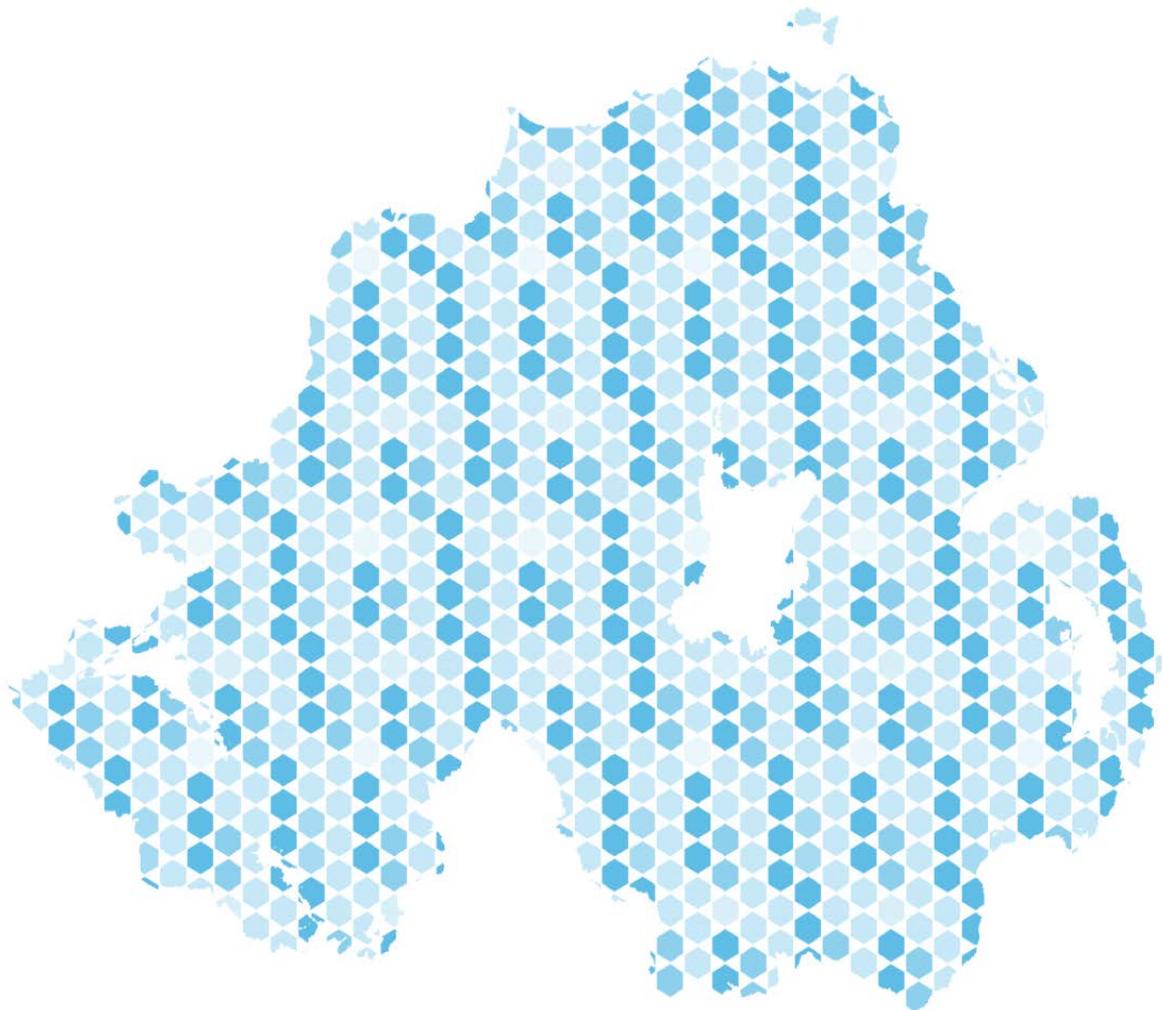


# PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training  
Inspectorate

St John's Primary School and  
Nursery Unit, Middletown,  
Armagh

Report of an Inspection  
in March 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

