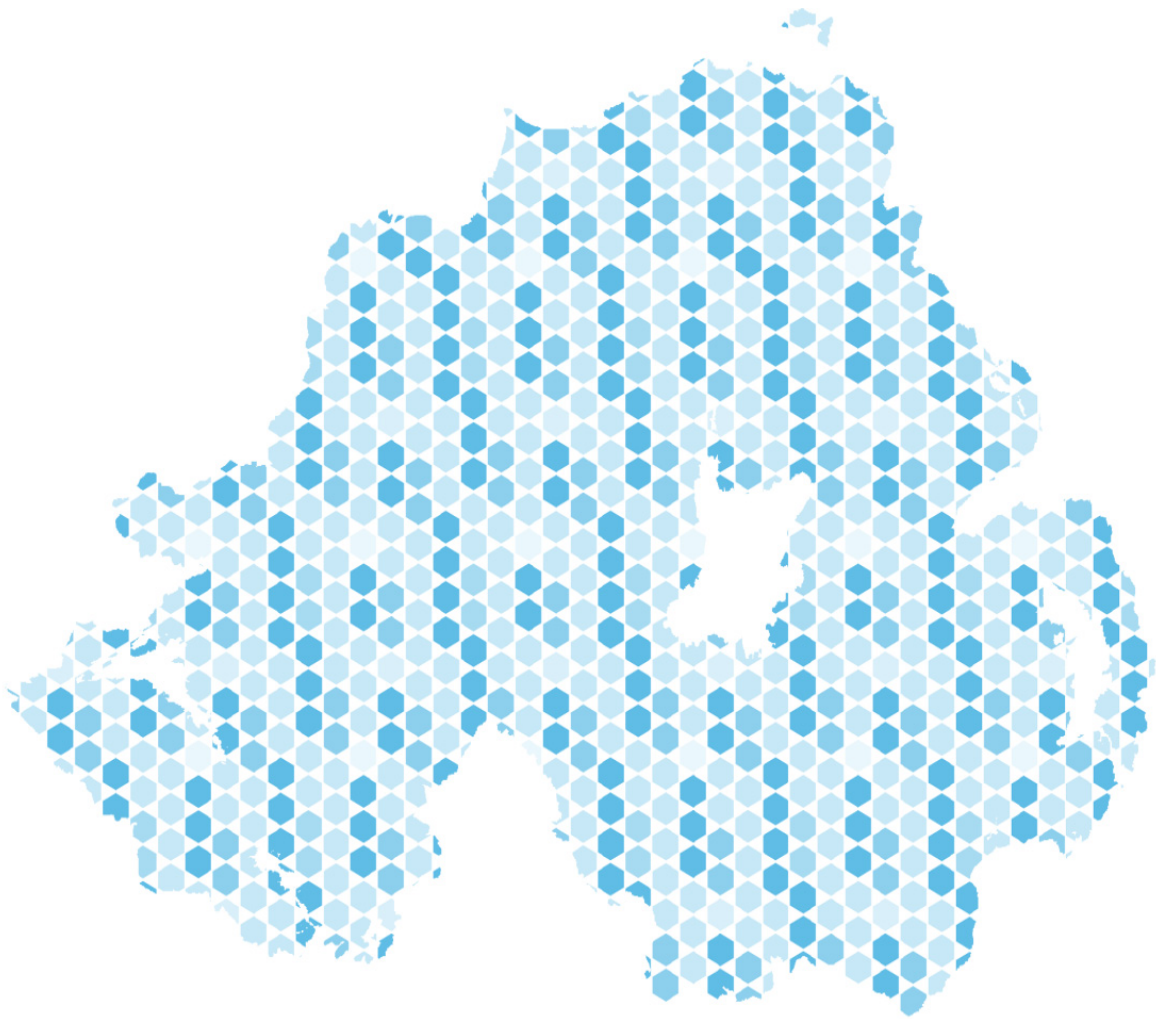


PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

St Malachy's Primary School,
Magherafelt

Report of an Inspection
in September 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 the townland of Drummullan, near Cookstown. Most of the children who attend the school come from the surrounding rural area. The enrolment has risen slightly over the past five years and currently stands at 51, with a small number in reception. At the time of the inspection, approximately 25% of the children in the school were entitled to free school meals. The school has identified 24% 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 good. The school has important strengths in most of its educational and pastoral provision. The inspection has identified areas for improvement which the school has demonstrated the capacity to address. The Education and Training Inspectorate will monitor the school's progress on the areas for improvement.

