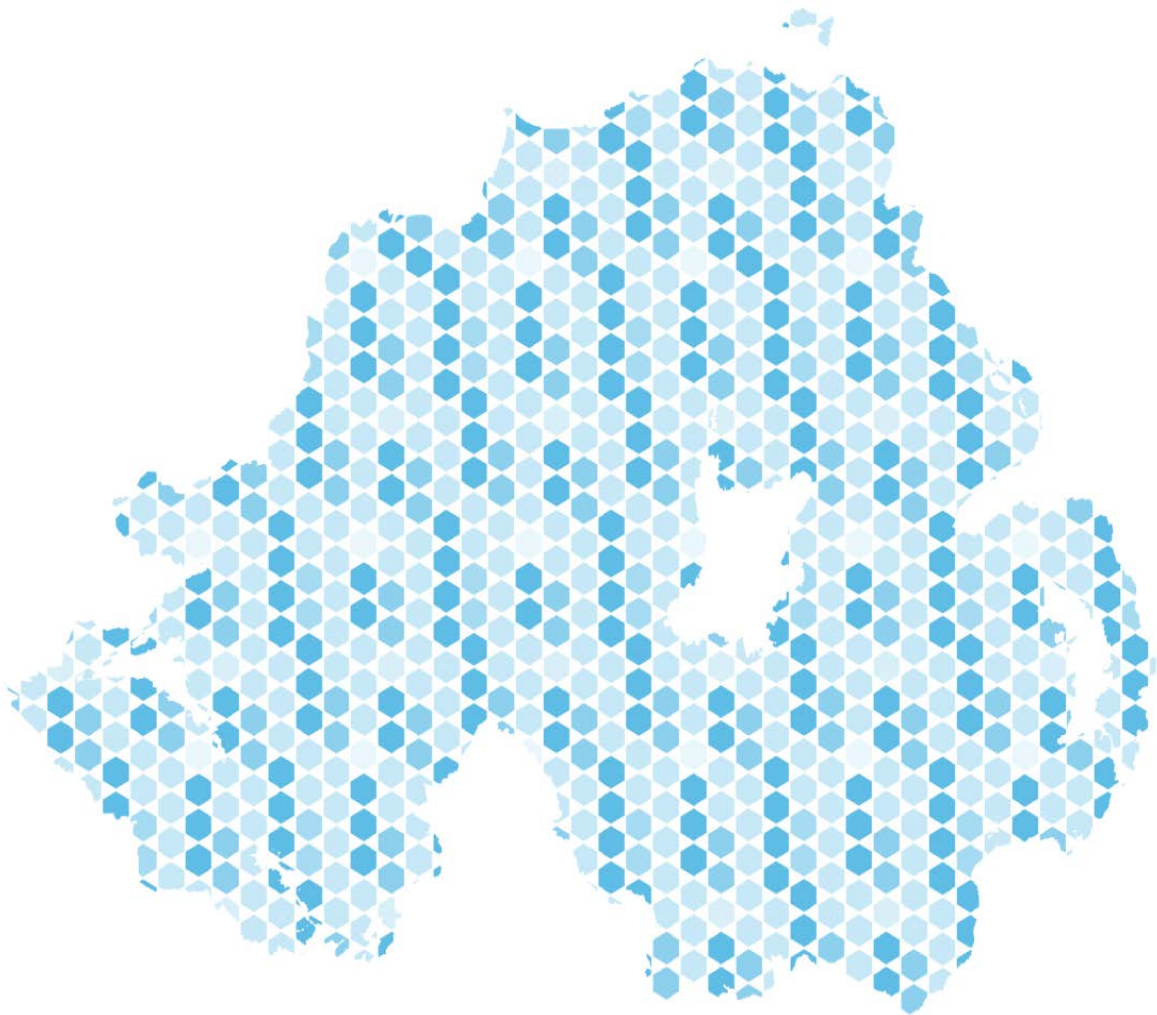


PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

St Colman's Primary School
and All Saints' Nursery Unit,
Annaclone

Report of an Inspection
in February 2013



CONTENTS

Section		Page
1.	School Context	1
2.	Focus of inspection and overall finding	1
3.	Achievements and standards	1
4.	Provision for learning	2
5.	Leadership and management	4
6.	Summary of questionnaire responses	5
	Appendix - Accommodation	

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

St Colman's Primary School and All Saints' Nursery Unit is situated in the village of Annaclone in the district of Banbridge. The children attending the school come from the surrounding rural area. The school enrolment has increased steadily over the past five years and stands currently at 159 children. At the time of inspection, approximately 19% of the children were entitled to free school meals and the school has identified 18% of the children as requiring support with aspects of their learning. This inspection completes work that began in February 2012. The inspection was incomplete at that stage due to action being taken by a number of the staff who were not co-operating with the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) on advice from their teaching union.

