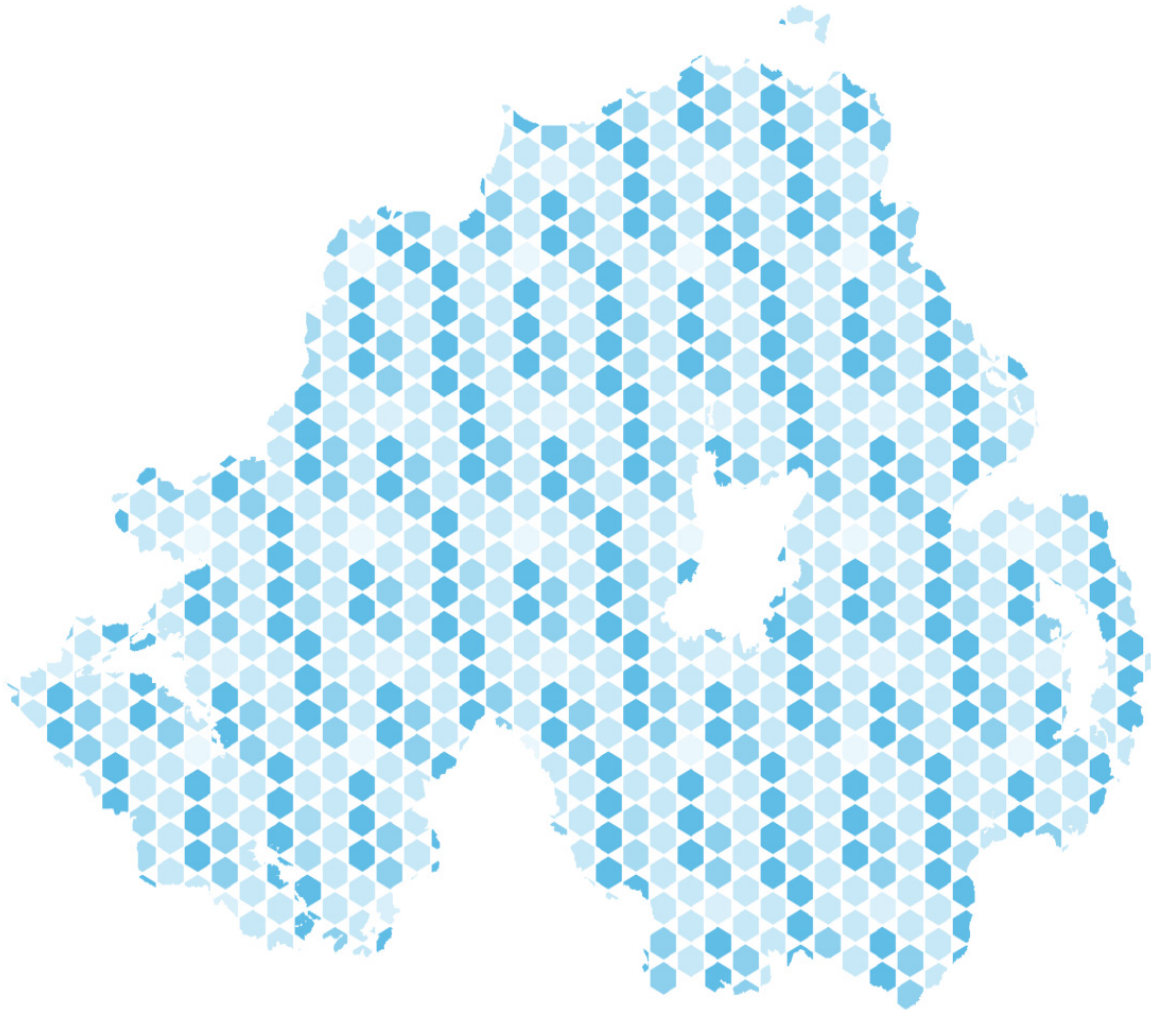


PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

St Anthony's Primary School
and Nursery Unit, Craigavon

Report of an Inspection
in November 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: St Anthony's Primary** iii. **Date of Inspection: W/B 21/11/11**
 ii. **School Reference Number: 503-1184** iv. **Nature of Inspection: Focused**

B.

