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*The Education and Training Inspectorate -
Promoting Improvement*



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



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Education and Training Inspectorate

Report of a Focused Inspection

All Saints Primary School
Omagh

Inspected: November 2006

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BASIC INFORMATION SHEET (BIS) - PRIMARY SCHOOLS

- A. i. **School: All Saints Primary, Omagh** iii. **Date of Inspection: W/B 27.11.06**
 ii. **School Reference Number: 203-6557** iv. **Nature of Inspection: FI/English/SEN/ICT**

B.

School Year	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07
Year 1 Intake	3	7	3	3	4
Enrolments					
Primary	51	52	38	29	27
Reception	4	1	2	6	4

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):

94.1%

Primary & Reception	Nursery Unit	Special Unit
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- D. i. Number of Teachers
 (including the principal and part-time teachers): 2 - -
 (Full-time equivalent = 25 teaching hours)
- ii. PTR (Pupil/Teacher Ratio): 15.5 NI PTR: 20.5
- iii. Average Class Size: 15.5
- iv. Class Size (Range): 13 to 18
- v. Ancillary Support:
 Number of Hours **Per Week**:
- | | |
|--|-----|
| i. Clerical support: | 7.5 |
| ii. Official Making A Good
Start Support: | 10 |
| iii. Additional hours of other
classroom assistant support: | 5 |
- vi. Number of children with statements of special educational needs: 0
- vii. Number of children who are not of statutory school age: 4
- viii. Percentage of children entitled to free school meals: 33.3%

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 All Saints' Primary School is situated in the townland of Tattysallagh, approximately four miles south-west of Omagh, Co Tyrone. Most of the children who attend the school come from the surrounding rural area; a few of the children travel from the outskirts of Omagh. The enrolment has decreased in recent years from a figure of 53 in 2002 to the current figure of 31. Approximately one-third of the children are entitled to receive free school meals.

1.2 The inspection focused on the work in English, including information and communication technology (ICT) and the provision for special educational needs (SEN). The inspection also evaluated the school's procedures for pastoral care, including the arrangements for child protection.

1.3 The arrangements for the inspection of pastoral care and child protection included the completion of questionnaires by the parents, as well as meetings with the Board of Governors (BoG) and with the year 6 children. Prior to the inspection, all of the parents were asked to complete a confidential questionnaire on the work of the school. Forty-one per cent of the parents responded to the questionnaire; a majority of those responding took the opportunity to write additional comments. The parents indicated that generally they have a high regard for many aspects of the school. A minority of parents, however, raised concerns about the recent fall in enrolment and the standards the children achieve.

1.4 The BoG expressed concern about some aspects of the organisation and management of the school. These included issues from past years, including the declining enrolment, the effectiveness of the communication between the school and the BoG and the standards achieved by the children. In particular, they mentioned the absence of important whole-school guidance and policies, and the need for a collegial approach to school and curricular leadership. The BoG also expressed their satisfaction with the dedication and work of the recently-appointed Principal. They reported that the parents and the community had a renewed confidence in the school and this was reflected in the increased enrolment at the start of the year and the parents' interest in the work of the school.

1.5 During the inspection a number of parents and BoG arranged separate meetings with the inspection team in which they expressed positive comments, including their high regard for the Principal, and similar concerns.

1.6 The group of year 6 children who met with the inspection team spoke very positively about the school; they reported that they enjoy school and that they value the help provided by the teachers. They feel safe, know how to seek help if a problem arises and are aware of the positive behaviour and discipline expected of them.

2. THE QUALITY OF THE CHILDREN'S WORK

2.1 The behaviour of the children is exemplary; they show enthusiasm for their work, cooperate willingly and respectfully with their teachers and are welcoming and courteous to visitors. The children are caring of one another, both in and outside of class.

2.2 During the inspection, the classrooms, corridors and assembly areas were bright and attractive with displays of the children's work, including paintings, drawings, personal writing, poems, word banks and research from the Internet; these reflect the range of the children's work and they were used effectively as resources for learning. The excess accommodation, including two classrooms, is being used to enhance the range of learning activities for the younger children.

2.3 The school is participating in the Extended Schools Initiative and has established links with other primary and special education schools in the area. Appropriately, parents have been consulted about which sporting and creative activities may be offered through the initiative. The school has also agreed to be one of the community primary schools linked to a nearby Specialist School. It is planned that the children will experience a range of activities, including the use of the post-primary school's ICT facilities in order to practise and develop further their skills and knowledge. The parents are encouraged to be involved in aspects of school life through, for example, their membership of the newly formed 'Friends of All Saints' Primary School' group.