2. Focus of inspection and overall finding

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 in the school and nursery unit; 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 FINDING OF THE INSPECTION

In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by the 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.

Summary of key findings

Achievements and standards	Good
Quality of provision	Good
Leadership and management	Very Good
Nursery unit	Good

KEY FINDINGS OF THE INSPECTION

3. Achievements and standards

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

- The children have a positive attitude to their learning; they are attentive and enthusiastic learners. Across the key stages (KS) the children work and play well collaboratively and individually. They develop very good levels of self-confidence and are able to work independently. By year 7 they are articulate and the most able children use their critical thinking to provide extended responses to challenging questions.

- An analysis of the KS 2 assessment data¹ shows that the school's performance in English and mathematics in two out of the past four years has been in line with or above both the Northern Ireland (NI) average and the average when compared to schools in the same free school meals category. The school's internal performance data indicates that by the end of KS2 most of the children are achieving standards in English and mathematics in line with their ability or above expectation.
- By year 7, most of the children achieve good standards in mathematics. The children have a very good understanding of a range of mathematical strategies which they can apply flexibly across the range of areas in mathematics. By year 7, the children attain good standards in their reading and the most able children read with high levels of understanding of the text and a mature level of empathy with the characters. The children write to a good standard through a range of genres and across the curriculum and they have acquired good talking and listening skills.
- The majority of the children in the school who have been identified with special educational needs (SEN) make good progress in their learning in line with their ability.
- The children in the nursery unit are confident and most are well behaved and settle enthusiastically to their chosen activities. A majority of the children make good progress in their development in relation to their age and the time of the year. They respond well to their daily routines, and most engage with good levels of interest for extended periods of concentrated play.
- Throughout the school, the children, through participation in external accreditation attain very good standards in ICT. They are confident in the use of programmable devices and a range of interactive software to support their learning.

4. **Provision for learning**

The quality of the provision for learning is good.

- The quality of the learning and teaching observed ranged from satisfactory to outstanding; in one-half of the teaching, it was very good or better. In the most effective practice, the teachers use well-considered learning intentions and precise success criteria which are negotiated with the children, to guide the learning process through challenging investigations, enquiries and opportunities for extended writing. In the less effective practice, the teachers do not employ an appropriate range of questioning techniques and intervention strategies to challenge the children's thinking. The teachers' planning connects successfully the learning for the children across the curriculum through real and relevant contexts. The teachers, however, need to plan for, implement and evaluate the use of a range of learning strategies in order to meet more effectively the needs of all the children and raise further the standards that they attain.

¹ The key stage outcomes should be interpreted with caution for small primary schools as a large percentage change from year to year can often be attributed to a very small number of children.