School Year	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Year 1 Intake	61	59	76	72	93
Enrolments					
Primary	460	457	473	464	514
Reception	22	23	17	24	0
Nursery Unit	52	52	52	52	78
Special Unit	0	17	22	16	20
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): 92.4% **NI Avg Att: 94.7%**

Average Attendance for those children on the Special Educational Needs Register: 89.4%

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): 23 3 2 0
 (Full-time equivalent = 25 teaching hours)

- ii. PTR (Pupil/Teacher Ratio): 23.2 NI PTR: 20.2

- iii. Average Class Size: 23.4

- iv. Class Size (Range): 20 to 30

- v. Ancillary Support:

Number of Hours Per Week:	i. Clerical support:	61
	ii. Foundation Stage Classroom Assistant Support:	105
	iii. Additional hours of other classroom assistant support:	219.5

- vi. Percentage of children with statements of special educational needs: 6%

- vii. Total percentage of children on the Special Needs Register: 16%

- viii. Number of children who are **not** of statutory school age:

- ix. Percentage of children entitled to free school meals: 41%

- 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 | Mathematics | Irish |
| 85.96% | 89.48% | N/A |

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 SCHOOL CONTEXT

St Anthony's Primary School is situated in the Legahory area of Craigavon. The school's enrolment has increased steadily in the past four years, from 460 in 2007 to the current figure of 514. In addition, there are 78 children in the nursery unit and 20 children in the Learning Support Centre (LSC). Most of the children in the school and nursery unit come from the local and wider Craigavon area. At the time of the inspection, approximately 41% of the children were entitled to free school meals; 16% of the children were identified as requiring help with aspects of their learning and there were 72 newcomer children.

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 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 138 questionnaires issued to the parents of children at the school and the LSC, 63 were returned to Inspection Services Branch, including 36 which contained additional written comments. The responses from the parents indicated a high level of satisfaction with the educational and pastoral provision of the school. In particular, the parents acknowledged the work of the dedicated staff and Principal, the welcoming and friendly atmosphere and the quality of the learning environment.

Fifty-two questionnaires were issued to the parents of children in the nursery unit; 50% of the parents completed the questionnaire and nine made additional written comments. Most of the responses were positive and indicated the parents' appreciation of the care and support given to the children. The few issues raised by the parents of the school, nursery unit and LSC have been discussed with the governors and with the Principal.

Twenty-four members of the teaching staff and 15 members of the support staff completed the online questionnaire. Nine teaching staff and a small number of support staff made written comments. All of the responses from the staff were very positive and highlighted the support of the staff for the work and life of the school.

The governors expressed their strong support for the work of the school, nursery unit and LSC; in particular, they highlighted the hard-working staff, the standards attained by the children and the strong sense of community throughout the school.

The year 6 children talked enthusiastically about their learning and the many aspects of school life they enjoy. They highlighted the work of the school council and Eco club, and the support they receive from each other and from the staff. They indicated that they feel safe in the school and are fully aware of what to do if they have any concerns regarding their work, safety or well-being.

1.4 PASTORAL CARE

The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care is outstanding and develops effectively the children's academic, social and personal development. The staff is highly committed to the care and support of the children and there are excellent working relationships at all levels. The very inclusive ethos throughout the school values the contribution of all of the children, celebrates diversity and ensures that the provision is open to, and accessible by, all of the children. The emotional health and well-being of the children is a key priority throughout the school.

The children's behaviour is exemplary; they are polite, courteous, welcoming and take pride in their school and in their achievements. The children have high levels of self-esteem and take on responsibilities with confidence and maturity. They listen and respond to the views of others with respect, and support one another well in their learning.

1.5 CHILD PROTECTION/ SAFEGUARDING

The school, nursery unit and LSC have very good arrangements in place for safeguarding the children; these arrangements reflect fully the guidance issued by the Department of Education.

1.6 HEALTHY EATING AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

The school, nursery unit and LSC give very good attention to promoting healthy eating and physical activity. The children participate in a wide range of after-school sporting activities and learn about the importance of a healthy lifestyle through the well-planned programme for Personal Development and Mutual Understanding.

1.7 LINKS WITH PARENTS AND THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

The school, nursery unit and LSC give a high priority to establishing and developing meaningful links with the parents and the local community, in order to support and extend the children's learning experiences and to enable the parents to support their children in their learning. The school has effective arrangements for communicating with the parents and seeks their views on a range of aspects through questionnaires. Following consultation with the parents, the school has organised a number of activities that are open to them and members of the local community under the Extended Schools programme. The children work with and learn from other children in local schools through the Extended Schools cluster group. The school has very good curricular and pastoral links with the local post-primary school which aids the transition of the children to the next stage of their education.

