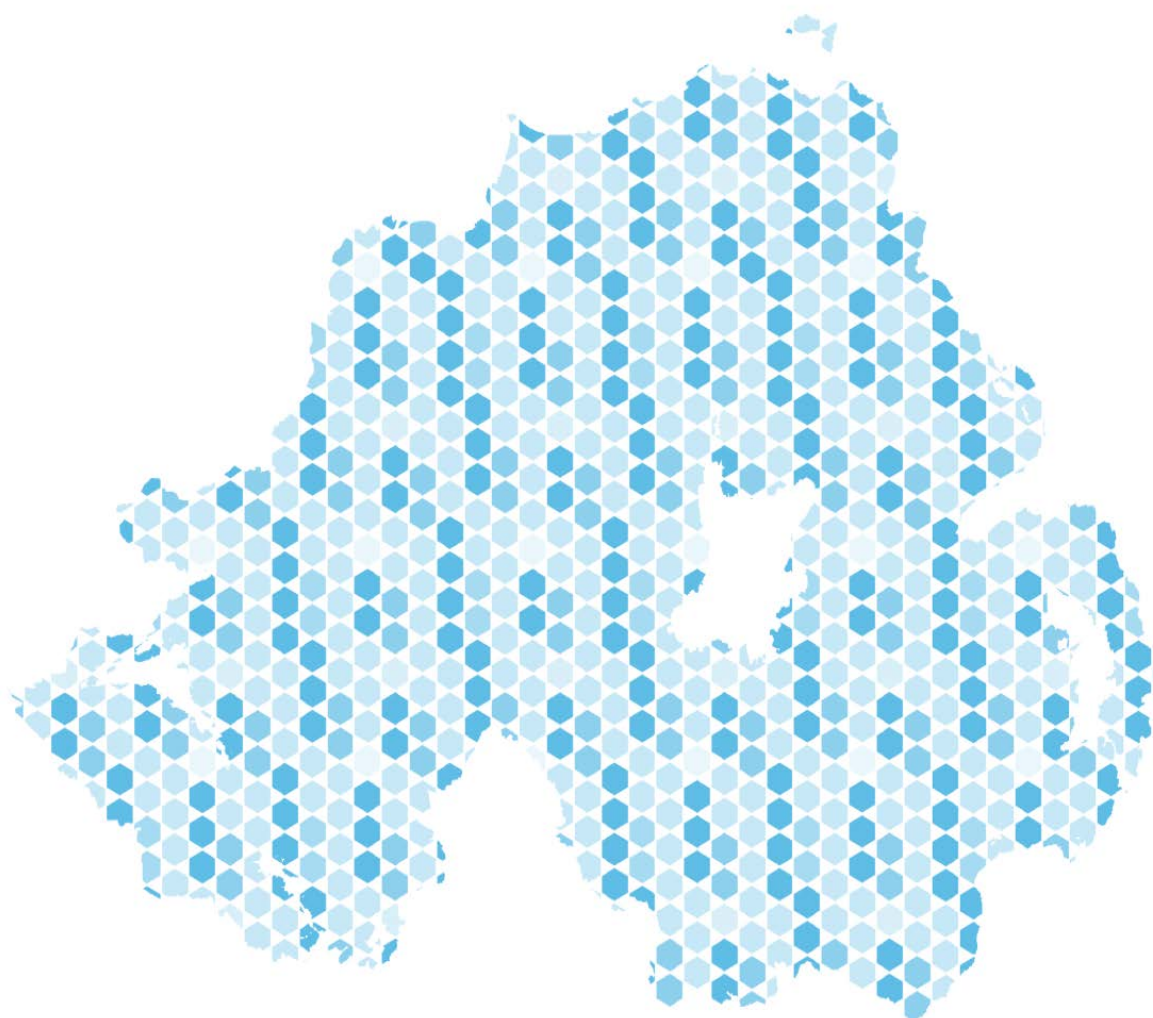


PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Kirkistown Primary School,
Cloughey

Report of an Inspection
in February 2013

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

Kirkistown Primary School is located in the village of Cloughey on the Ards Peninsula, County Down. Since the last inspection visit by the Education and Training Inspection (ETI) in May 2012, a new Principal was appointed. The current enrolment is 130. The school has identified almost 22% of the children as requiring additional support with aspects of their learning. This inspection completes the work that began in May 2012. The inspection was incomplete at that stage due to industrial action being taken by the staff not to co-operate with the Education and Training Inspectorate on advice from their teaching union.