KEY FINDINGS OF THE INSPECTION

Achievements and Standards

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

- By the end of Key Stage (KS) 2 the children achieve good **standards** in English and mathematics which are in line with their ability. The children speak confidently, enjoy mature and sustained whole class discussions, and have opportunities to write in a variety of genres. Most of the children have appropriate processing skills in numeracy. In addition, the children participate in cross-community projects and sporting competitions.
- The children identified with **special educational needs** make good progress, almost all are working in line with their ability and reach the standards of which they are capable.

Provision for Learning

The quality of the provision for learning is good

- The **children** have a positive attitude and disposition to learning and their behaviour is exemplary. They engage confidently and enthusiastically with their peers and offer mature and thoughtful opinions in class. The children enjoy learning other languages.

- The **teachers** are hard-working and fully committed to meeting the needs of the children. The quality of the **teaching** observed during the inspection ranged from satisfactory to very good and in almost all of the lessons was good or better. The teachers are well supported by the classroom assistants. Evaluations of planning need further development with a focus on critical reflection to inform future teaching and learning.
- The provision for **special educational needs** is good. The school appropriately identifies at an early stage the children who require support with their learning, and intervene by providing good in class support and well-planned withdrawal sessions matched to the needs of the children.
- The quality of the arrangements for **pastoral care** is very good. This is evident through the friendly and welcoming ethos in the school and the very good working relationships at all levels. The parents, staff, Board of Governors and local community work together effectively in the best interests of all the children.
- 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 very good attention to promoting **healthy eating and physical activity through**, for example, the healthy, active breaks and the very good range of sporting activities available to all the children which encourage them to adopt healthy lifestyles.

Leadership and Management

The overall quality of leadership and management is good

- The Principal provides effective **leadership** and is fully committed to the whole school community. She puts the needs of the children first, and encourages a collegial approach to decision taking and professional development in the school.
- There is a good comprehensive **school development plan** (SDP) that complies with the requirements of the School Development Plans Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2005. There are appropriate action plans to support the SDP, and the school has started to use performance data to identify priorities for development. Overall, there is a developing culture of **self-evaluation** across the school to bring about 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 including the present provision for reception children, 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 good. The school has important strengths in most of its educational provision and very good pastoral provision. The inspection has identified areas for improvement which the school has demonstrated the capacity to address. These include the need to:

- focus evaluation more specifically on learning and teaching in order to promote improvement and raise further the children's levels of attainment in literacy and numeracy; and
- develop the roles of the recently appointed literacy and numeracy co-ordinators to include the effective analysis of performance data as another means to promoting improvement.

BASIC INFORMATION SHEET (BIS) - PRIMARY SCHOOLS

- A. i. **School: St Malachy's Primary** iii. **Date of Inspection: W/B 26/09/11**
 ii. **School Reference Number: 503-6057** iv. **Nature of Inspection: Short**

B.

School Year	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Year 1 Intake	4	6	2	10	9
Enrolments					
Primary	32	36	36	44	47
Reception	2	0	1	2	4
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% **NI Avg Att: 94.7%**

Average Attendance for those children on the Special Educational Needs Register: 94.4%

- | | Primary & Reception | Nursery Unit | Special Unit | Irish Medium Unit |
|---|--------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| 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): | 17 | NI PTR: 20.2 | | |
| iii. Average Class Size: | 17 | | | |
| iv. Class Size (Range): | 13 to 23 | | | |
| 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: | | | | 37.5 |
| vi. Percentage of children with statements of special educational needs: | | | | 6% |
| vii. Total percentage of children on the Special Needs Register: | | | | 23.5% |
| viii. Number of children who are not of statutory school age: | | | | |
| ix. Percentage of children entitled to free school meals: | | | | 25.4% |
| 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
81.42% | Mathematics
82.01% | Irish
0% | |
| xi. If there is a composite class with reception children in it, please indicate the numbers of children in the other year groups: | Year 1
9 | Year 2
10 | Year 3
0 | |

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, and for a group of the children from year 6 to meet with the inspectors.

Forty four questionnaires were issued to the parents of the children in the primary school; 17 were returned to Inspection Services Branch and eleven contained additional written comments. All of the responses from the questionnaires returned were highly affirmative. The parents indicated that their children enjoy school, highlighted the friendly and approachable staff, and commented positively on the overall quality of education provided by the school.

The teachers and support staff completed confidential questionnaires with each providing an additional written comment. All of these responses were wholly positive indicating very strong support for the work and life of the school. All of the staff enjoy working at the school, feel valued by the management and consider the leadership of the Principal to be effective.

The inspectors also met with a group of the year 6 children; they talked enthusiastically and very positively about their experiences in school, and indicated that they are included in decisions that affect them. The children feel safe and secure in the school; they aware of what to do if they have worries about their safety and well-being.

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