2. ACHIEVEMENTS AND STANDARDS

2.1 LEARNING

The children demonstrate high levels of engagement and enjoyment in their learning. They work effectively through group, paired work and independently. The children display increased levels of critical thinking as they progress through the key stages. When presented with more challenging activities, they demonstrate the ability to solve problems and the perseverance to complete investigations. The children are developing very good personal and social skills which enable them to have a positive attitude to their learning. The children receive good quality experiences of a range of ICT applications which complement and support their learning across the curriculum. A majority of the children attain good standards in the Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment ICT Accreditation Scheme.

An analysis of the key stage (KS) 2 assessment data over the past four years shows that in English and mathematics, in two of the past four years, the school's performance is above the Northern Ireland (NI) average. Compared with schools in the same free school meals band, the levels of attainment in English, in three of the past four years, have been in line with or above the average. In mathematics, in three of the past four years, the levels of attainment have been above the average.

The children who receive additional support for their learning in literacy and numeracy make good progress.

The newcomer children are well integrated into all aspects of school life and make a valuable and valued contribution to the school. They benefit from the well-planned additional support sessions which are clearly linked to their learning in class. They make good progress across all areas of the curriculum.

2.2 ENGLISH AND LITERACY

The quality of the provision in English and literacy is very good.

The literacy co-ordinators work effectively to identify appropriate areas for the development of literacy and the improvement work is supported by an effective staff development programme. They monitor and evaluate the quality of provision well through looking at the outcomes of the children's work in their books and the sharing of the children's writing as examples of good practice at year group meetings.

The teachers place a high priority on the development of the children's oral skills across the curriculum and the children attain very good standards in talking and listening. In discussions, the children take on a range of roles and interact well with one another; they listen respectfully, respond appropriately and express their own views with increasing confidence. When given the opportunity, in World Around Us and mathematics lessons, for example, they are able to report the findings of their research and discussion clearly to the whole class. The teachers use well-planned drama strategies, such as hot seating, to enable the children to ask informed questions and respond in character, all of which help to develop the children's self-esteem, confidence and understanding.

The school's assessment data shows that most of the children make good progress in their reading. By the end of KS2, the majority of the children are reading at a level in line with, or above, their chronological age. The teachers use a range of approaches effectively to develop the children's phonological awareness and spelling skills. The recent focus on guided reading has been integral to the School Development Plan (SDP) and is well

embedded in effective classroom practice. Attractive new reading resources and well-differentiated tasks have been introduced across the year groups. The central library and class libraries have been re-stocked with a wide range of age-appropriate fiction and non-fiction books. Those children who have additional needs in literacy receive very good support from the classroom assistants who have been trained as Reading Partners; all of the children who were involved in the programme last year made significant progress in their reading competence. The children read with fluency, expression and a very good level of understanding. They speak enthusiastically and knowledgeably about their favourite books and authors.

The children attain very good standards in writing. They write confidently for different purposes and audiences. The teachers encourage the children to use a range of resources including word walls, dictionaries and thesauri to become increasingly independent as writers. Their writing is celebrated in colourful, attractive displays in the classrooms and corridors throughout the school. The children use ICT effectively across the year groups for research and to facilitate the process of drafting and editing to improve their work.

2.3 MATHEMATICS AND NUMERACY

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

The co-ordinators provide effective leadership. They have reviewed well the planning, resources and provision for mathematics across the school. They have agreed an action plan to bring about further improvements in the overall quality of the provision, with a particular focus on developing the children's understanding of processes in mathematics. The teachers' planning for mathematics consists of half-termly and two-weekly plans, and the whole-school scheme is reviewed regularly, with effective feedback given to the teachers by the co-ordinators.

The teachers have developed innovative approaches to the teaching of mathematics, including the strategic creation of specific classes within year groups that target number work; an emphasis on problem-solving and investigations; numeracy after-school booster classes as part of the Extended School Programme; and withdrawal support for mathematics. The intervention has a positive impact on the children's confidence in, and aptitude for, mathematics

In the foundation stage (FS), the teachers use practical resources effectively to introduce mathematical concepts. The children benefit from learning experiences which use natural materials, they recognise the sets of numbers, and they are able to sort using two criteria. The teachers link numeracy well with other areas of the curriculum, for example, by sorting library books by authors. The children make good use of play-based learning opportunities to familiarise themselves with mathematical equipment, and by the end of the FS, the children are able to create graphs and apply their numeracy skills in real life contexts, for example, using money in the builders' shop.