- The quality of the provision for literacy is good. The children develop their language and literacy skills through well-connected topics and creative learning experiences. The children's vocabulary is very good as a result of the effective questioning by the teachers to develop extended responses. A minority of the children however, need to have more opportunities to speak audibly, clearly and with appropriate pronunciation which in the best practice, is modelled by the staff.
- The quality of the provision for mathematics is good. The mathematics curriculum is broad and balanced and provides for the children appropriate progression in their learning across the key stages. The well-paced and challenging mental mathematics sessions are a key strength of the provision. It is appropriate, however, that the school has identified the need to develop further the children's problem-solving and investigation skills.
- The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care is very good. The school has a friendly family ethos and the children experience a wide range of enrichment activities connected well to their learning. The school has an active Eco Club which provides opportunities for the children involved to develop their leadership skills. A key strength of the provision is the opportunities for the children to take responsibility for their own learning across the key stages through the effective target-setting process.
- The quality of the provision for those children with SEN is good. The children are supported effectively through withdrawal support programmes in literacy and numeracy. A targeted group of children benefit from an innovative use of the Extended Schools cluster to provide a programme of support focused on developing the children's speech and language. The school has identified the need to focus on identifying and implementing appropriate learning and teaching strategies to enable the children to meet more effectively their targets on the individual education plans and the inspection findings endorse this as a key priority.
- The quality of the provision in the nursery unit is good. The newly-formed staff team work hard to create a caring and child-centred learning environment. A majority of the children respond well to the routines and transitions throughout the session. The adults develop well the children's self-esteem and their personal and social skills and there are good examples of quality interactions with the children through the modelling of appropriate vocabulary in context. The written planning is currently being developed and this needs to embed fully all the best practice of the pre-school curriculum in relation to the role of all the adults in maximising the learning potential at all opportunities. Whilst the staff make good observations of each child's learning, they need to ensure that these observations are used to inform future planning.
- The school gives very good attention to promoting healthy eating and physical activity. The school encourages the children to adopt healthy lifestyles through the healthy breaks and regular opportunities for the children to engage in outdoor play and sports.

5. Leadership and management

The quality of leadership and management is very good.

- The leadership and management of the school is highly effective in bringing about improvement in the standards attained by the children through improving the quality of the learning experiences throughout the school. There has been a significant and effective restructuring of the roles of the staff in the past year. Through a very good programme of staff training, workshops, external visits and action research, the staff have worked collegially to build their capacity to address appropriate areas for improvement through a systematic approach to self-evaluation. The school development planning process is underpinned by an effective analysis of performance data and consultation with the staff, parents, governors and children on an ongoing basis and this regular review ensures the necessary improvement takes place at an appropriate and informed pace. As the nursery unit is recently established, key aspects of the nursery unit's provision remain to be developed which the school has identified through its self-evaluative processes.
- The parents are kept well-informed about their children's progress and the work of the school. They are involved actively in their children's learning through the curriculum evenings, meetings, the use of questionnaires and regular school events. The children's educational and social experiences are enhanced by the strong connections with the local community and through a particular emphasis on providing the children with cross-community learning experiences through local history, ICT, media, language, music and cultural events.
- The governors support the work of the school well through their informed involvement in the actions by the school to promote improvement. In particular, they provide effective support to the Principal and staff in planning to meet the growing development of the school.
- On the basis of the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the school, including the 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 the 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 area for improvement is:

- to ensure that the teachers plan for, implement and evaluate the use of a range of learning strategies in order to meet more effectively the needs of all the children and raise further the standards that they attain.

The ETI will monitor the school's progress on the area for improvement.

6. Summary of questionnaire responses

PARENTAL QUESTIONNAIRES	
Number of Questionnaires Issued to the school and nursery unit (Based on 010/11 Enrolment)	147
Number of Questionnaires Returned	34
Percentage of Returns	29%
Number of Comments	25

TEACHERS QUESTIONNAIRES	
Number of Questionnaires Returned	2
Number of Comments	1

SUPPORT STAFF QUESTIONNAIRES	
Number of Questionnaires Returned	7
Number of Comments	3

The responses from the parents were mostly positive and indicated their appreciation of the work of the staff, the friendly ethos and the development of their children's personal and social skills. The majority of parents who made written comments identified the need for improvement in the quality of the school meals. A minority of the parents from the school also identified the need for an increase in the standards attained by their children. The key issues raised by the parents of the school have been discussed with the governors and with the Principal.

Almost all of the responses from the staff were 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; in particular, they highlighted the sense of community within the school and the commitment of the Principal and staff to the life and work of the school.

The children talked enthusiastically about their learning and the many aspects of school life they enjoy. 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.

ACCOMMODATION

- The accommodation provision for two of the year groups is inappropriate and needs to be improved urgently.

STATISTICAL INFORMATION ON ALL SAINTS' NURSERY UNIT

1. Details of Children

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

* 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.	0%
Average attendance for the previous year.	91.9%

2. Duration of Sessions

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

3. Details of Staff

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

Number of: ***	
Students	0
Trainees	0

*** Total placements since September of current year

4. Parental Questionnaires

Number issued	27
Percentage returned	33.3%
Number of written comments	5

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