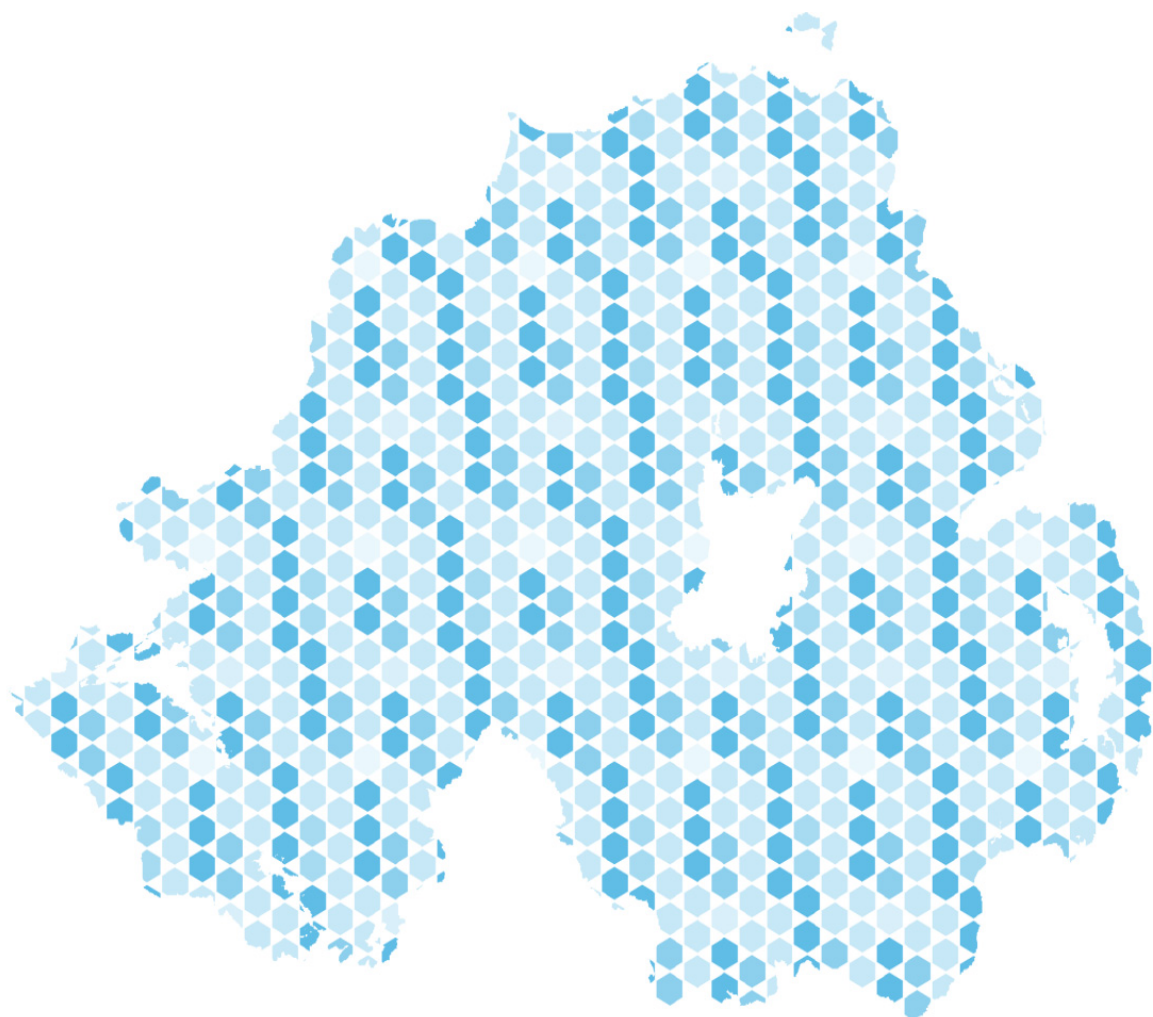


PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

St Mary's Primary School,
Dunsford, Ardglass

Report of an Inspection
in June 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 Mary's Primary School is situated on the Strangford Road, two miles from Ardglass in County Down. Almost all of the children attending the school come from the Parish of Dunsford and Ardglass. In the last four years the enrolment has remained steady and currently stands at 86 children. At the time of the inspection 20% of the children were entitled to free school meals. The school has identified 20% of the children as requiring additional support in 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.

OVERALL FINDING OF THE INSPECTION

In the areas inspected, the quality of the education provided by this school is very good. The school is meeting very effectively the educational and pastoral needs of the learners; 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.

