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**Department of Education  
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Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure**



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

## **Education and Training Inspectorate**

### **Report of a Focused Inspection**

### **Hollywood Primary School**

**Inspected: May 2008**

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## BASIC INFORMATION SHEET (BIS) - PRIMARY SCHOOLS

- A. i. **School: Hollywood Primary** iii. **Date of Inspection: W/B 12/05/08**  
 ii. **School Reference Number: 401-1631** iv. **Nature of Inspection: Focused**

B.

School Year	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08
Year 1 Intake	57	47	43	41	31
<b>Enrolments</b>					
Primary	405	382	367	355	343
Reception	0	0	0	0	0
Nursery Class/Classes	0	0	0	0	0
Special 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):

96.3

Primary & Reception	Nursery Unit	Special Unit
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- D. i. Number of Teachers  
 (including the principal and part-time teachers): 15 0 0  
 (Full-time equivalent = 25 teaching hours)
- ii. PTR (Pupil/Teacher Ratio): 22.86 NI PTR: 20.8
- iii. Average Class Size: 25
- iv. Class Size (Range): 15 to 32
- v. Ancillary Support:  
 Number of Hours **Per Week**:
- |   |    |
|---|----|
| i. Clerical support:  | 56 |
| ii. Official Making A Good Start Support:                   | 30 |
| iii. Additional hours of other classroom assistant support: | 80 |
- vi. Percentage of children with statements of special educational needs: 11.6
- vii. Total percentage of children on the Special Needs Register: 21
- viii. Number of children who are **not** of statutory school age: 0
- ix. Percentage of children entitled to free school meals: 9

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

1.1 Holywood Primary School is situated in the centre of Holywood, County Down. The majority of children who attend the school live in the town; an increasing number of children are coming to the school from other areas. The enrolment currently stands at 343. Nine per cent of the children are entitled to free school meals. Twenty-one percent of the children have been identified as requiring additional support with aspects of their learning.

1.2 The arrangements for the inspection of pastoral care and child protection included the opportunity for the parents to complete a confidential questionnaire prior to the inspection, as well as meetings with representatives from the Board of Governors (governors) and groups of children from years 6 and 7. One hundred and nineteen questionnaires were issued to parents; approximately 43% were returned to the Department of Education (DE), of which 24 contained additional written comments many praising the staff and work of the school. At the meeting with the governors, they expressed their confidence in the school and appreciation of the commitment and hard work of all the staff. In discussions held with the year 6 children, they talked openly and positively about their experiences in the school, the extra-curricular activities available to them, and the care and support provided by their teachers. They indicated that they know whom to turn to if they have any concerns regarding their work or their safety and well-being. The Education and Training Inspectorate has reported, the areas of concern emerging from the questionnaires and the discussions, to the Principal and representatives of the governors. The Principal and governors expressed their commitment to addressing all of the concerns.

1.3 The inspection focused on the work in mathematics and the effectiveness of the school's special educational needs (SEN) provision. In addition, the inspection evaluated the work in information and communication technology (ICT) in promoting and supporting learning and teaching in mathematics. The inspection also evaluated the school's procedures for pastoral care, including child protection.

## **2. THE QUALITY OF THE CHILDREN'S WORK**

2.1 The children learn within a caring and supportive environment; they are friendly and welcoming to visitors. The classrooms, corridors and the entrance foyer contain colourful and attractive displays of the children's work and sporting achievements, these displays add substantially to the atmosphere throughout the school.

2.2 Over the past few years, the school has undergone a period of staff changes; a new special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) has recently joined the teaching staff. There is a developing sense of team-spirit and a common sense of purpose amongst the staff; the teachers are hard-working and committed to the children. The support staff contribute well to the smooth running of the school.

2.3 The school's programme for the promotion of health and well-being has important strengths. Attention is paid to the development and implementation of healthy eating and physical activity programmes, for example after-school cookery club, meaningful links with external agencies and posters to reinforce healthy eating messages, which encourage the children to adopt healthy lifestyles. The few areas for improvement identified consist of the

need to include an assessment of the nature and quality of the arrangements for health and well-being practices in the school development plan (SDP) in order to comply with statutory regulations and the extension of food-related health initiatives to include the adoption of a healthy break policy to further support a whole-school approach to health.

