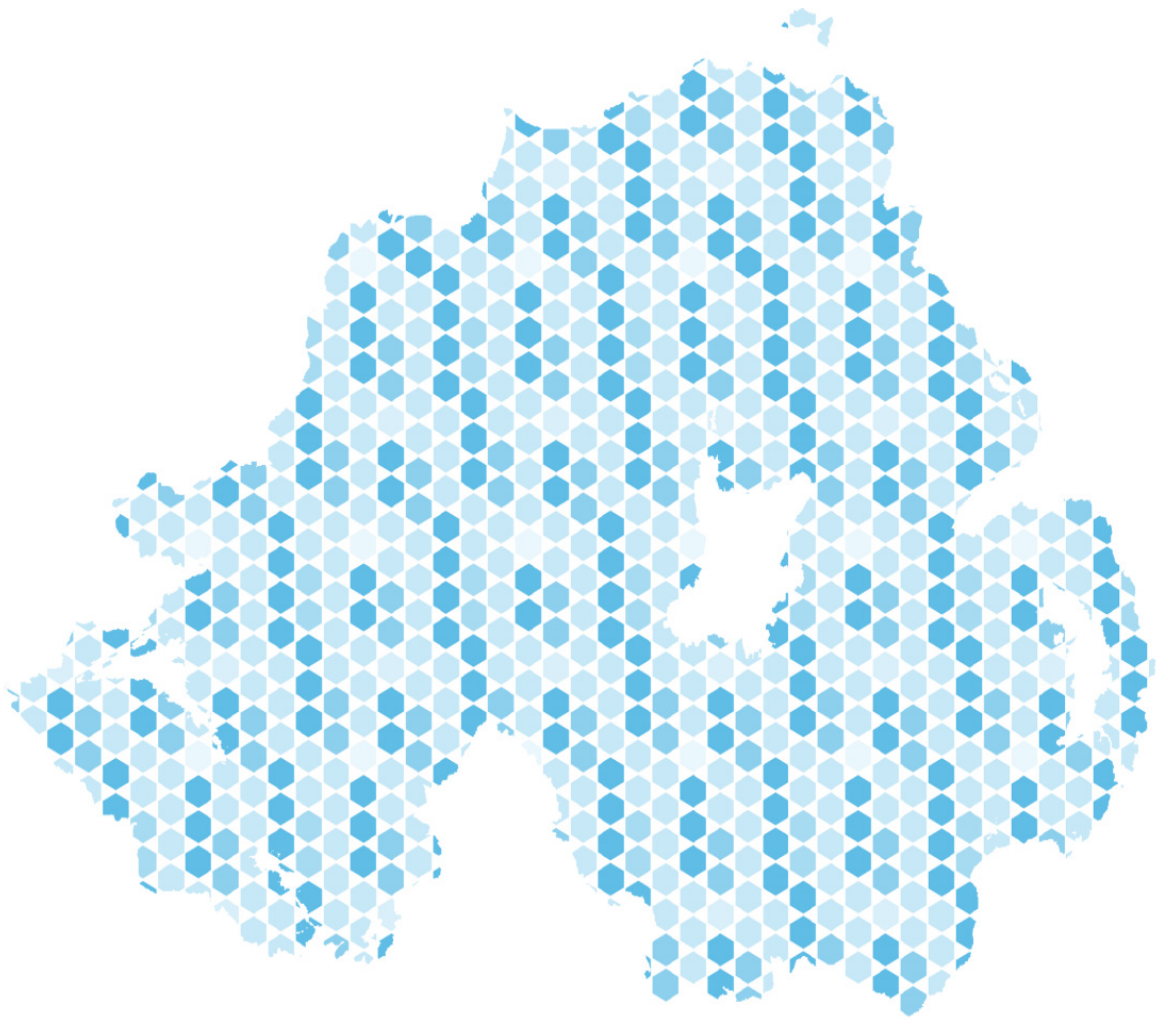


# PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training  
Inspectorate

Olderfleet Primary School,  
Larne

Report of an Inspection  
in February 2012



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

Olderfleet Primary School is situated in the harbour area of Larne, County Antrim. The children attending the school come from the town and the surrounding rural area. The enrolment has fluctuated slightly over the past five years and currently stands at 171. At the time of the inspection, 19% of the children were entitled to free school meals. The school has identified 23% of the children as requiring additional support with aspects of their learning; five of whom have statements of educational need.