- In English and mathematics, almost all of the children make good progress and attain **standards** in line with their ability. By the end of key stage 2, they read competently and are able to write for a variety of audiences and purposes. They use mental mathematics strategies confidently and show flexibility in their mathematical thinking.
- The children identified as having **special educational needs** make good progress in meeting the short- and medium-term targets identified in their individual education plans (IEPs); almost all attain standards in line with their ability.

Provision for Learning

The provision for learning is very good.

- The **children's** behaviour is exemplary. In all of the classes, they display high levels of motivation; they engage fully in their lessons, demonstrate independence in their learning and, when given the opportunity, work very well in pairs and small groups.

- All of the **teaching** observed was good or very good, in equal proportion. The teachers have high expectations of themselves and of the children. They plan thoroughly for the lessons and provide stimulating activities well matched to the needs and abilities of all of the children.
- The provision for **special educational needs** is very good. The well-focused IEPs are child friendly and are reviewed regularly by the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO), the teachers, the parents and the children. The children benefit from effective in-class support and withdrawal sessions, including booster classes for those who no longer require an IEP.
- The quality of the arrangements for **pastoral care** is outstanding. The ethos of mutual respect is characterised by excellent working relationships at all levels. The school focuses effectively on meeting the needs of all of the children and develops well the children's sense of personal responsibility through the "Buddy" system and the school council.
- On the basis of the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the school has comprehensive arrangements in place for **safeguarding** children. These arrangements reflect the guidance issued by the relevant Department.
- The school gives very good attention to promoting **healthy eating and physical activity** through the effective emphasis placed on healthy breaks and the very good opportunities for physical activity in timetabled classes and after-school sports clubs.

Leadership and Management

The quality of leadership and management is very good.

- The **Principal** leads the school very effectively. He has promoted a team ethos in which all members of the school community are involved in the decision-making process. He enjoys the strong support of all of the teachers, the parents and the governors in managing the school improvement process.
- The whole-school **self-evaluation** and **school development planning** processes are very good. The associated action plans are well informed by the effective analysis and use of the school's performance data. They identify appropriate areas for improvement and the processes to address them.
- The SENCO and the literacy and numeracy **co-ordinators** lead and manage their respective areas of responsibility effectively. They have good processes in place to monitor and evaluate both the quality of the provision and the children's progress.
- It will be important that the employing authority, school governors and the staff plan for, and manage, issues relating to 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 the education provided by this school is very good. The school is meeting very effectively the educational and pastoral needs of the learners; and has demonstrated its capacity for sustained self-improvement.

BASIC INFORMATION SHEET (BIS) - PRIMARY SCHOOLS

- A. i. **School: St Mary's Primary** iii. **Date of Inspection: W/B 04/06/12**
 ii. **School Reference Number: 403-1673** iv. **Nature of Inspection: Short**

B.

School Year	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Year 1 Intake	9	16	13	9	16
Enrolments					
Primary	87	92	92	87	86
Reception	2	0	0	3	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): 94.4% **NI Avg Att: 94.7%**

Average Attendance for those children on the
 Special Educational Needs Register: 92.6%

Primary & Reception Nursery Unit Special Unit Irish Medium Unit

- D. i. Number of Teachers
 (including the principal and part-time teachers): 5 0 0 0
 (Full-time equivalent = 25 teaching hours)
- ii. PTR (Pupil/Teacher Ratio): 17.20 NI PTR: 20.2
- iii. Average Class Size: 21.5
- iv. Class Size (Range): 14 to 28
- v. Ancillary Support:
 Number of Hours **Per Week**:
 i. Clerical support: 15
 ii. Foundation Stage Classroom Assistant Support: 20
 iii. Additional hours of other classroom assistant support: 95
- vi. Percentage of children with statements of special educational needs: 5.8%
- vii. Total percentage of children on the Special Needs Register: 22.1%
- viii. Number of children who are **not** of statutory school age: 0
- ix. Percentage of children entitled to free school meals: 20%
- 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 94.4% Mathematics 94.4% 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 55 questionnaires issued to the parents, 24 (44%) were returned to Inspection Services Branch, including 17 which contained additional written comments. All of the parental questionnaires expressed high levels of satisfaction with the life and work of the school. In the written comments, the parents expressed their appreciation of the welcoming and inclusive ethos; the information and guidance on supporting their children's learning; the dedicated, approachable Principal and teachers; and the support provided for the children who have additional needs in their learning. Thirteen members of staff, including the teachers and the support staff, responded very positively to the staff questionnaires. The key messages from all of the questionnaires have been shared with the Principal and a representative of the Board of Governors (governors).

The inspectors also met with a group of the year 6 and 7 children; they talked positively about the "Buddy" system, the merit system and the range of activities they enjoy both inside and outside the classroom. They reported they felt very secure in school and knew what to do if they had any concerns about their safety and well-being.

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