2.4 The children's experiences are enriched through a wide variety of extra-curricular activities which include music and sporting activities. In addition, the children's learning and social development are enhanced through participation in educational visits, competitions and community events.

2.5 The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care and child protection has important strengths. The school has procedures in place which implement the guidance outlined in the relevant DE Circulars and has identified appropriately a few areas for improvement which it is currently implementing.

2.6 Among the main strengths are:

- the promotion of a caring and supportive learning environment;
- the frequent examples of courtesy and positive responses from most of the children;
- the wide range of extra-curricular and enrichment activities provided for the children;
- the merit reward scheme used to encourage good behaviour and positive achievements; and
- the commitment of the pastoral care co-ordinator and the staff to the welfare of the children.

2.7 The areas for improvement identified include:

- the need to review the arrangements for the dismissal and collection of the children at the end of the school day; and
- the need to monitor and evaluate further the effectiveness of the implementation of pastoral care and child protection policies.

2.8 There is a strong sense of community within the school. The school is committed to maintaining and extending links with the parents and the wider community. Appropriate induction procedures are in place to welcome new parents and children, and a range of information meetings, and a regular newsletter are provided throughout the year to encourage the parents to become involved in school events and to play an active role in the education of their children. The Parent Teacher Association (PTA) plays an integral part in the life of the school and has helped raise significant funds to further enhance the experiences offered to the children.

2.9 The overall provision for mathematics is generally sound and the co-ordinator has a good understanding of the areas for improvement required in mathematics. She has identified appropriately the need to develop long-term planning for continuity and progression in the children's learning; and to monitor and review the teachers' six-weekly planners and lesson evaluations to identify and share good practice.

2.10 In the foundation stage (FS) and in key stage (KS) 1 the children enjoy a wide range of experiences. There is appropriate development of early mathematical language. A counting stick, finger puppets, rhymes and action songs are used effectively to develop an understanding of the number system, addition and subtraction. Mathematical games, well-chosen practical resources and effective oral work led by the teacher are used well to help the children acquire a sound understanding of number, measures, shape and data-handling. As the children progress through KS2 the majority of them continue to make good progress in mathematics. The evidence from their workbooks, however, suggests that there is insufficient breadth of experiences and that there is a need to improve the quality of presentation.

2.11 During the inspection, the quality of most of the teaching observed was satisfactory; a significant minority was consistently good and a small number of lessons were very good. In a minority of the lessons observed the teaching had weaknesses. In the best practice observed, the children engaged actively in their learning; displayed high levels of motivation and enjoyment; worked collaboratively; and had good opportunities to discuss and explain their mathematical thinking. During these lessons, the learning intentions were clear, there was effective questioning, the pace and level of challenge was appropriate, and a suitable range of learning activities and resources were used. In the less effective practice observed, there was no clear focus to the learning, the teaching was over-directed and lacked differentiation, and there were limited opportunities for the children to develop their mathematical skills and knowledge. In general, there is a need to develop effective plenary sessions to consolidate learning.

2.12 Most of the numeracy lessons observed commenced with a mental mathematics session, and a minority included an element of mental mathematics within the lesson. To develop this practice further, the mental mathematics should be linked to the learning objective, when appropriate, and there is a need to promote greater consistency in the development of mental mathematics strategies during these sessions.

2.13 By the end of KS1, the children show a good understanding of number, can demonstrate flexibility in their thinking, have a quick recall of simple number facts and multiplication bonds, can understand simple metric measurements and have a sound knowledge of the properties of two-dimensional (2D) shapes. By the end of year seven most of the children attain good standards in their mathematics. They have a broad mathematical understanding including place value, calculating, estimating and measuring, and a good knowledge of the properties of a variety of 2D and 3D shapes. The children can demonstrate flexibility in their thinking and solve problems.

2.14 During the inspection, ICT was used effectively to enhance the quality of teaching and learning in the majority of numeracy lessons observed. Programmable devices such as 'Beebot' and 'Probot' are used well to help the children gain an understanding of number, sequencing and direction, and other software programs are used to support the learning of

mathematics. In the FS, interactive whiteboards are used very effectively to engage the children actively in their learning. For example, important data-handling concepts such as classification are reinforced through the children dragging and dropping data on Carroll diagrams.