2.4 The ancillary staff, including the secretary, classroom assistants, school meals and cleaning staff make a valuable contribution to the work of the school. The exemplary standards of caretaking and cleaning contribute significantly to the attractive environment for the children.

2.5 The school has developed, and is implementing, programmes that encourage the children to adopt healthy life-styles. There is a developing commitment to promoting healthy eating, and opportunities are provided for all the children to participate in a range of physical activities.

2.6 There are many strengths in the quality of the arrangements for pastoral care and child protection. The school has procedures in place which implement the guidance outlined in the relevant Department of Education (DE) Circulars and has identified appropriately a minor area for improvement. Among the strengths are the appropriate policies relating to pastoral care and child protection matters and the means through which the parents and children have been informed of how they can raise concerns. The minor area for improvement identified is the need to develop and agree a Code of Conduct for all the staff.

2.7 The teachers plan individually for their teaching at four-weekly and daily levels. The four-weekly planning outlines the intended learning outcomes, learning activities, resources and assessment opportunities. In the best practice observed, the planning was sufficiently detailed to ensure that the activities and experiences matched the abilities of the children, provided opportunities for the intended learning and had appropriate degree of challenge particularly for the more able. There is evidence that the teachers undertake regular evaluation of the learning in their own class, and, at its most effective, this provides information to help them plan for future learning. There is a need, through appropriate collaboration and effective teamwork, to review the existing schemes of work and to develop further whole-school guidance to ensure progression and greater coherence in the children's learning within and across both key stages.

2.8 The quality of teaching observed during the inspection was always satisfactory and on occasions it was good. In the best practice, the intended learning outcomes were shared with the children, the activities were challenging and matched to the children's abilities, the resources were stimulating, and the children were engaged fully and took responsibility for aspects of their own learning. The teacher also provided effective support to reinforce learning and to take forward the children's understanding. In the less effective practice, the work was over-directed by the teacher and focused on the completion of the common, low-level tasks by the class, the questioning strategies used required minimal responses and the children had insufficient opportunities to discuss their work with one another. Where the intended learning outcomes were not sharply focused, the learning was often superficial and the children were not given opportunities to consolidate their understanding at the conclusion of the lesson.

2.9 The children experience a range of enjoyable play-based learning activities in key stage (KS) 1. The timely intervention of the teacher and the classroom assistants encourages the children's development and learning. Two vacant classrooms are used well to provide the children with opportunities to use and explore a variety of large and small equipment, for example, in role-play situations. During the inspection the children chose and used different resources competently to prepare displays. The classroom assistants encouraged and stimulated the children to use and extend their vocabulary, to develop their manipulative skills, and to work confidently in small group contexts. Incidental records are kept regularly of each child's responses to the play activities. It will be important that this good practice of recording the children's achievements informs the planning for the next stages of each child's learning.

2.10 The children have good opportunities to develop their talking and listening skills through a well-planned programme of activities. In the best practice observed, the children displayed confidence and enthusiasm as they participated in role-play, interviews and where they had opportunities to express their opinions, responses and feelings. Where discussions are over-directed by the teacher, the children's responses are limited; opportunities for challenging their thinking or requiring them to organise and present their thoughts in a reasoned way are limited. It is important that within the context of the composite classes and the small number in each year group, that each child is challenged to develop their communication skills, both orally and in written form. In addition, the development of the children's oral skills needs to be reflected more in their personal writing through appropriate writing activities and contexts. There is an over-emphasis at times on transcription of text into classbooks rather than the children developing and applying their skills as writers across the whole curriculum, particularly in contexts other than English.

2.11 In the early years the teacher makes skilful use of a range of reading strategies designed to encourage the children to develop their competence as readers and to enjoy books. In both classes the teachers have provided collections of books to support class topics and themes. In the junior class the teacher develops effectively the children's talking and listening skills across all subject areas. Through discussion, play-based learning and a range of very practical activities, the children's vocabulary is extended and their skills of communication are promoted. They are developing a range of strategies to help them identify and read unfamiliar words through, for example, a variety of phonic activities and games.

2.12 In the senior class, a range of activities has been planned around the study of the class novel and these have the potential to provide opportunities for the children to develop their skills in reading, writing, talking and listening and to apply them. The children's ability to explore texts and infer meaning is developed further through the teachers' use of open-ended questions that require the children to organise and extend their thinking. The school and class libraries are very well stocked with a wide range of reference books and other texts.

2.13 In the early years, the children increasingly have opportunities to write in different forms and for a range of purposes, particularly to record their responses to class activities or to incidents happening at school and home. The emphasis placed currently on the development of phonics and the use of word banks is making a positive impact on the quality of the children's writing. There are currently too few examples of the children's personal writing across the curriculum. The older children need to have further opportunities to write for different purposes and for a range of audiences.