## 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 the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by the school is **good**.

The school has important strengths in most of its educational and pastoral provision. The inspection has identified an area for improvement which the school has demonstrated the capacity to address. The Education and Training Inspectorate (Inspectorate) will monitor the school's progress on the area for improvement.

## KEY FINDINGS OF THE INSPECTION

### Achievements and Standards

**The quality of the children's achievements and standards are good.**

- By the end of key stage (KS) 2, in English and mathematics, almost all of the children attain good **standards** which are in line with their ability. By year 7 the children are able to write competently for a range of audiences and purposes. They read with fluency and expression. They have a sound understanding of key concepts across the mathematics curriculum, and they are confident and competent in their choice of mental mathematics strategies.
- The children identified with **special educational needs** make good progress in line with their ability.
- The children attain good standards in **information and communication technology** (ICT) through their successful participation in the Council for the Curriculum Examinations and Assessments (CCEA) external accreditation scheme which affords them opportunities to use ICT to support their learning in all areas of the curriculum.

## Provision for Learning

The provision for learning is good.

- The **children** are courteous, co-operative and well-behaved; they show good levels of independence and perseverance in their learning. When given the opportunity, they interact well with one another in paired and group work and can take responsibility for their own learning.
- During the inspection, the quality of the **teaching** observed ranged from satisfactory to very good; in two-thirds of the lessons it was good or very good. In the most effective practice, the planned learning activities were matched well to the individual needs and interests of the children and were set in meaningful contexts. The teachers used a range of active and practical learning and teaching strategies to engage the children, to challenge their thinking and to extend their learning. In the less effective practice, the teachers did not take sufficient account of the children's prior learning, and the learning intentions of the lesson were not made clear to the children; as a result there was inconsistent and limited progress in the children's learning.
- The provision for **special educational needs** (SEN) is good. The children are supported well in their learning through effective withdrawal sessions and, in the majority of the classes, through appropriate in-class differentiation. The individual education plans have clearly focused targets which guide well the provision made for the children.
- The quality of the arrangements for **pastoral care** is good. This is evident through the caring, welcoming, community ethos and through the well-planned induction programme which helps ensure the year 1 children settle quickly into their new school. The children's confidence and self-esteem are fostered through the whole-school merit system which is used appropriately to celebrate their efforts, achievements and positive dispositions.
- The school has very good arrangements in place for safeguarding children. These arrangements reflect the **child protection** guidance issued by the Department of Education.
- The school gives good attention to promoting **healthy eating and physical activity** through, for example, the promotion of healthy breaks and lunches and the provision of energetic physical activity for the children.

## Leadership and Management

The quality of leadership and management is good.

- The **Principal** has been in post for three years and provides effective leadership. He has developed good working relationships with all staff and with the local community. He has managed well the pace of change, and has led effectively the development of the school's assessment processes and procedures. He is strongly committed to the welfare of the children and to continuing to improve the quality of the learning and teaching in order to raise further the standards attained by the children.

- Over the past three years, the staff has begun the process of **self evaluation** to bring about improvement. As a result of effective consultation with parents, improvements have been made in the quality of the two-way communication between the parents and the school. There is a need to develop further the self evaluation procedures in order to ensure more systematic and rigorous monitoring and evaluating of the quality of provision, to inform better the **school development planning** (SDP) processes, and to improve further the quality of the learning and teaching.
- The **co-ordinators** of literacy, numeracy, ICT and SEN provide valuable support and guidance for the staff, and they have identified suitable priorities for development at class level within their areas of responsibility.

