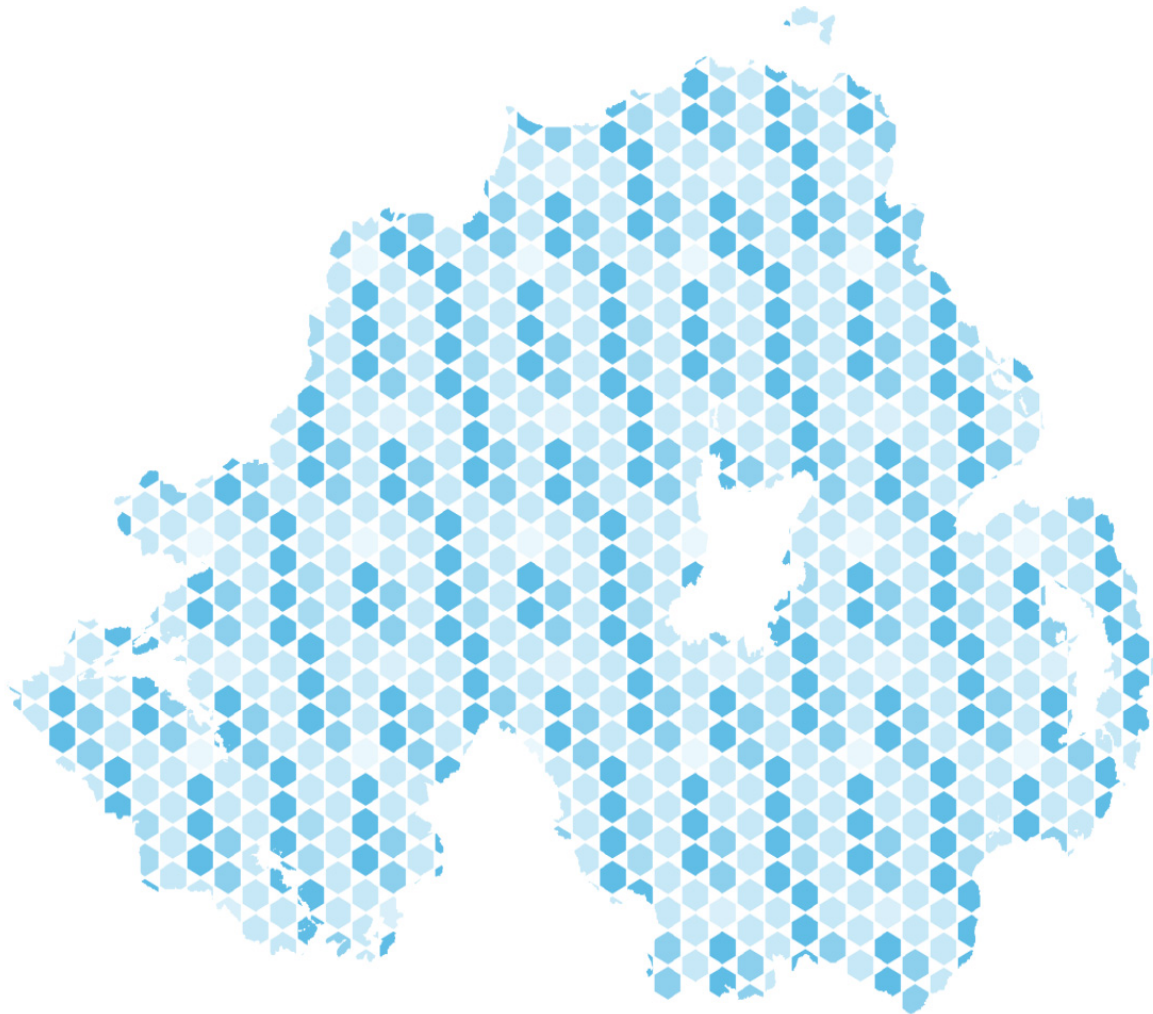


PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Kesh Primary School and
Nursery Unit, Co Fermanagh

Report of an Inspection
in February 2011

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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

BASIC INFORMATION SHEET (BIS) - PRIMARY SCHOOLS

- A. i. **School: Kesh Primary** iii. **Date of Inspection: W/B 21/02/11**
 ii. **School Reference Number: 201-1787** iv. **Nature of Inspection: Focused**

B.