2.14 A significant minority of the children make satisfactory progress in their reading and achieve standards in writing of which they are capable. Nevertheless, overall, the standards of literacy in the school could be improved. The recent emphasis on addressing this issue has already begun to demonstrate improvement.

2.15 The school's ICT facilities are used to support learning, for example, in literacy, history and science, and the children acquire the basic skills of word processing and using the Internet by the end of KS2. The children would benefit, however, from having more opportunities to compose and edit on screen and to use a fuller range of software packages. There is a need to update the whole-school guidance in order to facilitate the greater use of ICT to promote and support learning and teaching across the curriculum.

2.16 The school has recently developed a new policy regarding the provision for the children who require additional support with aspects of their learning. The policy is detailed and forms a good basis from which to develop appropriate procedures and practices. An effective action plan has been developed and the Principal, in her capacity as Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO), has re-established suitable records of liaison meetings and Educational Psychologist assessments. Currently the school has identified nine children who require additional support with aspects of their learning. The teachers have prepared education plans for four of the children in order to address the children's particular difficulties and to plan for improvement. It will be important that there is a co-ordinated approach to special educational needs provision within the school. There is a need to re-establish the use of appropriate standardised tests to help the teachers to identify the children who require help and track their progress.

2.17 An annual report is issued to the parents and opportunities are provided for them to meet with the teachers to discuss the progress made by their children. The school maintains a folder for each child in which copies of the reports and samples of work are retained. There is a need to review and update regularly the school's recording and reporting procedures in order that the progress of the children can be monitored effectively and parents are informed regularly of the standards that their child has achieved.

2.18 The teachers mark the children's work regularly and generally annotate the work with positive comments. In the best practice, the teachers indicate, through comment and example, how the children may improve the quality of their work.

2.19 There are four children enrolled in the school who are below statutory school age. Whilst the children are provided with helpful experiences through play that encourage their overall development, their presence adds significantly to the demands on the teaching staff and on the organisation of the school. The presence of these children should be reviewed within a context of specific pre-school facilities and resources.

2.20 The BoG are supportive of the overall work of the school. However, there has been little informal monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning across the school or analysis of the school performance information, particularly the standards which the children attain. The staff need to have a more prominent role in monitoring and evaluating the standards achieved by the children and in the implementation of strategies designed to raise standards. The current helpful School Development Plan (SDP) and subsequent action plans need to be amended, agreed and implemented in order to guide the development of the curriculum and to raise the standards of the children's work and their attainments. This will require the effective engagement and full support of all of the staff, the BoG and the employing authority.

2.21 The Principal has been in post since the beginning of the current school year. She has demonstrated her managerial and leadership skills, and given, very significantly, of her time, to address a number of important issues relating to the school. The Principal has prepared a number of policies and guidance central to the management of the school and to the provision for the children and shared these with the BoG. She has a clear vision for the school, for the improvement of the curriculum, for raised standards for the children and for the promotion of the school within the immediate and wider areas. The Principal has the support of the BoG and she has also established good links with the parents. There is increased parental contact with the school and greater support for their children's learning.

2.22 This school currently has a teaching staff of two; each teacher has five-year groups and three-year groups respectively. This arrangement places very considerable demands on each member of staff to plan, teach and monitor the work of each year group across a full key stage, within a composite class. It is essential, therefore, that productive working relationships are put in place, in the interests of the learners, to support the work of the school, including the planning, monitoring and evaluation of the whole curriculum and the tracking of each child's attainments.

3. CONCLUSION

3.1 The strengths of the school include the:

- bright and stimulating environment for learning;
- exemplary behaviour of the children and their enthusiasm and motivation for learning;
- commitment and support of the BoG and parents;
- contribution by the classroom assistants and other ancillary staff to the children's learning and to the life and work of the school;
- high quality of caretaking and cleaning;

- high standard of pastoral care for the children;
- good quality of some of the lessons observed during the inspection;
- good start made to addressing a number of important issues within the school; and
- skills, commitment, enthusiasm and vision of the recently-appointed principal.

3.2 The areas for improvement include the need:

- for the effective engagement and full support of all of the staff, the BoG and the employing authority in amending the current helpful SDP and subsequent action plans in light of the inspection findings;
- to raise the standards achieved by the children; and
- to have effective strategies and procedures to monitor the learning and teaching across the school and to track the children's attainments.

3.3 In the areas inspected, the school has strengths in its educational and pastoral provision. The inspection has identified important areas for improvement which need to be addressed promptly and collaboratively if the school is to meet effectively the needs of all learners.

3.4 The Education and Training Inspectorate will monitor and report on the school's progress in addressing these areas for improvement.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

The school should consider the installation of a secure door access system.

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