers): 4.6 0 0 0
 (Full-time equivalent = 25 teaching hours)
- ii. PTR (Pupil/Teacher Ratio): 17.8 NI PTR: 20.2
- iii. Average Class Size: 20.5
- iv. Class Size (Range): 10 to 28
- v. Ancillary Support:
 Number of Hours **Per Week**:
- | | |
|---|----|
| i. Clerical support: | 6 |
| ii. Foundation Stage Classroom Assistant Support: | 30 |
| iii. Additional hours of other classroom assistant support: | 36 |
- vi. Percentage of children with statements of special educational needs: 3.7%
- vii. Total percentage of children on the Special Needs Register: 19.5%
- viii. Number of children who are **not** of statutory school age: 0
- ix. Percentage of children entitled to free school meals: 40.2%
- 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 | 92.31% | Mathematics | 84.61% | Irish | N/A |
|----------------|--------|--------------------|--------|--------------|-----|

APPENDIX 2

THE VIEWS OF THE PARENTS, TEACHERS, GOVERNORS, 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. Of the 46 questionnaires issued to the parents, 14 (30.4%) were returned to the Inspection Services Branch, including ten which contained additional written comments. Almost all of the parental questionnaires and written comments expressed very high levels of satisfaction with the life and work of the school, particularly with the caring ethos, the provision for children who need support and the approachable and caring staff.

A small number of the governors met with the inspection team on the first day of the inspection and expressed their strong support for the work of the school, especially the caring ethos, the good working relationships and the leadership of the Principal.

The teachers and almost all of the members of the support staff responded very positively to the staff questionnaires.

The inspectors also met with a group of the year 6 children; they talked enthusiastically about their experiences at school, the extra-curricular activities, and the support 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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