St John's Primary School and Nursery Unit is situated just outside Middletown in County Armagh. The school opened in June 2000 following the amalgamation of three small local primary schools. The nursery unit, which was added in 2002, operates as a full-time class and is situated in its own purpose built accommodation within the grounds of the primary school. The children who attend the school and nursery unit come from the village and the surrounding rural area. The enrolment in the primary school has risen gradually over the last four years and currently stands at 136 and the enrolment in the nursery unit has remained constant. At the time of the inspection, approximately 11% of the children were entitled to free school meals. The school has identified approximately 15% of the children as requiring 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 FINDINGS OF THE INSPECTION

In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by this school and nursery unit is outstanding; the quality of pastoral care is also outstanding. The school 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 outstanding.**

- In English and maths almost all of the children attain high **standards** in line with or above expectation. In all classes, including in the nursery unit, almost all of the children listen actively and convey their ideas articulately in discussions. The children in the primary classes read expressively and write well for a broad range of purposeful and engaging reasons. Almost all of the children are very flexible thinkers in their work in mathematics; they are able to select from and apply a range of strategies and justify their choices using the appropriate vocabulary. The children attain very good standards in Information and communication technology (ICT). Overall, almost all of the children take very good levels of responsibility; for example, they contribute meaningfully to monitoring and evaluating their own progress in key aspects of their learning.
- The children in the nursery unit are making very good progress in all aspects of their learning and personal development; almost all spend sustained periods in concentrated collaborative play.

- The children identified with **special educational needs** (SEN) make very good progress in line with their ability and are able to apply their learning with growing confidence.

### Provision for Learning

**The quality of the provision for learning is outstanding.**

- Almost all of the **children** are highly motivated in their learning; they work together productively, persevere well and enjoy challenge in their various learning activities.
- During the inspection, the quality of the **teaching** observed was always good or better and over half of the teaching was very good or outstanding. All of the teachers have high expectations of what the children can achieve; they take good account of and build thoughtfully on the children's prior learning which they connect creatively in meaningful contexts. In the nursery unit, the excellent quality of the staff interactions with the children ensures that the opportunities for learning through the play and daily routines are exploited fully.
- The teachers in the school and the nursery unit have developed detailed and thorough **planning** and they use very successfully an effective range of complimentary **assessment** methods to monitor and track the children's progress and inform the future planning.
- The provision for **special educational needs** is outstanding. The rigorous early identification processes and very good range of intervention strategies support well the children who require additional support with aspects of their learning. The individual education plans are sharply focused and inform closely the teachers' work with the children.
- The quality of the **arrangements for pastoral care** in the school and nursery unit is outstanding. There is a warm and welcoming ethos and all of the staff place a strong emphasis on contributing to the development of each child.
- The school and nursery unit give very good attention to promoting **healthy eating and physical activity**, for example, through the provision of healthy breaks and a varied range of regular physical and extra-curricular activities.

### Leadership and Management

**The quality of the leadership and management is outstanding.**

- The teaching **Principal** provides excellent leadership and management. Along with the staff, he has prioritised appropriate actions and strategies for the continuous improvement of the school's and nursery unit's provision. He is ably supported in this work by the highly skilled vice-principal and co-ordinators who work effectively with the whole staff team.

- The whole-school **self-evaluation and development planning** processes are well-embedded and of a high quality. The staff are reflective in their everyday work and they consult appropriately with the children, parents, governors and one another to inform the school's development priorities.
- On the basis of the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the school and 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 this school is outstanding; the quality of the pastoral care is also outstanding. The school has demonstrated its capacity for sustained self-improvement.

