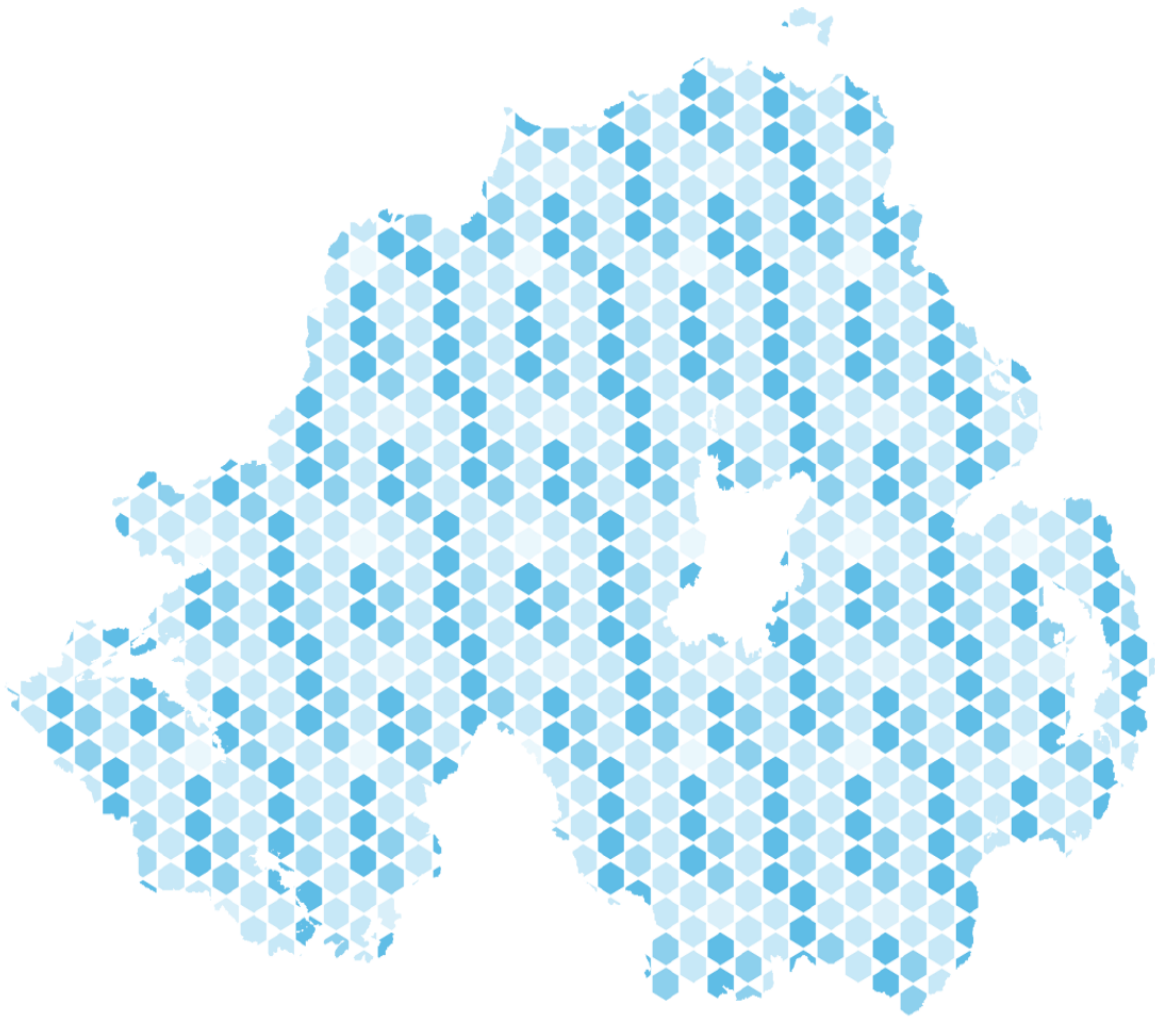


PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Blessed Patrick O'Loughran
Primary School, Dungannon

Report of an Inspection
in September 2012



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

CUSTOMER
SERVICE
EXCELLENCE



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

Blessed Patrick O'Loughran Primary School is situated on the outskirts of Castlecaulfield village in County Tyrone. A majority of the children attending the school come from the local and surrounding rural areas, the remainder travel from the outskirts of Dungannon. The enrolment, which has been steady over the last four years, has increased slightly from 94 children in 2010 to the current enrolment of 97 children. At the time of the inspection, approximately 26% of the children in the school were entitled to free school meals. The school has identified 24% of the children who require additional support with aspects of their learning.

