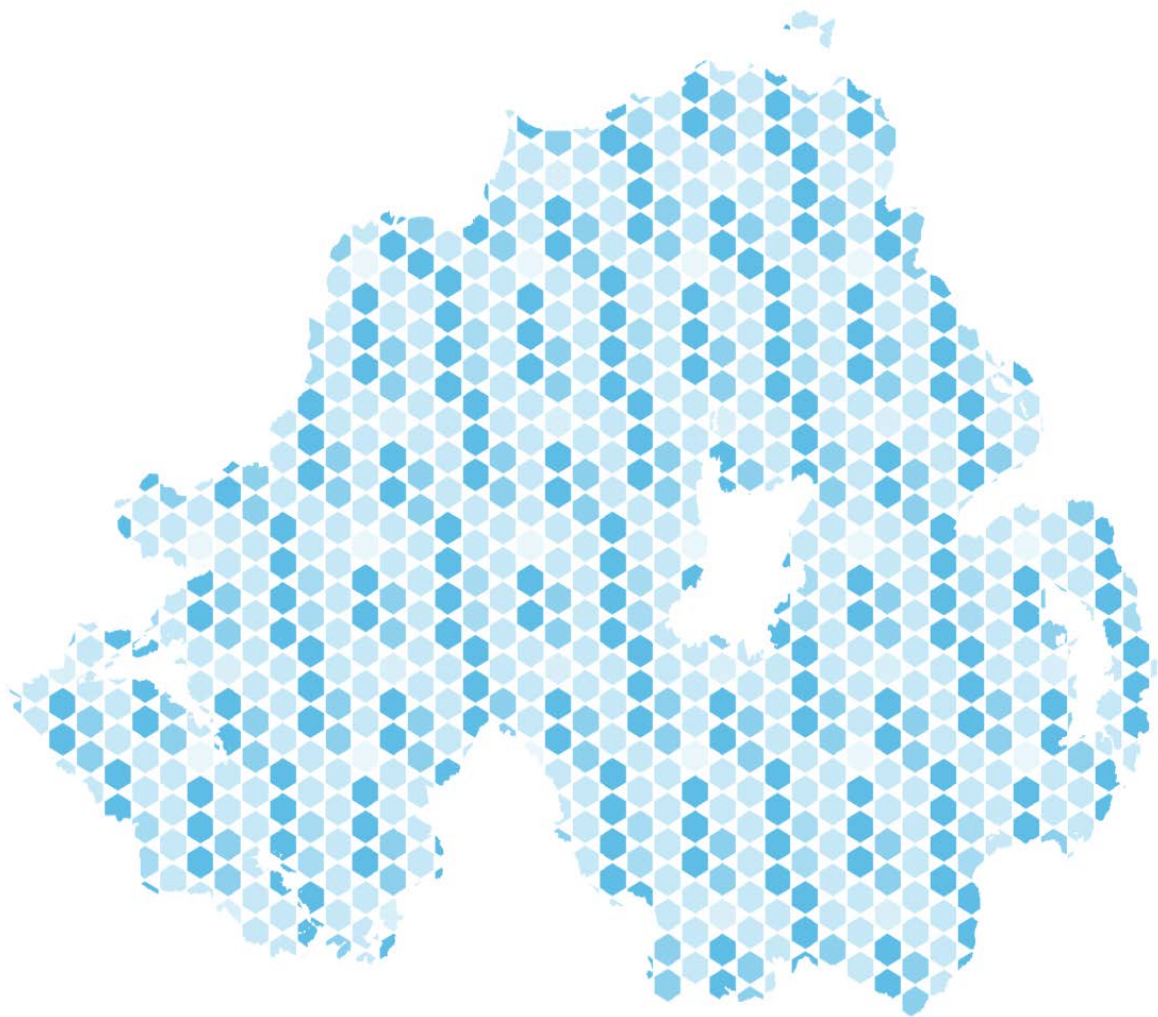


PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Moira Primary School and
Nursery Unit, Co Down

Report of an Inspection
in April 2013



Providing Inspection Services for
Department of Education
Department for Employment and Learning
Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure



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Inspection methods and evidence base

The inspection evaluations are based on evidence gained from lesson observations, from scrutiny of the children's completed written work and from a range of documentation including the school's internal performance data. In addition, the inspection team held discussions with groups of the children, with teaching and non-teaching staff and with representatives from the Board of Governors.