In KS1, the children enjoy mental mathematics activities in all lessons. The teachers make very good use of real-life contexts to engage the children in their learning, and develop the concepts being taught, for example, by using their skills in the Christmas Shop. By the end of KS1, the children demonstrate good knowledge of, and skills in key mathematical concepts.

In KS2, the children are encouraged to talk about their learning, and to think about methods of working with mathematical concepts. The children demonstrate very good application of their mathematical understanding orally. The children are confident in their use of ICT, and they are able to programme BeeBots and use Logo accurately to aid their understanding in,

for example, cardinal number, angles and co-ordinates. The children experience a broad curriculum and demonstrate confidence and enjoyment of mathematics. By the end of KS2, they show very good flexibility in number, understand well place value and are able to apply their knowledge well in computations, investigations and problem solving. Most of the children attain good standards in their mathematics.

3. THE QUALITY OF PROVISION FOR LEARNING

3.1 PLANNING

The teachers plan thoroughly for lessons to ensure consistency, variety, progression and challenge in the children's learning. Furthermore, they plan conscientiously for all aspects of the curriculum, including the effective integration of thinking skills and ICT. In the FS, the teachers' records of their observations of the children's learning are very good. The evaluation of planning, learning and teaching, however, throughout the school is variable and it is appropriate that the school has prioritised staff development on the use of teachers' evaluations to inform better learning and teaching.

In the nursery unit, the staff work collaboratively to plan and review the programme on a regular basis. Detailed short-term two-weekly planning for indoor play provides effective guidance on the learning to be promoted, action for specific children and language to be developed. The staff makes excellent use of on-going observation records to assess the children's learning and target support for their further development.

3.2 TEACHING

During the inspection the quality of teaching observed ranged from satisfactory to outstanding; in most of the lessons, it was good or better; and in one-half of the lessons, it was very good or outstanding. In the best practice observed, the teachers have high expectations of the children's learning and they use skilful questioning to extend the children's thinking and their extended responses. The teachers make meaningful links with the children's prior learning and connections across the curriculum; they share the intended learning clearly with the children, use well-planned activities and resources to develop the children's understanding and use the plenary effectively to consolidate the learning.

3.3 ASSESSMENT

The Principal and senior management team (SMT) have collated and analysed very effectively a wide range of performance data including analysis of standardised tests and Department of Education bench-marking information in order to identify underachievement and track the progress of individual children. The teachers are increasingly using the analysis of data to inform learning and teaching in order to bring about improvement in the standards attained by all the children including, specifically, those targeted for support.

The teachers mark the children's work regularly. The marking is at its most effective when the teachers provide detailed written feedback, give appropriate praise for good work and allow the children to correct any mistakes. The school recognises that this good practice needs to be applied more consistently across the school.

There are appropriate procedures and records for keeping the parents informed about their children's progress, for example one written report, two parent-teacher consultations and an open-door policy for informal consultations. The written reports are comprehensive; they are related well to the curriculum and provide the parents with detailed and pertinent information regarding their children's progress, any difficulties they have and couple this with advice on how they may help their children further.

3.4 LEARNING SUPPORT CENTRE

The quality of the provision in the learning support unit is very good. The quality of the teaching observed, the interaction between the staff and the children and the learning outcomes are of very good quality. The teachers plan, monitor and evaluate the children's progress very well. There is a regular, well-planned system of daily integration with the main school for the children with their peers and teachers. All of the children in the unit demonstrate improvement over their previous learning and enhanced social and independence skills.

3.5 SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

There is good provision for children with additional learning needs throughout the school. The children who require additional support in literacy and numeracy are identified through appropriate assessment methods and effective strategies are used to address their needs. In the best practice, the teachers' planning is matched closely to the needs of the children with Individual Education Plans (IEP). The school needs to disseminate further this good practice to ensure that all IEP targets are sharp, precise and supported with carefully differentiated activities.

The provision for SEN is managed effectively and efficiently throughout the school. Detailed records of the children's progress are analysed well to ascertain further action required.

4. LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The quality of leadership and management is very good.

The innovative Principal, who has been in post for just under four years, is highly committed to meeting the needs of all of the children and the wider community. He inspires confidence and respect with the children, the staff, the parents and governors. He promotes a collegiate approach to decision-making within the school and as a result, there is a strong sense of teamwork at all levels. He has gained a thorough working knowledge of the quality of the teaching throughout the school and has led developments resulting in the implementation of effective processes for tracking, assessing and improving the quality of the children's experiences and the standards they attain. He has the support of the Vice-principal who leads and manages effectively key areas of the school's development relating principally to SEN and pastoral care. In addition to these personnel, the SMT comprises the Head of the nursery unit and another senior teacher. The SMT is supplemented with other co-ordinators as appropriate to help guide key curricular developments in the school and this is helping to extend further the capacity for leadership and management.

4.1 PLANNING FOR IMPROVEMENT

There is a very significant amount of development being undertaken throughout the school by leaders at various levels, and through this, the capacity for self-evaluation within the school is being enhanced. The Principal and staff have worked effectively to create a whole-school approach to school development planning. They have audited the provision, identified priorities and drawn up action plans. The school now needs to refine the action plans to ensure they address more clearly the precise and measurable targets to effect improvement in the outcomes for the children. The SDP complies with the requirements of the School Development Plans regulations (Northern Ireland) 2010.

4.2 ACCOMMODATION

The staff works hard to create stimulating learning environments in the classrooms, corridors and outside spaces. The school building and surrounding grounds are maintained to a high standard.

4.3 RESOURCES, FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE

The governors undertake their governance role of the school earnestly and sincerely. They are very knowledgeable of the total provision in the school and are enabled, through highly effective communication with, and information provided by, the Principal, to play a strategic role in the school's development. The governors support the Principal in managing effectively the school's budget allocation. The school is well resourced to support learning and teaching, especially in literacy, numeracy and ICT.

5. CONCLUSION

5.1 The strengths of the school include:

- the self-confident children who display exemplary behaviour, high levels of motivation, engagement and independence in their learning;
- the outstanding quality of the pastoral care provision which promotes effectively the children's academic, social and personal development;
- the very good standards in literacy and numeracy attained by the children;
- the excellent links and partnerships established with others which enhance the children's learning experiences;
- the very good or outstanding quality of the teaching in one-half of the lessons observed; and
- the very good leadership provided by the Principal who has a clear focus on improving the quality of learning and teaching for the children.

5.2 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 children; and has demonstrated its capacity for sustained self-improvement.

6. THE NURSERY UNIT

6.1 The key strengths of the nursery include:

- the high levels of enjoyment of their learning displayed by the children and the ability of almost all of the children to play independently and collaboratively for sustained periods of time;
- the effective staff interaction to support the development of the children's language and learning;
- the broad and balanced programme which provides good or better learning experiences in the areas of the pre-school curriculum, and in particular, the development of the children's mathematical understanding;
- the good provision made for those children with additional learning needs;
- the well-planned programme for both indoor and outdoor play which is informed by the very good use of on-going assessment records; and
- the very good links put in place to facilitate a smooth transition for the children when joining and leaving the nursery unit.

6.2 The area for improvement is the need to:

- ensure a greater consistency, throughout the nursery unit, of the good or better teaching observed.

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

STATISTICAL INFORMATION ON ST ANTHONY'S PRIMARY SCHOOL NURSERY UNIT

1. Details of Children

Number of children:	Class 1	Class 2	Class 3
Attending full-time	26	26	26
Attending part-time	0	0	0
Under 3 years of age*	0	0	0
With statement of special educational needs	0	1	0
At CoP stages 3 or 4**	1	0	0
At CoP stages 1 or 2**	0	1	0
With English as an additional language	4	5	5

* 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.	1%
Average attendance for the previous year.	93.5%

2. *Duration of Sessions*

Full-time	Part-time: am	Part-time: pm
4 hours 35 mins	-	-

3. DETAILS OF STAFF

Number of:	Full-Time	Part-Time
Teachers	3	0
Nursery Assistants	3	0
Qualified Nursery Assistants	0	0

Number of: ****	
Students	0
Trainees	1

**** Total placements since September of current year

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

Number issued	
Percentage returned	%
Number of written comments	

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