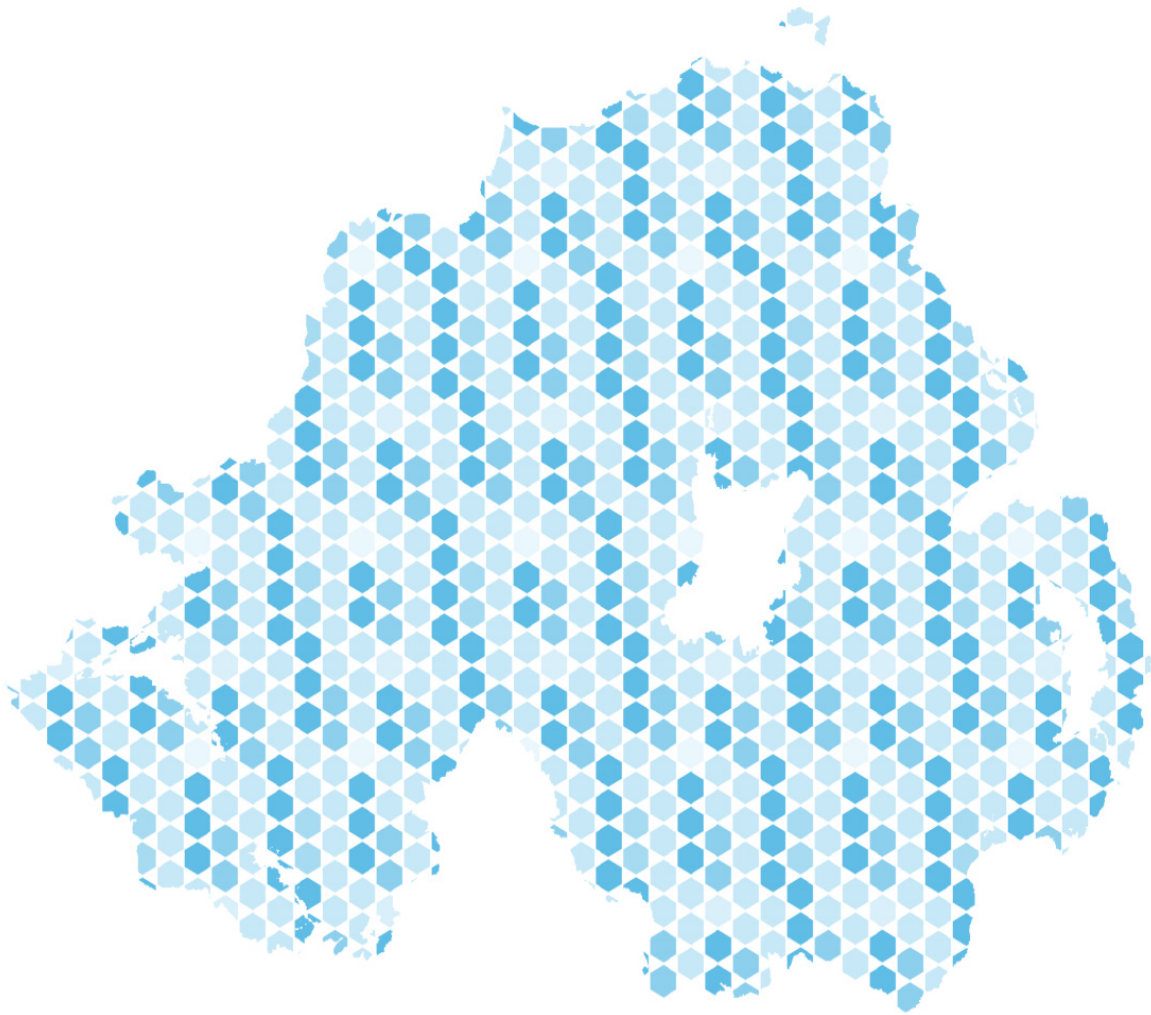


PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Culcrow Primary School,
Aghadowey

Report of an Inspection
in May 2012



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

Culcrow Primary School is situated in the parish of Aghadowey, close to the town of Ballymoney. The children attending the school come from a wide catchment area. Enrolment has increased over the past five years from 45 and currently stands at 67. At the time of the inspection approximately 11% of the children in the school were entitled to free school meals. The school has registered approximately 12% of the children as having special educational needs.

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 good, and the pastoral care is very good. The school has important strengths in most of its educational provision and very good pastoral provision

KEY FINDINGS OF THE INSPECTION

Achievements and Standards

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

- In **English and mathematics**, most of the children attain very good standards that are in line with their ability. By the end of Key Stage (KS) 2, the children read with very high levels of fluency and expression and have a very good understanding of number and measure.
- The majority of children identified with **special educational needs** make good progress and attain standards in line with their ability.

Provision for Learning

The provision for learning is good.

- The **children's behaviour** is very good. The children interact confidently with their teachers, with classroom assistants and with each other. The children have good levels of independence and work well in pairs and small groups.
- The quality of the **teaching** observed ranged from satisfactory to very good, with one-half of the lessons being very good. In the best practice, there was a clear focus on the intended learning which was shared effectively with the children. The work was set in local and real-life contexts and built effectively on the children's prior learning. The teachers mark the children's work regularly and provide useful written comments which, in the best practice, give clear guidance to the children on how they can improve their work.