The views of the parents, teaching and non-teaching staff were sought through a confidential questionnaire prior to the inspection. The reporting inspector discussed any issues raised through the questionnaires with the principal and the governors. A summary of the outcomes from the questionnaires is included in section 6 of the report.

Quantitative terms

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

1. School context

Moira Primary School is situated on Backwood Road, Moira, County Down. The enrolment has remained relatively stable over the past five years, being 365 in 2008 and currently 372 children. In addition, the nursery unit provides a full-time session for 26 children. At the time of the inspection, approximately 9 % of the children were entitled to free school meals (FSM) and 11% were identified as requiring help with aspects of their learning.

2. Focus of the inspection

The inspection focused on:

- the children's achievements and standards in literacy and numeracy, in particular, how the school is addressing low attainment and under-achievement, where applicable;
- 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 learning, and the school's arrangements for pastoral care, including child protection, were evaluated.

OVERALL FINDINGS OF THE INSPECTION

In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by this school is very good. The school is meeting very effectively the educational and pastoral needs of the children; and has demonstrated its capacity for sustained self-improvement.

Summary of key findings

Achievements and standards	Very Good
Quality of provision	Very Good
Leadership and management	Very Good
Nursery Unit	Satisfactory

KEY FINDINGS OF THE INSPECTION

3. Achievements and standards

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

- The children are highly motivated and enjoy their learning. In the best practice, they transfer their knowledge, skills and capabilities to other meaningful learning activities and make independent, informed choices regarding how to develop their learning or record their findings. In the effective paired and group work, the children make sustained responses, handle different opinions and extend their thinking skills. They have a wide range of opportunities to reflect on their learning through, for example, plenary sessions and peer or self-assessment.

- An analysis of the key stage (KS) 2 assessment data, over the past four years, shows that in both English and mathematics, the school's performance is above both the Northern Ireland average and the average of schools in the same free school meals (FSM) category.
- The school's internal performance data shows that most of the children make very good progress in English and mathematics in line with their ability or above expectation. Most of the children are highly articulate and confident in their talking and listening skills. The most able children read with fluency, accuracy and expression; they have an excellent understanding of the text through asking and answering high quality questions. The quality of writing, including presentation, is a particular strength throughout the school. By the end of key stage (KS) 2, almost all of the children achieve outstanding standards in writing.
- The children apply and explain their mental mathematics strategies and use appropriate mathematical language with increasing accuracy. By the end of key stage (KS) 2, the most able children have a very good understanding of a wide range of mathematical concepts and demonstrate very good levels of flexibility in their mathematical thinking and computation.
- The internal performance data shows that by year 7, the level of teacher concern has reduced for the majority of the children identified as having special educational needs (SEN). They are well supported in literacy and numeracy.
- The children use a wide range of information and communication technology (ICT) applications with confidence and make informed decisions about its effective use in literacy and numeracy. The school's internal data indicates that by the end KS2, the children achieve good standards in information and communication technology (ICT).
- In the nursery unit, the quality of the children's achievements and standards is satisfactory. Many of the children are developing early mark making skills and a few are able to write their own names. The children develop satisfactorily their numeracy skills; many of the children can count, sort and match materials. A significant number of the children create detailed representational drawings and paintings.

4. Provision for learning

The quality of the provision for learning is very good.

- The teachers' medium-term planning for literacy and numeracy indicates clearly the progression in the curricular skills and knowledge. The most effective planning includes the evaluations of the children's responses to the learning and these are used well to inform future learning and teaching.
- Most of the teaching in the lessons observed was good or better; in almost half, it was very good and outstanding. In the most effective teaching, the practical and well-planned follow-on activities cater well for the wide range of the children's abilities and develop very well their thinking skills and personal capabilities. In a minority of the teaching, the pace and challenge of the lessons was at too low a level and this led to the children becoming less engaged in the learning process.

