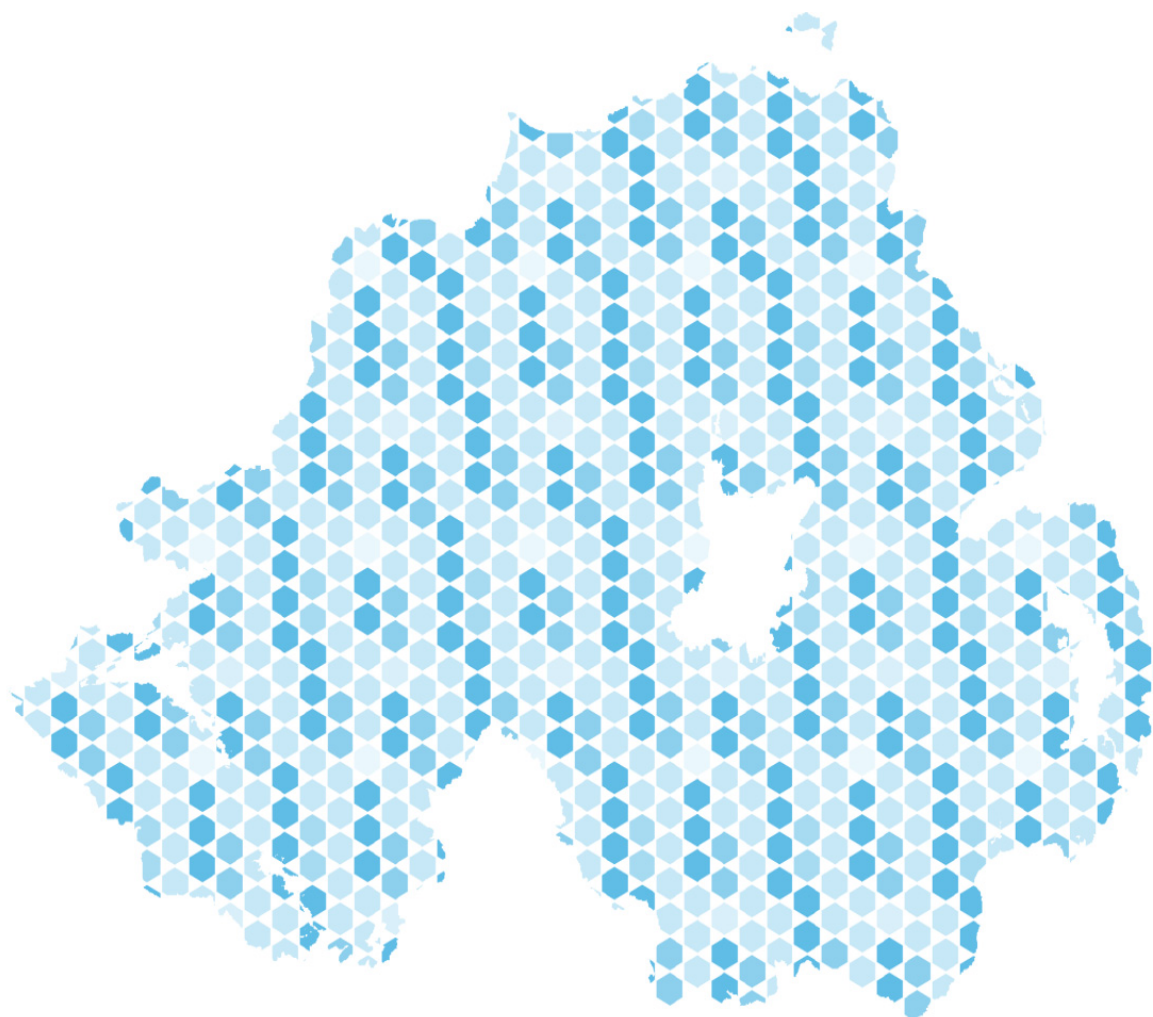


PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

St Mary's Primary School,
Cargan

Report of an Inspection
in December 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 Mary's Primary School is a co-educational maintained primary school situated in the village of Cargan, between Ballymena and Cushendall. Almost all of the children come from the surrounding rural area, within a five mile radius of the school. The enrolment has declined steadily over the past five years and currently stands at 69. The school has identified 26% of the children as requiring additional support with aspects of their learning. Approximately 23% of the children are entitled to free school meals.

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.

KEY FINDINGS OF THE INSPECTION

Achievements and Standards

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

- The **children** are highly motivated, confident and engage actively in their learning. They have good problem solving skills. The children work independently and collaboratively in pairs and groups in all classes across the key stages.
- The children attain good standards in **English**. They write with independence and accuracy across a range of genres, using grammar appropriately. The children make good progress in developing their reading skills. Individual target-setting in writing is, however, not developed sufficiently by the teachers to ensure that all of the children reach their full potential.
- The children attain good standards in **mathematics**. In key stage (KS) 1 and KS2, the children have a good knowledge and understanding of number, measures, shape and space, and handling data. The children use an appropriate range of mental mathematics strategies and, by the end of year 7, they can think flexibly. Across the school, the children do not have enough opportunities to record their own learning and the quality of the presentation of their work is not high enough.
- The children identified with **special educational needs** make good progress in their learning and meet the targets as set out in their individual education plans.