2.15 Standardised test scores are collated and used to assess the children's level of attainment and identify children who are in need of additional help with aspects of their learning. Appropriate individual education plans (IEPs) are maintained. Specific, measurable and attainable learning targets have been identified for numeracy, and the IEPs are reviewed twice each year. Support is provided by the class teacher and withdrawal sessions are available with the SEN teacher. In general, there is a need to develop further the use of standardised test outcomes to track progress in learning for all children and inform planning.

2.16 The children's work is marked regularly and often annotated with supportive and personalised comments which serve to encourage them. In the best practice the children were self-assessing and receiving appropriate feedback from their teacher. The school is working towards greater consistency in marking for improvement and target-setting. To develop the quality of marking further, indications should be given to the children as to how they can improve their work, and the children should be given an opportunity to address misconceptions and correct mistakes in order to consolidate their learning. Parents are informed about their children's progress through consultation meetings and an annual written report.

2.17 A new special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) has very recently been appointed by the school. Since taking up her post she has drafted a new policy for SEN and is currently reviewing the SEN provision. The school has a strong commitment to supporting the children who require additional support with aspects of their learning. The children's learning needs are identified through the combination of teacher observation and the analysis of standardised and diagnostic tests. Currently, almost all of the support is provided through in-class and withdrawal sessions. The class teachers in liaison with the SENCO prepare IEPs to meet the needs of those children with specific difficulties. The parents have an input into the preparation and review of the plans. The children's attainments in literacy and numeracy are monitored and evaluated. As the SENCO develops her role it will be important to review the SEN provision in order to ensure that it is manageable.

2.18 The Principal, who is in his third year in post, is hard-working and committed. He has a good knowledge of the children and has recently reviewed the roles and responsibilities of all the staff. In particular, he has reviewed important pastoral aspects of the school's provision and is committed to improving other aspects of the school's educational provision. It will be important for the Principal to develop further the roles and responsibilities of the co-ordinators to promote ongoing improvement within their curricular areas.

2.19 The Principal has sought the views of teachers through an audit which has been useful in beginning to develop a more collegial approach to school development planning. The SDP identifies a wide range of important areas for improvement; it is timely however that the SDP is being reviewed; the school should consider prioritising the areas identified for improvement in this inspection report. It will be important that the school puts in place a

range of strategies to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of planning, and teaching and learning across those areas contained in the SDP. In addition, further use should be made of all available benchmarking data and first-hand evidence gained from monitoring, to set targets for further improvement in the children's learning. The school should continue to develop a culture to promote self-evaluation.

2.20 The school's staff development programme includes a combination of school-based and external in-service training, mainly by the South-Eastern Education and Library Board which focuses on pastoral and curricular areas.

2.21 The quality of the accommodation is satisfactory and the standard of the caretaking is good. The staff make significant efforts to ensure that the learning environment is attractive, bright and stimulating; the children's work is celebrated through displays of the art work and photographs of their experiences throughout the school. Trophies and photographs of the children's many sporting achievements provide interesting exhibitions in the foyer.

### 3. CONCLUSION

3.1 The strengths of the school include:

- the promotion of a caring and supportive learning environment and the use made of the children's work and achievements throughout the school to celebrate their efforts and success;
- the good standards achieved by most of the children in mathematics;
- the interesting and varied range of extra-curricular activities which enrich the children's experiences and development;
- the effective use of practical equipment and range of resources, including ICT, used to support learning and teaching in mathematics;
- the commitment of the Principal to developing further the educational provision, and the hard-working and dedicated teachers; and
- the strong links established with, and support of, the governors, parents, and the local community for the work of the school.

3.2 The areas for improvement include the need to:

- develop further the role of the co-ordinators to include the monitoring and evaluation of the quality of the learning within their areas of responsibility;
- ensure that the work within mathematic lessons is differentiated and provides appropriate pace and challenge to meet the needs and abilities of all the children; and



- review the numeracy planning to ensure continuity and progression throughout the school using all available data to set appropriate targets and inform further planning and teaching.

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

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

**HEALTH AND SAFETY**

- A privacy barrier needs to be erected in the boys' toilets.
- There is a need to carry out a school risk assessment to identify and address any potential health and safety hazards.
- There is a need to ensure that the infant playground is secured over the lunch time break.
- Ensure that viewing panels into the classrooms are clear of obstructions.

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