School Year	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
Year 1 Intake	26	15	19	31	24
Enrolments					
Primary	195	178	172	177	176
Reception	0	0	0	0	0
Nursery Unit	26	26	26	26	26
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): 95.9% **NI Avg Att: 94.9%**
- | | 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) | 8.6 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| ii. PTR (Pupil/Teacher Ratio): | 20.46 | NI PTR: 20.7 | | |
| iii. Average Class Size: | 23.15 | | | |
| iv. Class Size (Range): | 18 to 36 | | | |
| v. Ancillary Support: | | | | |
| Number of Hours Per Week : | | | | |
| i. Clerical support: | | | | 30 |
| ii. Foundation Stage Classroom Assistant Support: | | | | 15 |
| iii. Additional hours of other classroom assistant support: | | | | 10 |
| vi. Percentage of children with statements of special educational needs: | | | | 2.84% |
| vii. Total percentage of children on the Special Needs Register: | | | | 22% |
| viii. Number of children who are not of statutory school age: | | | | 0 |
| ix. Percentage of children entitled to free school meals: | | | | 10.8% |
| 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 | | |
| | 91.67% | 91.67% | | |

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 CONTEXT

Kesh Primary School is situated in the village of Kesh, County Fermanagh. The replacement school, opened in 2006 and adjacent self-contained nursery unit, provide bright and spacious indoor and outdoor learning spaces and facilities for both the primary and nursery age children. The majority of the children come from the local and surrounding rural area. The current enrolment of the school is 202; this includes 26 children in the nursery unit. The school has identified approximately 22% of the children as requiring additional support with their learning. Approximately 11% of the children are entitled to free school meals.

1.2 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.

In addition, the use of information and communication technology (ICT) to support teaching and learning, and the school's arrangements for pastoral care, including child protection, were evaluated.

1.3 THE VIEWS OF THE PARENTS, TEACHERS, GOVERNORS, SUPPORT STAFF AND CHILDREN

The arrangements for the inspection included the opportunity for the parents, and the teaching and support staff to complete a confidential questionnaire prior to the inspection, as well as meetings with representatives from the Board of Governors (governors), and a group of the children from year 6.

Of the 114 questionnaires issued to the parents of the primary school, 39% were returned to Inspection Services Branch. Eighteen contained additional written comments. Nearly all of the responses indicated a high level of satisfaction with the educational and pastoral provision in the school. In particular, the parents emphasised the school's approach to developing the children's self-esteem, the hard-working staff, and the range of extra-curricular activities provided. Of the 26 questionnaires issued to the parents of the nursery unit children, 38% were returned, three of which contained additional comments. The comments were mostly affirmative. Nine teachers and ten members of the support staff completed the online questionnaire, and five contained additional written comments. The responses were wholly positive. In particular, the staff commended the school's welcoming environment and its close links with the community.

The governors praised the hardworking staff, the dedicated leadership of the Principal, the very good working relationships at all levels and the school's good reputation in the community.

The children in year 6 spoke highly of the support provided by their teachers, the wide range of extra-curricular activities provided for them and the friendly atmosphere in the school. In discussions, they reported that they feel very safe and are aware of what to do if they have any worries or concerns about their safety or well-being.

An analysis of the questionnaires and the written comments made by the parents and the staff were shared with the Principal and the governors.

1.4 PASTORAL CARE

The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care both in the school and the nursery unit is very good. Among the school's strengths are: the caring and supportive ethos; the very good behaviour of the children, the positive way in which they engage with their learning and the emphasis the school places on enhancing the children's experiences through their involvement in extra-curricular activities.

1.5 CHILD PROTECTION

The school and the nursery unit have very good comprehensive arrangements in place for safeguarding the children. These arrangements reflect the guidance issued by the Department of Education and other relevant Departments.

1.6 HEALTHY EATING AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

The school and the nursery unit give very good attention to promoting healthy eating and physical activity, through, for example, the annual Healthy Focus Event and healthy school meals and snacks in the nursery unit, which encourage the children to adopt healthy lifestyles.

1.7 LINKS WITH PARENTS AND THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

The school and nursery unit have established excellent links with the parents and local community. The children enjoy success in a wide range of learning, cultural and sporting events both within and beyond the local area. There is a very active parent support group which provides additional resources which have extended significantly the learning opportunities and resources for the children. The school supports regularly various charities, and promotes the community use of the school for a range of activities.

