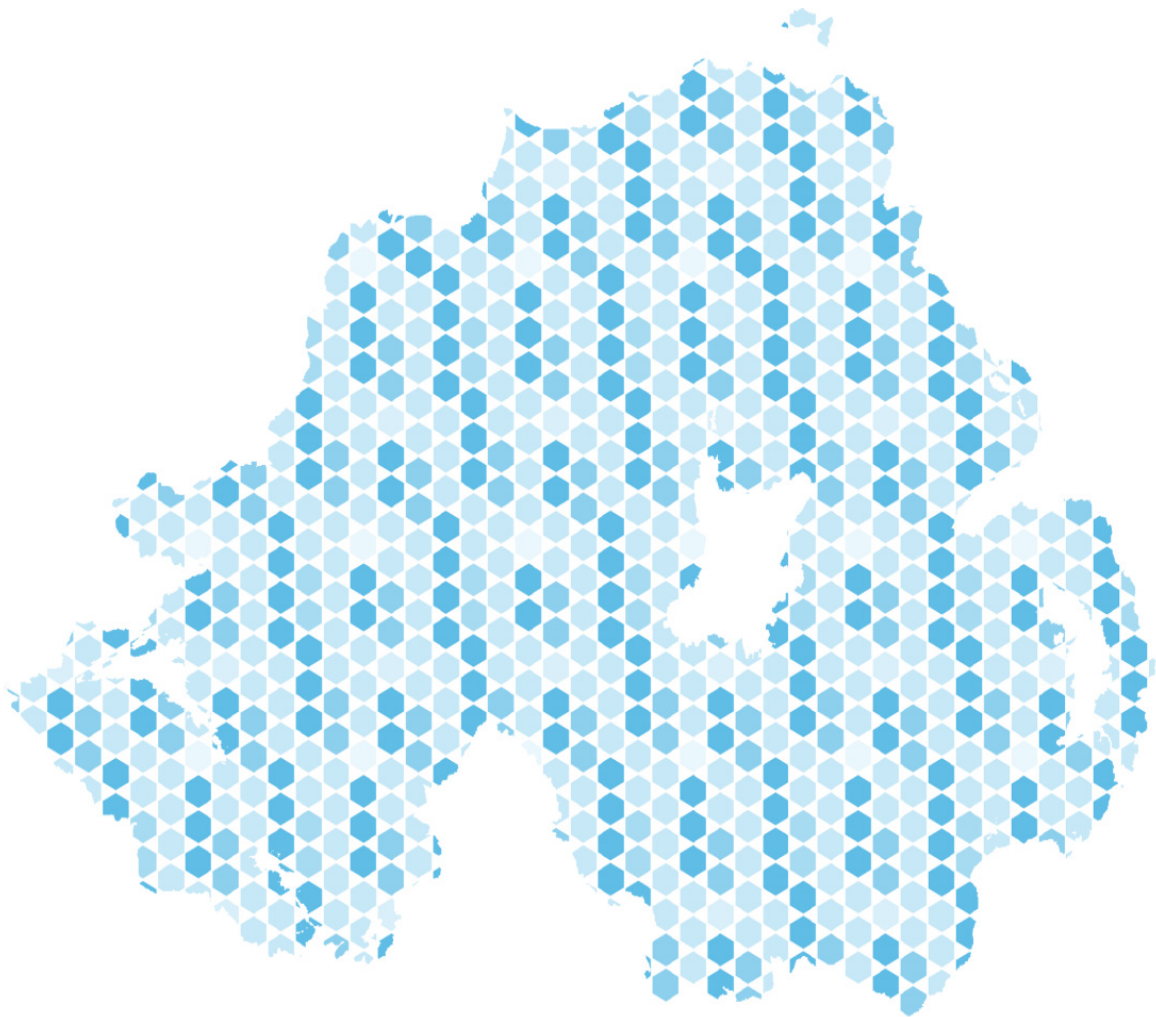


# PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training  
Inspectorate

St Patrick's Primary School,  
Portrush

Report of an Inspection  
in June 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 Patrick's Primary School Portrush is a maintained school located adjacent to the town's East Strand beach. All of the children attending the school come from Portrush and the nearby surrounding areas. The enrolment has fallen slightly in recent years and it currently stands at 94, including five children of reception age. At the time of inspection, approximately 27% of the children in the school were entitled to free school meals. The school has identified approximately 33% of the children as requiring additional support with aspects of their learning and there is a small number of newcomer children.

## 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 education provided by this school is good**. The school has important strengths in most of its educational and pastoral provision. The inspection has identified an area for improvement which the school has demonstrated the capacity to address. The Education and Training Inspectorate will monitor the school's progress on the area for improvement.

## KEY FINDINGS OF THE INSPECTION

### Achievements and Standards

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

The **standards** the children achieve in English and mathematics across the school, including the quality in the children's books and the school's own internal data, range from satisfactory to very good. Over the last three years, the school has gathered and analysed an appropriate range of assessment data and is very focused on identifying appropriate areas where standards can be raised further. The school has rightly identified writing across the curriculum and mathematical investigations as areas to improve.

The children acquire and develop good **inter-personal skills**. By the end of year 7, most of the children are confident and enthusiastic learners who can converse appropriately with their peers, as well as with adults.

The children who require **additional support with aspects of their learning** are making good progress and most of them reach standards which are in line with their abilities by year 7. The school, through its own assessment data, is able to demonstrate clearly the good progress made by the children involved in its reading partnership programme.