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 processes for self-evaluation leading to improvement.

OVERALL FINDING OF THE INSPECTION

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

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

KEY FINDINGS OF THE INSPECTION

Achievements and Standards

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

- Almost all of the children are highly motivated, engaged in their learning and settle quickly to their work. The behaviour of the children was excellent.
- In both literacy and numeracy, the children participate well in group work and class discussion. In class, the children are able to present their opinions well on current topics. By Key Stage (KS) 2 the children are able to read in line with their abilities. The work in the children's literacy books is very well presented and the children's handwriting is of a very good standard. In the children's literacy and topic books, there are satisfactory opportunities to write for a range of purposes and audiences. The children would benefit from more opportunities for extended and independent writing in a range of genres and across the year groups.

- The recent focus on the development of mental mathematic strategies across the school is having a positive impact on the children's confidence and involvement in the lessons. In KS1 the children are able to sort, match, sequence and make patterns. In KS2 most of the children engage well in problem solving activities although a small number of them are less confident in their knowledge of shape and space.
- The children who require **additional support** with aspects of their learning make steady progress in reaching the identified targets in their individual education plans.

Provision for Learning

The provision for learning is satisfactory.

- The quality of the **teaching** observed ranged from satisfactory to outstanding with the majority being good or better. Most of the teaching is well structured, in the best practice it is appropriately paced and builds well on previous learning. In the less effective practice the teaching lacks sufficient challenge for the more able children and insufficient time is provided to consolidate the children's learning in the plenary. More attention needs to be given to ensure that lessons are sufficiently differentiated to meet the needs and abilities of all of the children.
- Currently, the marking of the children's work is inconsistent; the school has identified the need to review the schools marking policy in line with the school's School Development Plan.
- The planning for play based learning requires considerable development to identify the learning inherent in the activities and the progression in the children's learning. Activities provided in the play based learning sessions are too narrowly focused on a theme and do not extend the children's thinking and learning.
- There is composite provision in the year 1 class which includes six pre-school children. Due to the large number in the class the needs of all of the children are not being met effectively enough. The school has appropriately identified the need to review the reception provision.
- The provision for **special educational needs** is very good and is a particular strength of the school's work. The needs of individual children are identified at an early stage and appropriate advice is sought and additional support provided. The individual education plans (IEPs) are focused on the learning needs of each child with clearly defined targets and strategies. Literacy is supported well through withdrawal sessions by a learning support teacher who is trained in Reading Recovery. Support is also provided for a small number of children who require support for numeracy.
- The quality of the arrangements for **pastoral care** is very good. The school places a strong emphasis on developing links with the parents and external agencies. Many of the children benefit from a wide range of extra-curricular activities and educational visits. In addition, the children welcome their participation on the school council and 'buddy' system and recognise that they have a role to play in the decision-making processes within the school.

- On the basis of the evidence available at the time of the inspection the school has satisfactory arrangements in place for safeguarding children. These arrangements broadly reflect the guidance issued by the relevant Department but the following minor areas need to be addressed:
 - all of the staff and governors training needs to be updated; and a review needs to be undertaken of the procedures and practices relating to risk assessment and intimate care.
- The school gives very good attention to promoting **healthy eating and physical activity**, through, for example, the encouragement for the children to eat a healthy diet and the extensive whole-school physical education and extra-curricular programmes.