- A key strength of literacy and numeracy provision is the well-connected learning contexts, including educational trips, which make the curriculum relevant to the children's interests and enables them to apply their literacy and numeracy skills across all areas of learning. The children use the creative displays, in the shared areas and classrooms, to consolidate and extend their learning. The outstanding quality of the literacy provision includes opportunities for the children to learn the key language skills in meaningful contexts. The children learn through interactive approaches including drama and role-play strategies that stimulate the children's interest and contribute to broadening their thinking and vocabulary. A recent school production has been used to provide the children, throughout the school, with a range of excellent literacy opportunities. The whole-school programme for writing extends further the children's ability to write confidently across the areas of the curriculum.
- The staff develops successfully the children's interest and enjoyment in numeracy by entering them for external numeracy competitions and through the school's numeracy theme days, such as, the Olympics and the 'World Mathematics Day' challenges, and the use of the school environment to create numeracy trail activities. The children use and apply their numeracy strategies through purposeful mental mathematics activities. There is a very good emphasis on children explaining their thinking and developing their mathematical language, in particular, through practical problem-solving and investigative activities set in real life contexts. In the most effective practice within the foundation stage (FS), well-planned play-based learning provides valuable opportunities to develop the children's early literacy and numeracy skills. This good practice needs to be disseminated across the foundation stage (FS) and KS1.
- In the nursery unit, the quality of the provision for learning is satisfactory. The nursery unit's educational programme provides opportunities for learning in all areas of the pre-school curriculum. The development of the children's language and early mark making skills are particular strengths of the programme. The staff develops the children's understanding of number, shape and colour through a variety of play activities. It will be important for the staff to develop further the children's learning experiences through the more effective organisation of the day and the use of available space and resources. Furthermore, the staff needs to review and develop further the methods of planning, assessment and evaluation to meet more effectively the differing needs of all the children.
- In the school and the nursery unit, the quality of the arrangements for pastoral care is very good. The children are confident, courteous, and interact politely with their peers and adults. They have very good opportunities to become involved in decisions affecting the life of the school through the School Council. The nursery unit has a positive ethos based on good working relationships at all levels. The staff creates a calm, caring and supportive atmosphere and the children's work is valued and presented around the playroom.

- The quality of the provision for special educational needs (SEN) is very good. The children benefit from a well-planned programme of support which is provided mostly through in-class sessions and additional withdrawal classes for literacy and numeracy. The school maintains very good links with a suitable range of external support agencies. Within the Reading Partnership sessions, the children make very good progress with their reading. It is appropriate that the school is redesigning the individual education plans to include more concise short-term targets and the children's personal learning objectives.
- The school and the nursery unit give very good attention to promoting healthy eating and physical activity.

5. Leadership and management

The quality of leadership and management is very good.

- The Principal, senior leadership team and co-ordinators provide very effective leadership and management of curricular and organisational change in the school. They have worked with the staff, in a collaborative manner, to implement change using a systematic and well-paced approach. The co-ordinators are excellent role models for the development of literacy and numeracy by leading a programme of continuing professional development that focuses on improving the quality of learning and teaching and by raising further the standards attained by the children. Alongside the assessment co-ordinator, they make good use of the analysis of performance data to monitor the children's learning and to set priorities for future development.
- In the current School Development Plan (SDP), the focus on literacy and the development of writing and comprehension skills throughout the school has improved significantly the standards achieved in these areas. The school is currently updating the whole school literacy programme to reflect recent curriculum developments and is developing appropriately the numeracy scheme and the ICT programme. There is a need to develop the self-evaluation processes in the nursery unit.
- The school and the nursery unit have well established links with the parents who receive information about policies and events in school life through newsletters, curriculum meetings and the school website. The school maintains very good links with the local community. In preparation for a new cycle of school development planning, the parents completed and received feedback from a parental questionnaire as part of the consultative process required by the School Development Plans (SDP) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2010.
- Based on the evidence presented at the time of inspection, the inspection team's evaluation is that the parents, staff and school community can have a high degree of confidence in the aspects of governance evaluated. In meeting the governors, it was evident they are well informed about the school and contribute to the overall strategic planning and policy development.
- On the basis of the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the school and nursery unit have comprehensive arrangements in place for safeguarding children. These arrangements reflect the guidance issued by the Department of Education.

CONCLUSION

In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by this school is very good. The school is meeting very effectively the educational and pastoral needs of the children; and has demonstrated its capacity for sustained self-improvement.

NURSERY UNIT

In most of the areas inspected, the quality of education provided in the nursery unit is satisfactory; the strengths outweigh areas for improvement in the provision. The inspection has identified areas for improvement in leadership and management, learning and teaching and standards which need to be addressed if the needs of all the children are to be met more effectively.

The areas for improvement include the need to:

- improve the organisation of the day to use more effectively the daily routines, resources, space and time available to bring about further learning; and
- review and develop the methods of planning, assessment and evaluation to meet more effectively the differing needs of all the children.