The parents receive clear and regular information about school policies and activities through letters, newsletters and the school website, and their views are valued and acted upon. They are encouraged to become actively involved in promoting their child's learning and the school provides information sessions to support this. There are planned opportunities for the parents to consult with the teachers both formally and informally about their child's progress.

The staff in the nursery unit communicates well with the parents about the life and work of the unit through newsletters and the parents' notice board. In addition to the informal meetings which occur at the beginning and end of each session, progress meetings are held with parents throughout the year.

2. ACHIEVEMENTS AND STANDARDS

2.1 LEARNING

An analysis of the key stage (KS) 2 assessment data over the past four years shows that in English and mathematics the school's performance is consistently above the Northern Ireland (NI) average. Compared with schools in the same free school meals category, the levels of attainment in English and mathematics are also above the average.

The children's behaviour in the primary school and nursery unit is very good. When given the opportunity, the children work well collaboratively and communicate effectively with their peers and adults. As the children progress through the school, they engage actively in a broad range of learning experiences. In all key stages, the presentation of their work is good. By the end of KS2, the children demonstrate a variety of skills across all aspects of their learning. At the foundation stage (FS), the children learn through a range of play-based and more formal activities. On a few occasions, in the FS and KS1, a minority of the children were less well engaged in some of their learning tasks and classroom routines because the nature of some of the planned activities did not fully sustain their attention.

Throughout the school, the children use ICT well to extend their learning and to communicate their ideas. All classrooms are equipped with interactive whiteboards and the teachers are skilled in using them. The children also make very good use of the computer clusters in the shared areas. The school participates in the Council for Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA) Accreditation scheme and achieves standards in ICT that are well above the NI average.

2.2 ENGLISH AND LITERACY

The quality of provision for English and literacy is good.

The children are able to develop and use their literacy skills in a range of meaningful contexts.

The school's literacy co-ordinators promote literacy well across the curriculum and have included appropriate literacy priorities in the current school development plan. They have led the staff in developing a revised reading programme and are currently guiding the teachers in producing a structured progression of skills and learning activities to support the teaching of writing. The inspection endorses both of these important improvement actions.

Across the key stages the children demonstrate good oral communication skills. In the best practice, the teachers extend the children's ability to share ideas through effective questioning and discussions, group tasks and plenary sessions. In the FS and KS1, play-based learning areas and activities are used regularly to encourage the children to extend their vocabulary and communicate with their peers. However, there is a lack of consistency sometimes in the quality of adult interaction, expectations and teaching strategies. The children in all key stages communicate with a larger audience through participation in themed assemblies and lively drama presentations.

By the end of KS2, the children achieve very good standards in reading. Good phonological awareness is developed through a structured phonics programme. The school is currently embedding its revised reading programme and associated resources. Within the FS and KS1 the children complete a broad range of literacy activities. Good use is made of topics

which develop reading and writing in real-life contexts. An effective 'Paired Reading' scheme, involving the parents of year 4 children, is used well to support the children's reading. By year 7 most of the children read with fluency, enjoyment and understanding. They are able to discuss their text preferences and favourite genres. The children's reading experiences are enhanced further by access to a wide range of stimulating texts.

The standard of the children's written work is good and at times very good. This is celebrated in attractive class anthologies and displays. In the FS, the children develop as early writers through sentence and sequencing activities, role-play writing and shared writing sessions. As the children progress through KS1 and KS2, they write in different forms and for various purposes and audiences. During the inspection, children in KS2 interviewed a visitor to inform a piece of recount writing. In upper KS2, very good strategies such as appraising real texts to investigate persuasive language and creating mind maps to organise ideas were used to stimulate the children's understanding and motivation. This good practice needs to be disseminated and the staff need to agree and implement a consistent method of responding critically to the children's writing to help the children make further improvements in the quality and range of their writing. By the end of year seven, most children have developed an attractive linked handwriting style.

Information and communication technology is integrated well into literacy activities; the children make very good use of ICT to research, draft and present their work to a high standard.

2.3 MATHEMATICS AND NUMERACY

The quality of provision in mathematics and numeracy is very good.

The KS1 and KS2 numeracy co-ordinators provide effective leadership and are committed to the ongoing development of the school's provision, as prioritised within the school development plan (SDP). The associated action plan is focused appropriately on improving further the children's standards and achievements and the more effective use of performance data to aid this development.

