

PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Aghavilly Primary School,
Armagh

Report of an Inspection
in March 2011



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

Aghavilly Primary School is a controlled primary school situated in a rural setting approximately five miles from Armagh. The children attending the school come from the surrounding villages and townlands. The enrolment has declined in recent years and currently stands at 19 including one child of reception age. At the time of the inspection, none of the children in the school were entitled to free school meals. The school has identified five percent of the children as requiring additional support with aspects of his learning. The Principal has been in post since 1999.

The protracted discussions about the school's sustainability over recent years have created a sense of uncertainty within the school and wider community. This has added significantly to the pressures felt by the staff and in particular the Principal who is also a class teacher.

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 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 leadership and management, provision for learning and standards which need to be addressed if the needs of all the children are to be met more effectively.

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

KEY FINDINGS OF THE INSPECTION

Achievements and Standards

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

The **standards** achieved by the children in English and mathematics by the end of key stage 2 range from satisfactory to very good. The Principal and the Vice-principal have made a useful start to the collation of a range of quantitative and qualitative assessment data; they now need to use this information to track the progress of individual children and, specifically, to identify and address underachievement.

The children who are, or who have been, in recent years, identified as requiring **additional support with aspects of their learning** make satisfactory progress. The school is able to identify a number of children whose progress has been such that they have been removed from the special educational needs register.

Provision for Learning

The provision for learning is satisfactory.

- The quality of the **children's** responses in class is varied; most respond positively but there is a need for the teachers to provide more creative and inspiring learning opportunities across the curriculum in order to engage a small number of the children who display low levels of motivation to learning.
- The quality of the **teaching** observed was always satisfactory and on one occasion it was good. In order to bring about improvement, the teachers need to incorporate mathematical processes into their planning to ensure greater consistency and progression in the development of the children's problem solving and thinking skills.
- The provision for **special educational needs** is good. A small number of children benefit from additional support in literacy through the Reading Partnership scheme and mathematics through the Maths Catch-up programme. There is a need, however, for the progress made by these children to be monitored and recorded in a more systematic manner to ensure that the early gains made as a result of this intervention are sustained.
- The quality of the arrangements for **pastoral care** in the school is very good. The strengths include the caring ethos, the very good behaviour of the children and the appropriate merit systems which are highly valued by the children. The teachers have identified the many challenges presented by the wide range of ability and age in the two classes and work hard to meet the children's emotional and social needs.
- The school has satisfactory arrangements in place for **safeguarding children**. While these arrangements reflect broadly the guidance issued by the Department of Education (DE), the staff and Board of Governors (governors) are due to receive refresher training in child protection matters. The school is in the process of updating the policies and procedures for child protection.

Leadership and Management

The quality of leadership and management is satisfactory.

The Principal, who has a significant teaching commitment, manages the school efficiently. In addition, she has worked hard with the governors, local community and parents to meet the challenges presented by the ongoing concerns over the sustainability of the school. She has, with the support of the Vice-principal, undertaken an audit of the provision within the school and has identified appropriately the need to develop further the approaches to the teaching of writing, processes in mathematics and the need to make more effective use of data to track the children's progress in relation to their potential.

The whole school audit has informed the school development planning (SDP) process; the current SDP complies with DE requirements and is well placed to guide the strategic direction of the school.

There is a need for the Principal and the governors to review the provision for children of reception age to ensure that they have full access to the pre-school curriculum.

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 leadership and management, provision for learning and standards which need to be addressed if the needs of all the learners are to be met more effectively.

These include the need to:

- improve aspects of the literacy provision including the systematic teaching of writing across the school;
- develop further the children's problem-solving skills in mathematics; and
- make more systematic use of the qualitative and quantitative data to inform the learning and teaching of the children across the age and ability range in the classes .

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

It will be important that the employing authority, school governors and the staff plan for, and manage, issues related to the sustainability of the school provision and school budget, in order to address the current and future needs of the children and the staff.

BASIC INFORMATION SHEET (BIS) - PRIMARY SCHOOLS

- A. i. **School: Aghavilly Primary Armagh** iii. **Date of Inspection: W/B 21/03/11**
 ii. **School Reference Number: 501-1034** iv. **Nature of Inspection: Short**

B.

School Year	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
Year 1 Intake	3	0	4	3	2
Enrolments					
Primary	42	32	28	22	19
Reception	1	0	2	1	1
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): 95.2% **NI Avg Att: 94.9%**
- | | Primary & Reception | Nursery Unit | Special Unit | Irish Medium Unit |
|--|------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| D. i. Number of Teachers (including the principal and part-time teachers): (Full-time equivalent = 25 teaching hours) | 2.6 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| ii. PTR (Pupil/Teacher Ratio): | 7.3 | NI PTR: 20.7 | | |
| iii. Average Class Size: | 9.5 | | | |
| iv. Class Size (Range): | 8 to 11 | | | |
| 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: | | | | 5 |
| vi. Percentage of children with statements of special educational needs: | | | | 0% |
| vii. Total percentage of children on the Special Needs Register: | | | | 5.3% |
| viii. Number of children who are not of statutory school age: | | | | 1 |
| ix. Percentage of children entitled to free school meals: | | | | 0% |
| x. Percentage of children at the end of Key Stage 2 for 2009/10 who attained level 4 and above in English and mathematics: | English
100% | Mathematics
100% | | |
| 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
2 | Year 2
3 | Year 3
2 | |

APPENDIX 2

THE VIEWS OF THE PARENTS, TEACHERS, 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. Of the 12 questionnaires issued to the parents, eight (67%) were returned to Inspection Services Branch, including five which contained additional written comments. Most of the parents expressed satisfaction with and support for the life and work of the school. In the written comments, they praised the provision of a caring environment, the hard-working staff and the sense of community in the school. The few issues raised in the written comments were discussed with the Principal.

All of the teachers and the support staff responded positively to the staff questionnaires and indicated high levels of satisfaction with school life.

The inspectors also met with the year 6 and year 7 children; all of the children were enthusiastic about their experiences at school. They talked about the friendly and caring environment, the extra-curricular sporting activities and the value they place on the school's reward system. The children feel safe in school and are aware of what to do if they have worries about well-being.

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