The Education and Training Inspectorate will monitor and report on the nursery unit's progress in addressing the areas for improvement over a 12-24 month period.

6. Summary of questionnaire responses

PARENTAL QUESTIONNAIRES	
PRIMARY SCHOOL	
Number of Questionnaires Issued to the Primary school	114
Number of Questionnaires Returned	59
Percentage of Returns	51.75%
Number of Comments	36
NURSERY UNIT	
Number of Questionnaires Issued to the Nursery Unit	26
Number of Questionnaires Returned	11
Percentage of Returns	42.3%
Number of Comments	7

In both the school and the nursery unit, almost all of the responses from the parental questionnaires indicated a high level of satisfaction with the school. In particular, the parents reported their high regard for the staff and the leadership of the school, the care and support provided by all of the staff for the children and the inclusive ethos of the school. The small number of concerns raised in the written comments has been discussed with the governors and the Principal.

In discussions with the governors, they praised the dedication of the staff, the quality of the pastoral care, the excellent standards achieved by the children, the high quality of the Principal's leadership and the importance of the school within the community.

The inspectors also met with a group of the year 6 children and representatives of the School Council. The children reported that they feel happy and safe in school and that they are aware of what to do if they have any concerns. The year 6 children spoke confidently and positively about their enjoyment of the learning experiences at school and their access to a wide range of extra curricular activities.

TEACHERS' QUESTIONNAIRES	
Number of Questionnaires Returned	15
Number of Comments	10

SUPPORT STAFF QUESTIONNAIRES	
Number of Questionnaires Returned	9
Number of Comments	0

The teaching and non-teaching staff indicated that they work effectively as a team; almost all indicate that they are fully involved with the school development planning process and feel that their contributions are valued by the Principal, parents and governors.

BASIC INFORMATION SHEET (BIS) - PRIMARY SCHOOLS

- A. i. **School: Moira Primary** iii. **Date of Inspection: W/B 08/04/2013**
 ii. **School Reference Number: 401-6104** iv. **Nature of Inspection: Focused**

B.

School Year	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
Year 1 Intake	52	57	59	55	60
Enrolments					
Primary	365	360	369	373	372
Reception	0	0	0	0	0
Nursery Unit	0	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: 94.7%**
- Average Attendance for those children on the Special Educational Needs Register: 93.3%
- | | Primary & Reception | Nursery Unit | Special Unit | Irish Medium Unit |
|--|---------------------|--------------|--------------|-------------------|
|--|---------------------|--------------|--------------|-------------------|
- D. i. Number of Teachers (including the principal and part-time teachers): 15.6 1 0 0
 (Full-time equivalent = 25 teaching hours)
- ii. PTR (Pupil/Teacher Ratio): 25.5 NI PTR: 20.2
- iii. Average Class Size: 26.6
- iv. Class Size (Range): 21 to 30
- v. Ancillary Support:
 Number of Hours **Per Week**:
- | | |
|---|-----|
| i. Clerical support: | 36 |
| ii. Foundation Stage Classroom Assistant Support: | 60 |
| iii. Additional hours of other classroom assistant support: | 124 |
- vi. Percentage of children with statements of special educational needs: 1.9%
- vii. Total percentage of children on the Special Needs Register: 11%
- viii. Number of children who are **not** of statutory school age: 0
- ix. Percentage of children entitled to free school meals: 8.6%
- 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 | 96.08% | Mathematics | 92.16% | Irish | N/A |
|----------------|--------|--------------------|--------|--------------|-----|

STATISTICAL INFORMATION ON MOIRA PRIMARY SCHOOL NURSERY UNIT

1. Details of Children

Number of children:	Class 1	Class 2
Attending full-time	26	0
Attending part-time	0	0
Under 3 years of age*	0	0
With statement of special educational needs	1	0
Without a statement but receiving therapy or support from other professionals for special educational needs	1	0
At CoP stages 3 or 4**	1	0
At CoP stages 1 or 2**	0	0
With English as an additional language	1	0

* On 1 July.

** 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.	7.7%
Average attendance for the previous year.	94%

2. Duration of Sessions

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

3. Details of Staff

Number of:	Full-Time	Part-Time
Teachers	1	0
Nursery Assistants (qualified)	3	0
Nursery Assistants (non-qualified)	0	0

Number of: ***	
Students	2
Trainees	0

*** Total placements since September of current year

4. Parental Questionnaires

Number issued	26
Percentage returned	42.3%
Number of written comments	7

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