- In the less effective practice there was a lack of pace and challenge to progress the children's learning further, and the learning opportunities during play based learning were not clearly defined.
- The children with **special educational needs** (SEN) are identified at an appropriately early stage through detailed staff discussion and through the effective analysis of assessment data. More rigour is needed in monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the individual education plans and in planning strategically for SEN provision, for example, through the School Development Plan (SDP).
- The quality of the arrangements for **pastoral care** is very good. The school has an inclusive and welcoming ethos, with all members of the school community playing an active and valued role in the life and work of the school. This is evident in the very good behaviour of the children and the respectful, supportive relationships that exist at all levels. The school makes very good use of educational visits, external speakers and a broad range of local community amenities to enhance the children's learning experiences.
- The school has very good arrangements in place for **safeguarding** children. These arrangements reflect the child protection guidance issued by the Department of Education.
- Due to the proximity of the school to a busy thoroughfare, the school has implemented a comprehensive road safety policy to address the dangers associated with the location of the school. (See Appendix 1)
- The school gives very good attention to promoting **healthy eating and physical activity**. The school utilises well the sporting provision available to the children through the effective use of local amenities and the provision of, and high participation rates in, a wide range of extra-curricular activities. The children play an active role in the choosing of the options for the healthy breaks and lunches.

Leadership and Management

The quality of **leadership and management** is good.

- The **teaching Principal**, who has been in post for five years, has a clear and shared vision for the school, and has raised the profile of the school in recent years. She has overseen a period of significant growth in the school's enrolment and has a strong commitment to the welfare of the whole school community.
- The **co-ordinators** are hard working and conscientious in their specialist areas. They have begun to use data to identify appropriate areas for development which is helping to raise further the children's achievements and standards. The role of the curriculum co-ordinator is under-developed; the school needs to monitor and evaluate the quality of provision of key curricular areas in a more systematic and robust manner.
- The school has satisfactory processes for whole-school **self-evaluation and school development planning (SDP)**. The school has identified appropriately the need to develop the planning processes further in a more cohesive manner to include a stronger focus on the provision of literacy, numeracy and SEN.

CONCLUSION

In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by this school is good. The school has important strengths in most of its educational provision and very good pastoral provision. The inspection has identified an area for improvement which the school has demonstrated the capacity to address. The area for improvement is for:

The curriculum co-ordinators to monitor and evaluate the quality of provision of the key curricular areas in a more systematic and robust manner.

BASIC INFORMATION SHEET (BIS) - PRIMARY SCHOOLS

- A. i. **School: Culcrow Primary** iii. **Date of Inspection: W/B 15/05/12**
 ii. **School Reference Number: 301-2065** iv. **Nature of Inspection: Short**

B.

School Year	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Year 1 Intake	5	6	5	8	13
Enrolments					
Primary	48	54	57	60	67
Reception	0	0	0	0	0
Nursery Unit	0	0	0	0	0
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): 97.4% **NI Avg Att: 94.7%**

Average Attendance for those children on the Special Educational Needs Register: 95.5%

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): 3.4 0 0 0
 (Full-time equivalent = 25 teaching hours)
- ii. PTR (Pupil/Teacher Ratio): 19.7 NI PTR: 20.2
- iii. Average Class Size: 22.3
- iv. Class Size (Range): 20 to 24
- v. Ancillary Support:
 Number of Hours **Per Week**:
- | | |
|---|----|
| i. Clerical support: | 10 |
| ii. Foundation Stage Classroom Assistant Support: | 20 |
| iii. Additional hours of other classroom assistant support: | 37 |
- vi. Percentage of children with statements of special educational needs: 1.49%
- vii. Total percentage of children on the Special Needs Register: 28.3%
- viii. Number of children who are **not** of statutory school age: 0
- ix. Percentage of children entitled to free school meals: 16.4%
- 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 |
| 100% | 88.9% | N/A |

HEALTH AND SAFETY

- There are considerable safety issues for the children at drop-off and collection times during the school day due to the speed of traffic on the main road.
- The height of the school wall constitutes a potential danger in terms of safeguarding as the children play in its immediate vicinity, also a stray football may potentially cause a distraction to a passing motorist or lorry driver.

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, and for a group of children from year 6 to meet the inspectors.

Of the 42 questionnaires issued to the parents, 37 (88%) were returned to Inspection Services Branch and 26 contained additional written comments. Almost all of the parental responses were highly positive about the work of the school. In the written comments, the parents expressed their satisfaction at the high quality of the pastoral care provision, the support from the teachers and classroom assistants for the children with additional learning needs, and the numerous after-school learning opportunities provided for the children. The very few concerns raised in the parental questionnaires were shared with the Principal and the governors.

The teachers and members of the support staff responded very positively to the questionnaires. The staff reported that they feel valued and enjoy working in the school.

Representatives of the Board of Governors the met with the inspection team: they reported that they are well-informed on all aspects of the life and work of the school, and commented positively on the commitment of the teachers and support staff to school improvement, and the active involvement of the parents and the local community in the school.

The inspectors met with a group of year 6 and year 7 children. The children talked enthusiastically about their experiences at school; in particular, they spoke of the kind, helpful staff and the strong emphasis placed by the teachers on showing kindness to one another. They reported that they feel happy and safe in school and they know what to do if they have any worries about their safety and well-being.

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