Leadership and Management

The quality of leadership and management is satisfactory

- At the time of the inspection the Principal had been in post for six months. During this time, he has provided highly effective leadership and begun to implement important changes to improve the quality of learning and teaching in the school. He has worked diligently with the parents and staff and made valuable links with other schools in the area to build positive working relationships, improve staff morale and to raise the profile of the school in an attempt to halt the declining enrolment. There is evidence to show that his work is addressing the significant challenges facing the school. Working relationships have improved and the enrolment figures have increased. A major review of the day-to-day management and work of the school is currently underway. Appropriate procedures are being developed to bring about the improvements necessary.
- The newly appointed coordinators are enthusiastic about the development of their roles and responsibilities; they have recently identified and prioritised appropriate areas for development within their specialist areas. They are aware of the need to analyse the performance data and use it in a more effective manner to inform learning and teaching across the school.
- The school development plan (SDP) has been reviewed and updated appropriately to reflect the inspection findings from the previous visit, in May 2012, and now meets the DE requirements. The formal process of self-evaluation is at a very early stage.

CONCLUSION

In most of the areas inspected the quality of education provided in this school is satisfactory; the strengths outweigh areas for improvement in the provision. The inspection has identified areas for improvement in achievements and standards, learning and teaching and leadership and management 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;

- develop further the curricular leadership roles and responsibilities of the new coordinators; and
- set in place appropriate strategies in order to monitor and evaluate more effectively the quality of learning and teaching and the standards attained by the children.

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

BASIC INFORMATION SHEET (BIS) - PRIMARY SCHOOLS

- A. i. **School: Kirkistown Primary** iii. **Date of Inspection: W/B 11/02/13**
 ii. **School Reference Number: 401-1373** iv. **Nature of Inspection: Short**

B.

| School Year | 2008/09 | 2009/10 | 2010/11 | 2011/12 | 2012/13 |
|-------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Year 1 Intake | 12 | 21 | 21 | 14 | 24 |
| Enrolments | | | | | |
| Primary | 104 | 116 | 127 | 126 | 125 |
| Reception | 9 | 5 | 3 | 8 | 3 |
| 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): 96.2% **NI Avg Att: 94.7%**

Average Attendance for those children on the Special Educational Needs Register: 95.96%

| Primary & Reception | Nursery Unit | Special Unit | Irish Medium Unit |
|---------------------|--------------|--------------|-------------------|
|---------------------|--------------|--------------|-------------------|

- D. i. Number of Teachers (including the principal and part-time teachers): 7 0 0 0
 (Full-time equivalent = 25 teaching hours)
- ii. PTR (Pupil/Teacher Ratio): 17.9 NI PTR: 20.2
- iii. Average Class Size: 17.4
- iv. Class Size (Range): 9 to 24
- v. Ancillary Support:
 Number of Hours **Per Week**:
 i. Clerical support: 25
 ii. Foundation Stage Classroom Assistant Support: 30
 iii. Additional hours of other classroom assistant support: 30
- vi. Percentage of children with statements of special educational needs: 3.2%
- vii. Total percentage of children on the Special Needs Register: 18.4%
- viii. Number of children who are **not** of statutory school age: 0
- ix. Percentage of children entitled to free school meals: 20%
- 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 86.7% **Mathematics** 80% **Irish** N/A
- xi. If there is a composite class with reception children in it, please indicate the numbers of children in the other year groups:
Year 1 24 **Year 2** 14 **Year 3** 19

THE VIEWS OF THE PARENTS, TEACHERS, 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 a meeting with a group of year 6 children.

In May 2012 a small number of teachers and five of the support staff completed the confidential questionnaire; while the responses were affirmative of many aspects of the work of the school, concerns were raised about, the low staff morale, staff welfare and the lack of strategic leadership.

In February 2013 six of the teachers completed the confidential questionnaire and their responses were wholly positive; a small number of the teachers made additional written comments highlighting their appreciation of the effective leadership of the new Principal and his vision on how he intends to bring about the necessary improvements in the school's work. In addition, a small number of the support staff spoke to the inspection team and highlighted their appreciation for the work of the new Principal in raising the morale of the staff.

The year 6 children spoke enthusiastically about their experiences and the support they receive from the staff. They report that they feel safe and are aware of what to do if they have worries about their well-being.

During the inspection a representative from the governors spoke to the inspection team and commended the work of the Principal and reported that they are well informed about school matters. The Inspectors discussed the issues raised through the questionnaires with the Principal and the representatives from the governors.

HEALTH & SAFETY

- There is no car parking facilities for the school.
- There is a low wall at the front of the school surrounding the children's playground which provides insufficient safety for the children.

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