In all classes, the mathematics lessons incorporate a range of teaching approaches and practical activities; a very good range of resources is used well to support the learning and teaching. All of the mathematics lessons include mental mathematics sessions in which the children respond well. In the best practice, the children are able to apply their mathematical thinking in other areas of the curriculum. During the inspection, the children worked well in groups, sharing their ideas and reasoning to develop further their mathematical thinking.

In FS and KS1, the children gain a good level of understanding of number, shape and space and they present their work in an appropriate form. Much of this work is linked well to the children's everyday experiences. As they progress through KS2, the children's learning is developed further, and by year 7 they have gained a broad range of mathematical knowledge and skills; most have an understanding of number, fractions and place value, are able to calculate accurately, recognise and know the properties of two-dimensional (2D) and 3D shapes, estimate and measure in different units, and interpret and present data in a variety of forms. The teachers use skilful questioning techniques that allow the children to think and talk critically and confidently about their mathematical learning.

During the inspection, the children demonstrated their knowledge of important mathematical ideas and concepts. By the end of KS2, the children are able to work flexibly with numbers, have a good understanding of data-handling, can solve problems and carry out investigative activities competently. The children achieve very good standards in mathematics.

The teachers make effective use of ICT to support numeracy. Data-handling packages are used well to assist the children to collect, analyse and present data in a variety of forms; appropriately, the data used is related to the children's experiences and interests.

3. THE QUALITY OF PROVISION FOR LEARNING

3.1 PLANNING

The teachers have developed engaging topics which support connected learning across the curriculum. The school has implemented a revised planning format which identifies intended learning outcomes, activities, resources and assessment strategies to be used; however this needs to be improved further by focusing more clearly on how to meet more precisely the needs of all the children. While many of the teachers evaluate their planning and its outcomes regularly, the implementation of a more systematic whole school approach to evaluating the quality and extent of the children's learning is needed to help inform future planning and secure improved outcomes for all of the children.

In the FS, the length of the school day for the children in year two needs to be reviewed. Within the FS and KS1, there is a need to develop further the planning for activity-based learning; the teachers need to focus planning more specifically on promoting the development of key learning strategies and on providing appropriate challenge for all children.

3.2 TEACHING

The quality of the teaching observed was always satisfactory or better with the majority being very good or outstanding. In the best practice observed during the inspection, the staff engaged very effectively with the children, generating their interest and using well the children's contributions and all of the available time for learning. In these lessons, very good use was made of incidental learning opportunities; the teaching was well-paced and provided all the children with appropriate levels of challenge and opportunities to develop their thinking skills through investigative and collaborative activities. Where the practice was less effective, the pace of the lessons was slower and less focused, there was sometimes prolonged whole class interaction and some of the group work activities were not sufficiently challenging; on these occasions, the children became unsettled or disengaged from the activities provided.

3.3 ASSESSMENT

The school has appropriate arrangements in place for monitoring and recording the progress of each child which includes, written progress reports, samples of work, analysis of standardised test scores, and teacher observations.

The teachers mark the children's written work regularly, often with supportive comments. In the best practice the quality of marking is very good; the teachers' written comments commend effort and provide helpful suggestions on how the work might be improved. In the context of assessment for learning, this effective practice needs to be undertaken more consistently across the school.

The school uses a range of quantitative and qualitative performance data to track the progress of the children and has identified further development of its use of data as a priority in the school development plan (SDP). This is an appropriate development which is facilitating the school to evaluate more fully the effectiveness of learning and teaching.

The parents are provided with very good opportunities to discuss their child's progress. In addition to formal and informal parent/teacher meetings, the parents receive comprehensive written termly progress reports and a detailed annual pupil profile report.

3.4 SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

The quality of the provision for children with special educational needs (SEN) is good.

The school has identified approximately one-fifth of the children as needing support with aspects of their learning. By the end of year 7, most of the children with special educational needs make progress in line with their abilities.

In the main, effective support is provided within class through the class teacher and classroom assistants, and to facilitate this, class sizes are kept small and as single year groups. The class teachers liaise well with the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) to develop education plans which set out appropriate targets and strategies to address each child's needs. These targets are reviewed regularly and shared with parents and, where appropriate, with the individual child. A few children also benefit from additional support provided through outreach services.

The SENCO maintains an overview of the school's policy and provision for SEN. She has identified, and implemented over recent years, specific and appropriate actions to promote improvement. The school needs to consider alternative ways of deploying the staff within its budget to facilitate the role of the SENCO in monitoring and evaluating the quality of the SEN support provided and in supporting all the teachers to develop a wider range of strategies to ensure that the needs of all children can be met more effectively.

4. LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

4.1 LEADERSHIP

The overall quality of leadership and management is good.

The Principal has been in post for eight years. She provides effective leadership of the school's provision and contribution within the wider community. Together with the Vice-principal and co-ordinators, she is committed to meeting the needs of all the children in the school and to raising their overall levels of attainment. She has developed a good team spirit amongst all of the staff, and is building leadership capacity by co-opting all teachers into the School Management Team in rotation and operating collaborative decision-making approaches to promote further improvement.

4.2 PLANNING FOR IMPROVEMENT

The Principal, Senior Management Team and co-ordinators are continuing to develop further a culture of self-evaluation, with an appropriate range of policies and action plans, including literacy and numeracy, to support the process of school improvement. The staff demonstrates good commitment to ongoing improvement; this is evidenced through the range of in-service training opportunities and school-based training which they have undertaken. The school gives good attention to, and meets fully, the requirements of the School Development Plans Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2005.

4.3 RESOURCES, FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE

There is very good communication between the Principal and the governors about all matters in relation to the school and meeting the needs of the children; the governors are hard-working and highly committed to the whole school community. They are well informed about school developments, and are involved appropriately in decisions regarding the strategic direction and development of the school.

4.4 ACCOMMODATION

The school's new accommodation is excellent and very good use is made of all the available space. The staff creates bright displays in the classrooms and corridors to support and inform learning. The standard of caretaking is excellent.

5. CONCLUSION

5.1 The strengths of the school include:

- the positive behaviour of the children and their disposition to their learning;
- the very good standards achieved by the children in literacy and numeracy by the end of year 7;
- the dedicated and hardworking staff and the quality of the teaching which was very good or outstanding in the majority of lessons observed;
- the caring ethos and very good quality of the pastoral care which has been developed by all staff under the leadership of the Principal;
- the school's excellent links with the parents and the local and wider community; and
- the developing culture of self-evaluation leading to improvement within the school and the willingness of the staff to improve further the quality of the learning and teaching.

5.2 The area for improvement is the need to:

- deploy the staff and disseminate the good practice more effectively in order to secure the best possible outcomes for all the children.

5.3 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 (Inspectorate) will monitor the school's progress on the area for improvement.

6. THE NURSERY UNIT

6.1 The main strengths within the nursery unit are as follows:-

- the children's good levels of confidence and independence and their ability to play co-operatively;
- the range of activities on offer during the inspection;
- the good use made of visitors to the nursery to enhance the children's learning experiences; and
- the well-designed, spacious indoor and outdoor accommodation.

6.2 The inspection identified areas for improvement. The priorities for further development include the need to:

- ensure all staff working in the nursery unit avail of appropriate training in relation to the provision of the pre-school curriculum; and
- review and improve the organisation of each session to ensure that all time is used effectively to promote learning and concentrated play.

6.3 In most of the areas inspected the quality of education provided in this nursery unit is satisfactory; the strengths outweigh areas for improvement in the provision. The inspection has identified areas for improvement in learning and teaching and leadership and management which need to be addressed if the needs of all the learners are to be met more effectively. The Inspectorate will monitor and report on the nursery unit's progress in addressing the areas for improvement.

STATISTICAL INFORMATION ON KESH PRIMARY SCHOOL NURSERY UNIT

1. Details of Children

Number of children:	Class 1	Class 2
Attending full-time	0	0
Attending part-time	26	0
Under 3 years of age*	0	0
With statement of SEN**	0	0
At CoP stages 3 or 4***	1	0
At CoP stages 1 or 2***	0	0
With English as an additional language	0	0

* On 1 July.

** Special Educational Needs.

*** The stages refer to those set out in the Code of Practice for the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs.

Percentage qualifying under DE admission criteria 1 or 2.	2%
Average attendance for the previous year.	92.8%

2. Duration of Sessions

Full-time	Part-time: am	Part-time: pm
-	2¾ hours	-

3. Details of Staff

Number of:	Full-Time	Part-Time
Teachers	1	1
Nursery Assistants	0	0
Qualified Nursery Assistants	0	1

Number of: ****	
Students	3
Trainees	0

**** Total placements since September of current year

4. Parental Questionnaires (to be completed by Inspection Services Branch)

Number issued	26
Percentage returned	38%
Number of written comments	3

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