## Provision for Learning

**The provision for learning is satisfactory.**

- The **children** in years 1 to 7 are well motivated and are keen to learn. They participate effectively in a good range of individual and collaborative learning activities. The children's behaviour, both in and out of class, is exemplary.
- The provision for the five children in the **reception class** is inadequate. This finding concurs with the school's own decision to cease making reception arrangements available.
- The teachers are caring and committed to the education and welfare of the children and are well supported by the classroom assistants. The **teaching** observed was always satisfactory, and in nearly half of the lessons observed it was good or very good. In the more effective lessons, the learning was set in meaningful contexts for the children and had a brisk pace and good levels of challenge.
- The teachers make satisfactory use of **information and communication technology** (ICT) to support the children in their learning in both literacy and numeracy. During the inspection, opportunities for using ICT to enhance teaching were missed and this is an area that the school has already identified to develop further in the next academic year.
- The provision for **special educational needs** is satisfactory and is provided mostly through in-class support. In the more effective practice, the teachers make good use of their formal observations and on-going assessment records to match subsequent learning and teaching to the children's differing abilities and needs. By contrast, the less effective practice was guided more by the children's chronological age, rather than their ability, with the result that work was not matched tightly enough to their needs.
- The quality of the arrangements for **pastoral care** is outstanding. The school has a very caring, inclusive and welcoming ethos and shows strong commitment to the health and welfare of all the children and the staff. The pastoral care is linked closely to raising the children's academic standards and developing their self-confidence, creativity and social skills. There is strong commitment to allowing the children to have a say in matters that affect them. There are effective parental, parish and community links to support the children's health, well being, spiritual development and learning.
- The school has very good and comprehensive arrangements in place for safeguarding children. These arrangements reflect the **child protection** guidance issued by the Department of Education (DE).

## Leadership and Management

**The quality of leadership and management is very good.**

- The **Principal** provides outstanding leadership and management and she sets high standards and expectations for all. Her leadership is child-focused. Since her appointment in 2007, she has put appropriate processes and practices in place to ensure there is effective management, governance and accountability.

She has played a significant role in developing the capacity of the staff in becoming more reflective practitioners. She is committed fully to enhancing further the school's reputation in the community through a whole-school improvement agenda.

- The whole-school **self evaluation** and **school development planning (SDP)** processes are very good. The SDP makes effective use of a wide range of performance data and qualitative information to prioritise appropriate areas for improvement. The SDP has been contributed to at all levels and is supported by effective action planning processes.
- The **co-ordinators**, over the last four years, have collated a wide range of data relating to the children's performance; this is understood and used to variable effect. The monitoring and evaluation roles of the co-ordinators now need to be developed further so that they can assess the quality of the provision more closely in order to bring about further improvement.

## 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 and pastoral provision. The inspection has identified an area for improvement which the school has demonstrated the capacity to address. This is the need to:

- develop further the roles and responsibilities of the co-ordinators, in order to improve the consistency in the quality of the provision for learning and improve the standards the children attain.

The Education and Training Inspectorate will monitor the school's progress on the area for 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, in order to address the current and future needs of the children and the staff.

## BASIC INFORMATION SHEET (BIS) - PRIMARY SCHOOLS

- A. i. **School: St Patrick's Primary Portrush** iii. **Date of Inspection: W/B 06/06/2011**  
 ii. **School Reference Number: 303-0547** iv. **Nature of Inspection: Short**

B.

School Year	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
Year 1 Intake	10	11	12	9	9
<b>Enrolments</b>					
Primary	104	92	93	90	86
Reception	3	2	2	2	5
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): 96.4%

**NI Avg Att: 94.9%**

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): 7 0 0 0  
 (Full-time equivalent = 25 teaching hours)
- ii. PTR (Pupil/Teacher Ratio): 13 NI PTR: 20.7
- iii. Average Class Size: 18.2
- iv. Class Size (Range): 11 to 23
- v. Ancillary Support:  
 Number of Hours **Per Week**:
- |   |    |
|---|----|
| i. Clerical support:  | 30 |
| ii. Foundation Stage Classroom Assistant Support:           | 25 |
| iii. Additional hours of other classroom assistant support: | 15 |
- vi. Percentage of children with statements of special educational needs: 1.09%
- vii. Total percentage of children on the Special Needs Register: 32.97%
- viii. Number of children who are **not** of statutory school age: 5
- ix. Percentage of children entitled to free school meals: 27%
- x. Percentage of children at the end of Key Stage 2 for 2009/10 who attained level 4 and above in English and mathematics:
- | English | Mathematics |
|---------|-------------|
| 76%     | 81%         |
- 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 | Year 2 | Year 3 |
|--------|--------|--------|
| 9      | 0      | 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 staff and support staff to complete a confidential questionnaire prior to the inspection. Of the 67 questionnaires issued to the **parents**, 26 (39%) were returned to the Department of Education (DE), including eight which contained additional written comments. The parents expressed good levels of satisfaction with the educational and pastoral provision provided by the school. In particular, they acknowledged the leadership of the Principal, the high quality of care provided by all of the staff and the school's welcoming ethos.

Seven **teachers** responded to the online questionnaires and there were five additional written comments. Almost all of the questionnaire responses were very positive and the written comments acknowledged the very good working relationships at all levels in the school and the teachers' commitment to raise standards further.

Eight members of the **support staff** responded to the online questionnaires and there were four additional written comments. Almost all of the responses were wholly affirmative of the work of the school and the written comments talked about a sense of team work, where the support staff felt valued, included and happy. There was praise for the pastoral care of the children.

A small representative group of the **governors** met with the inspection team. The governors take pride in their school's inclusive and welcoming ethos. They commended the dedication of the staff team who focus on the holistic development of all the children. A few issues raised through the questionnaires were shared with the Principal and the governors.

In discussions, the **children in year 6** reported that they feel very safe and secure and are aware of what to do if they have concerns about their safety or well-being. They talked enthusiastically about many aspects of school life and about the support and care provided by the teachers and the support staff.

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