## **CONCLUSION**

In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by the school is **good**.

The school has important strengths in most of its educational and pastoral provision. The inspection has identified an area for improvement which the school has demonstrated the capacity to address. The area for improvement is the need:

- to develop further the self evaluation procedures in order to ensure more systematic and rigorous monitoring and evaluating of the quality of provision, to inform better the school development planning processes, and to improve further the quality of the learning and teaching.

The Inspectorate will monitor the school's progress on the area for improvement.

## BASIC INFORMATION SHEET (BIS) - PRIMARY SCHOOLS

- A. i. **School: Olderfleet Primary** iii. **Date of Inspection: W/B 06/02/12**  
 ii. **School Reference Number: 301-0646** iv. **Nature of Inspection: Short**

B.

| School Year       | 2007/08 | 2008/09 | 2009/10 | 2010/11 | 2011/12 |
|-------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Year 1 Intake     | 19      | 27      | 30      | 30      | 16      |
| <b>Enrolments</b> |         |         |         |         |         |
| Primary           | 174     | 176     | 185     | 185     | 171     |
| Reception         | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       |
| 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): 97.0% **NI Avg Att: 94.7%**
- Average Attendance for those children on the Special Educational Needs Register: 94.9%
- |  | Primary & Reception | Nursery Unit | Special Unit | Irish Medium Unit |
|--|---------------------|--------------|--------------|-------------------|
|--|---------------------|--------------|--------------|-------------------|
- D. i. Number of Teachers (including the principal and part-time teachers): 8.48 0 0 0  
 (Full-time equivalent = 25 teaching hours)
- ii. PTR (Pupil/Teacher Ratio): 20.16 NI PTR: 20.2
- iii. Average Class Size: 24.4
- iv. Class Size (Range): 16 to 30
- v. Ancillary Support:  
 Number of Hours **Per Week**:
- |   |      |
|---|------|
| i. Clerical support:  | 19   |
| ii. Foundation Stage Classroom Assistant Support:           | 32.5 |
| iii. Additional hours of other classroom assistant support: | 100  |
- vi. Percentage of children with statements of special educational needs: 2.9%
- vii. Total percentage of children on the Special Needs Register: 23.3%
- viii. Number of children who are **not** of statutory school age: 0
- ix. Percentage of children entitled to free school meals: 18.7%
- 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):
- |                |        |                    |        |              |     |
|----------------|--------|--------------------|--------|--------------|-----|
| <b>English</b> | 84.62% | <b>Mathematics</b> | 92.30% | <b>Irish</b> | N/A |
|----------------|--------|--------------------|--------|--------------|-----|

**THE VIEWS OF THE PARENTS, TEACHERS, GOVERNORS, (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. Of the 135 questionnaires issued to parents, 45 (33%) were returned to Inspection Services Branch, including 23 which contained additional written comments.

Almost all of the parents expressed high levels of satisfaction with the life and work of the school; in particular they commented on the friendly, approachable staff and the school's focus on the development of the children's personal and social skills.

Almost all of the teachers and the support staff responded very positively to the staff questionnaires and indicated high levels of satisfaction with all aspects of school life. In particular, all of the staff enjoy working in the school, consider the leadership of the Principal to be effective and feel that their contribution is valued.

The inspectors also met with a group of children from year 6. The children talked about the many aspects of school life they enjoy, including the extra-curricular activities, such as school visits, and the support they receive from their teachers. They are aware of what to do if they have any worries about their safety and well-being.

The inspection team also met with governors on the first day of the inspection. They expressed their appreciation of the support and active involvement of the parents in the life of the school. They reported that they are kept well-informed on all aspects of the work of the school, including on the standards attained by the children. They commented favourably on the leadership provided by the Principal, the commitment of the staff to the children, and the efforts made to strengthen the school's links with the community.

The few issues raised through the questionnaires were discussed with the Principal and the governors.

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