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 including the school's processes for self-evaluation leading to improvement.

OVERALL FINDING 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.

KEY FINDINGS OF THE INSPECTION

Achievements and Standards

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

- In English and mathematics, the children attain very good **standards**. They display very good oral communication and reading skills and can apply their numeracy skills in a variety of meaningful contexts both in and beyond their classrooms. The children are very well motivated, confident and eager to learn. Their thinking skills and personal capabilities are highly developed.
- The children identified with **special educational needs** respond well to the additional support provided and make steady progress in line with expectations identified in their individual education plans to address a wide range of specific needs.

Provision for Learning

The provision for learning is very good.

- The **children** are able to take on roles and responsibilities to contribute both as leaders and as team members to the school community. During lessons, the children responded well to following instructions and completing problem-solving tasks. In other aspects of school life including the eco-council, they perform well as playground buddies taking responsibility for the care of themselves and others and for recycling in the environment.

- In the lessons observed, the **quality of the teaching** ranged from satisfactory to outstanding. Almost three quarters of the lessons evaluated were good or better. The key features of the very best practice included the teachers' skill in using open-ended and probing questioning techniques which promoted high quality extended responses from the children. In addition, these teachers demonstrated a clear understanding of how to use their assessment information on the children's progress to plan effectively for the full range of ability within the class.
- The children identified with **special educational needs** benefit from early identification and support which meets the wide range of needs effectively. There are clear lines of communication developed with the parents through the sensitive involvement of the staff to ensure that the children's needs are a key priority. In addition, the referral of small groups of children to the reading recovery provision is having a positive impact on the development of the children's reading and writing skills. Training for reading recovery programmes has been disseminated to the school team.
- The quality of the arrangements for **pastoral care** is outstanding. This is evident through the attention given to providing a very positive, nurturing learning environment, the promotion of respect for others demonstrated through the whole school community and the children's excellent behaviour. The programme for **Personal Development and Mutual Understanding** (PDMU) makes good use of the locality as a starting point for the children's learning and to establish links with others to foster mutual understanding.
- On the basis of the evidence at the time of the inspection, the school has comprehensive arrangements in place for **safeguarding** children. These arrangements reflect the child protection guidance issued by the Department of Education (DE)
- The school gives very good attention to promoting **healthy eating** and physical activity, for example, through the focus on nutritious snacks and the opportunities provided for the children to engage in a wide range of sport and physical activity.

Leadership and Management

The quality of leadership and management is good.

- The **teaching Principal** takes the lead in setting a positive tone for an inclusive and welcoming school. The co-ordinators, who hold multiple curricular roles and responsibilities, work closely as a whole staff team and all of their contributions are valued. The school should continue to develop further the strategic leadership and management processes at all levels to plan for continuous school improvement.
- The **Board of Governors** are supportive of the school, attend training and value the school as an important part of the community. 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.

- The school has developed a three year school development plan underpinned by consultation in the school. The very good working relationships, the collation of performance data and the development of clear lines of communication within the staff team provide a strong basis on which to develop further the processes for **self-evaluation and whole school improvement**. In particular, a more rigorous approach to effective action planning, monitoring and evaluation which focuses more clearly on the children's learning and standards is required to inform continued school improvement.

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.

THE VIEWS OF THE PARENTS, TEACHERS, GOVERNORS, (SUPPORT STAFF) AND CHILDREN

The arrangements for the inspection included the opportunity for the parents, the teaching and support staff to complete a confidential questionnaire prior to the inspection. Of the 65 questionnaires issued to the parents, 19 were returned to the Department of Education (DE), including nine which contained additional written comments. In the written comments, the parents expressed their appreciation of the committed and hard working staff that provides a caring and happy school environment which meets the needs of the children within the community.

All of the teachers and the support staff responded very positively to the staff questionnaires. They reported very good working relationships among the staff team and a respectful working environment.

The inspectors also met with a group of the year 6 children; they talked very positively about school life and in particular their enjoyment of sport, art, mathematics and meeting their friends. The children are aware of what to do if they have any concerns and report that they feel happy and safe in school.

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