## BASIC INFORMATION SHEET (BIS) - PRIMARY SCHOOLS

- A. i. **School: St John's Primary** iii. **Date of Inspection: W/B 13/03/13**  
 ii. **School Reference Number: 503-6622** iv. **Nature of Inspection: Short**

B.

| School Year       | 2008/09 | 2009/10 | 2010/11 | 2011/12 | 2012/13 |
|-------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Year 1 Intake     | 21      | 14      | 24      | 20      | 22      |
| <b>Enrolments</b> |         |         |         |         |         |
| Primary           | 123     | 119     | 123     | 128     | 136     |
| Reception         | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       |
| Nursery Unit      | 26      | 26      | 26      | 26      | 26      |
| 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): 96.74% **NI Avg Att: 94.7%**

Average Attendance for those children on the Special Educational Needs Register: 96.0%

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

- D. i. Number of Teachers (including the principal and part-time teachers): 6.6 1 0 0  
 (Full-time equivalent = 25 teaching hours)
- ii. PTR (Pupil/Teacher Ratio): 20.6 NI PTR: 20.2
- iii. Average Class Size: 22.6
- iv. Class Size (Range): 17 to 30
- v. Ancillary Support:  
 Number of Hours **Per Week**:  
 i. Clerical support: 30  
 ii. Foundation Stage Classroom Assistant Support: 40  
 iii. Additional hours of other classroom assistant support: 15
- vi. Percentage of children with statements of special educational needs: 2.94%
- vii. Total percentage of children on the Special Needs Register: 14.7%
- viii. Number of children who are **not** of statutory school age: 0
- ix. Percentage of children entitled to free school meals: 11.03%
- 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** 82.34% **Mathematics** 82.34% **Irish** N/A

**STATISTICAL INFORMATION ON ST JOHN'S PRIMARY SCHOOL NURSERY UNIT  
(503-6622)**

**1. Details of Children**

| <b>Number of children:</b>  | <b>Class 1</b> | <b>Class 2</b> |
|---|----------------|----------------|
| Attending full-time   | 26             | 0              |
| Attending part-time   | 0              | 0              |
| Under 3 years of age*   | 0              | 0              |
| With statement of special educational needs   | 0              | 0              |
| Without a statement but receiving therapy or support from other professionals for special educational needs | 7              | 0              |
| At CoP stages 3 or 4**  | ***            | 0              |
| At CoP stages 1 or 2**  | ***            | 0              |
| With English as an additional language  | 0              | 0              |

\* On 1 July.

\*\* The stages refer to those set out in the Code of Practice for the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs.

\*\*\* Fewer than five.

|   |       |
|---|-------|
| Percentage qualifying under DE admission criteria 1 or 2. | 7.69% |
| Average attendance for the previous year.                 | 95.1% |

**2. Duration of Sessions**

| <b>Full-time</b> | <b>Part-time: am</b> | <b>Part-time: pm</b> |
|------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| 4¾ hours         | -                    | -                    |

**3. Details of Staff**

| <b>Number of:</b>                  | <b>Full-Time</b> | <b>Part-Time</b> |
|------------------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Teachers                           | 1                | 0                |
| Nursery Assistants (qualified)     | 1                | 0                |
| Nursery Assistants (non-qualified) | 0                | 0                |

| <b>Number of: ***</b> |   |
|-----------------------|---|
| Students              | 1 |
| Trainees              | 0 |

\*\*\* Total placements since September of current year

**4. Parental Questionnaires**

|                            |     |
|----------------------------|-----|
| Number issued              | 26  |
| Percentage returned        | 39% |
| Number of written comments | *** |

## APPENDIX 3

### 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 confidential questionnaires prior to the inspection. Eighty-five questionnaires were issued to the parents of the children in the primary school; thirty-one (36%) were returned to Inspection Services Branch and fifteen contained additional written comments.

Twenty-six questionnaires were issued to the parents of the children in the nursery unit; ten (39%) were returned to Inspection Services Branch and a small number contained additional written comments.

Almost all of the teachers and support staff completed the online questionnaire and a small number included written comments.

Almost all of the responses from the questionnaires returned were highly positive and the written comments paid tribute to the dedication, hard work and approachability of all of the staff and the emphasis placed by the school on providing a wide range of learning experiences for all of the children.

The inspectors also met with a group of children from year 6. The children spoke enthusiastically about their experiences at school, including their enjoyment of learning and the kind, supportive staff. The children reported that they feel very secure and happy in school and know what to do if they have any worries or concerns about their safety and well-being.

The Inspectorate has reported to the Principal, and representatives of the governors, the responses from the questionnaires.

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