Provision for Learning

The quality of the provision for learning is good.

- The **teachers** prepare well for lessons. They are currently developing the 'world around us' area of learning through thematic planning. The school has identified appropriately the need to improve the long-term planning for numeracy in order to ensure greater continuity and progression in the children's learning. The planning for play-based learning in the foundation stage, and activity-based learning in KS1, is not sufficiently progressive.
- During the inspection, the quality of the **teaching** observed ranged from very good to satisfactory; most was good or better. In the more effective lessons: the learning intentions and success criteria were explicit, understood clearly by the children, and used effectively to frame the learning; the level of challenge was appropriately high; the children's own experiences were built upon effectively; and there were good links with real-life. In the less effective lessons: the pace was too slow; and the learning lacked structure.
- The overall provision for **special educational needs** is good. The children who require additional support with aspects of their learning are identified early. There is effective in-class and withdrawal support, and the work is matched well to the needs and abilities of the children. Currently, the staff do not involve the children enough in setting their personal learning targets.
- The quality of the arrangements for **pastoral care** is very good. This is evident through: the caring, supportive and friendly ethos within the school; the excellent behaviour of the children; and the positive working relationships at all levels throughout the school.
- The school has very good, comprehensive arrangements in place for **safeguarding** children. These arrangements reflect the guidance issued by the Department of Education (DE).

Leadership and Management

The quality of leadership and management is good.

- The **Principal** provides effective **leadership**, is committed to the pastoral welfare of the children, and leads successfully whole-school improvement.
- The **school improvement process** is managed well through the school development plan (SDP). The SDP is based appropriately on consultation with the children, the parents, the teachers and the Board of Governors (governors), and performance data is used effectively to identify priorities for development. There are appropriate action plans to support the SDP; however, the actions and success criteria are not specific enough.
- There is variation in the clarity of the roles and responsibilities of the **co-ordinators**. Currently, the co-ordinators do not monitor and evaluate closely enough the quality of the provision for numeracy and literacy.

CONCLUSION

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. These include the need to:

- clarify the roles and responsibilities of the co-ordinators and, in particular, to develop effective monitoring and evaluation of the provision in numeracy and literacy in order to inform self-evaluation and identify actions to bring about further improvement.

It is important that the employing authority, 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.

The Education and Training Inspectorate will monitor the school's progress on the areas for improvement.

BASIC INFORMATION SHEET (BIS) - PRIMARY SCHOOLS

- A. i. **School: St Mary's Primary Cargan** iii. **Date of Inspection: W/B 07/12/11**
 ii. **School Reference Number: 303-0625** iv. **Nature of Inspection: Short**

B.

School Year	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Year 1 Intake	7	14	9	11	11
Enrolments					
Primary	78	75	74	72	69
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): 96.9% **NI Avg Att: 94.7%**

Average Attendance for those children on the
 Special Educational Needs Register: 96.1%

Primary & Reception Nursery Unit Special Unit Irish Medium Unit

- 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): 17.3 NI PTR: 20.2
- iii. Average Class Size: 9.9
- iv. Class Size (Range): 6 to 14
- v. Ancillary Support:
 Number of Hours **Per Week**:
 i. Clerical support: 25
 ii. Foundation Stage Classroom Assistant Support: 15
 iii. Additional hours of other classroom assistant support: 25
- vi. Percentage of children with statements of special educational needs: 1.5%
- vii. Total percentage of children on the Special Needs Register: 26%
- viii. Number of children who are **not** of statutory school age:
- ix. Percentage of children entitled to free school meals: 23.2%
- 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 83.3% Mathematics 75% Irish N/A**

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.

Forty-nine questionnaires were issued to the parents of the children; 16 (33%) were returned to Inspection Services Branch and nine contained additional written comments. Most of the responses from the questionnaires returned were highly affirmative. The parents commented positively on the overall quality of education provided by the school, and the approachable teaching staff.

An online questionnaire was made available to the teachers and the support staff. These responses were wholly positive, indicating very strong support for the work and life of the school.

The ETI met with the Chair of governors on the first day of the inspection.

The inspectors also met with a group of the year 6 children; they spoke positively about the friendly atmosphere within the school, the positive rewards system and their enjoyment of problem solving in mathematics. The children reported that they feel happy and secure in school, and are aware of what to do if they have concerns about their safety and well-being.

The ETI reported to the Principal and representatives of the governors the views emerging from the questionnaires and the discussions.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

- There is a lack of car parking facilities at the school.
- Some of the roof tiles are loose and are a health and safety hazard.
- Access to the school play-ground needs to be reviewed to ensure the safety of the children at all times.
- There is currently no fire alarm system in the school.

ACCOMMODATION

- There is a lack of indoor facilities for play and physical education.

© CROWN COPYRIGHT 2012

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part, except for commercial purposes or in connection with a prospectus or advertisement, provided that the source and date thereof are stated.

Copies of this report are available on the ETI website: www.etini.gov.uk

