

# PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training  
Inspectorate

Portaferry Integrated Primary  
School, Co Down

Report of an Inspection  
in May 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

Portaferry Integrated Primary School is situated in the village of Portaferry on the Ards Peninsula in County Down. At the time of the inspection, the Principal had been absent for 15 months and a member of the teaching staff had been appointed as acting-Principal. During the past two years, there have been a number of staffing changes including some classroom assistant redundancies and all classes have been re-organised. All of the children attending the school come from the village and within a ten mile radius of the school. The enrolment has steadily decreased over the last four years and currently stands at 54; in addition nine pre-school aged children are enrolled in a composite foundation stage (FS) class which includes children in years 1 and 2. At the time of the inspection, approximately 22% of the children in the school were entitled to free school meals. The school has identified 22% of the children who require 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 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 standards; learning and teaching and leadership and management 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 are always satisfactory and on occasions good.**

- The majority of the children make satisfactory progress in English and mathematics as they progress through the school. The **standards** of the children's work in their books ranges from satisfactory to very good. The staff are aware of the need to continue to scrutinise and analyse the assessment data more rigorously in order to raise the standards further in literacy and numeracy. The recent attention given to developing the children's listening and oral skills is evident in the classes. In key stage (KS)2 the children are provided with opportunities to write for a variety of purposes and audiences; they produce pieces of writing of high quality on a range of topics and have good standards in reading. The school has appropriately identified writing across the curriculum and mathematical investigations as areas for further improvement and the inspection would endorse this.

- The children identified with **special educational needs (SEN)** make steady progress in their learning. They receive in-class support from the class teachers through appropriately differentiated tasks. There is evidence to indicate that almost all of the children involved in the reading partnership programme make good progress in their reading.

### **Provision for Learning**

**The provision for learning ranges from very good to inadequate.**

- The **children's** behaviour is very good; most are well-motivated and demonstrate a positive attitude to their learning. They interact and collaborate well with each another in paired and in group work; the majority are often keen to demonstrate and apply their learning in a variety of contexts.
- The staff are hard-working and committed to the education and care of the children; they are very well supported by the classroom assistants. The quality of the **teaching** observed, during the inspection, ranged from inadequate to outstanding. Half of the teaching was good or better. In the most effective practice, the teachers used a range of effective strategies to engage the children and to extend their learning and the children responded to these appropriately. In the less effective practice, the lessons were overly adult directed and the planned activities did not take sufficient account of the children's wide range of needs and abilities within the composite classes.
- The staff have appropriately identified the need to review and develop further the whole school planning in order to guide all of the staff more effectively in their day-to-day work with the children. The planning should include detailed reference to the differentiation within the lessons and, in addition, robust evaluations to inform future learning.
- The teachers make satisfactory to good use of **information and communication technology (ICT)** to support the children in their learning across the curriculum.
- The provision for **SEN** is good. Effective arrangements are in place to identify early those children who require additional support with aspects of their learning. The individual education plans (IEPs) have clearly focused targets, which are shared and agreed with the children and their parents and are used to guide the provision made for the children within the class. There is evidence that the children who make sufficient progress in their learning are withdrawn from the SEN register.
- The provision for the nine pre-school children in the **reception group** is inadequate. The children do not have access to a rich pre-school programme that is appropriate to their age and stage of development.
- The quality of the arrangements for **pastoral care** is very good. This is evident through the very good working relationships at all levels, the whole school celebration of the children's learning and achievements and the strong family ethos which permeates the life and work of the school. The children are generally well motivated, respectful and confident; there is a strong commitment from the staff to allowing them to have a say in matters that affect them.

- On the basis of the evidence available at the time of the inspection the school has **satisfactory** arrangements in place for **safeguarding** the children. These arrangements broadly reflect the guidance issued by the Department of Education but the following minor areas need to be addressed:
  - update training in child protection procedures for the designated member of the governors; and
  - the Intimate Care policy, which is currently in draft form, should be developed further, consulted on, and shared with, the parents and ratified by the governors.
- The school gives good attention to **promoting healthy lifestyles** through the provision of healthy breaks and the many opportunities provided for the children to participate in physical activity through a range of extra-curricular activities.

### **Leadership and Management**

**The quality of leadership and management is good.**

- The acting-**Principal** has worked hard, and has been effective, in identifying appropriate areas for improvement in the school's provision.
- The **co-ordinators** are developing their roles in monitoring and evaluating the quality of the provision. The policies and planning, particularly for literacy and numeracy, need to be updated and used to guide more effectively the work of the teachers.
- The school has an appropriate **School Development Plan (SDP)** which identifies appropriate areas for improvement; including raising further the standards achieved in literacy and numeracy. As the school works towards the development of a new SDP it will be important to use the findings from the inspection, to target and address the areas requiring further development.
- There is good communication between the acting-Principal and **the governors**. The governors are supportive of the staff and committed to the further development of the work of the school; they are providing effective support to the acting-Principal in her new role.
- It will be important that the employing authority, school governors, and the staff plan for, and manage, issues related to the size and sustainability of the school provision and school budget, in order to address the current and future needs of the children and the staff. In particular, the school needs to review, as a matter of urgency, the impact of the enrolment of the reception children throughout the year on the learning for the other children in the FS and on the teacher in the FS. The Principal and the governors need to ensure that the provision for the children in the reception group is of a high quality, well resourced and in line with the programme outlined in the Pre-school Curricular Guidance.

## **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 standards, learning and teaching, leadership and management which need to be addressed if the needs of all the children are to be met more effectively. The Inspectorate will monitor and report on the school's progress in addressing the areas for improvement.

## BASIC INFORMATION SHEET (BIS) - PRIMARY SCHOOLS

- A. i. **School: Portaferry Integrated Primary**                      iii. **Date of Inspection: W/B 01/05/12**  
 ii. **School Reference Number: 405-1601**                      iv. **Nature of Inspection: Short**

B.

School Year	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Year 1 Intake	15	8	11	6	8
<b>Enrolments</b>					
Primary	78	69	65	56	54
Reception	3	4	0	1	9
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%                      **NI Avg Att: 94.7%**

Average Attendance for those children on the Special Educational Needs Register:                      96%

Primary & Reception	Nursery Unit	Special Unit	Irish Medium Unit
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- D. i. Number of Teachers (including the principal and part-time teachers):                      4                      0                      0                      0  
 (Full-time equivalent = 25 teaching hours)
- ii. PTR (Pupil/Teacher Ratio):                      21.2                      NI PTR: 20.2
- iii. Average Class Size:                      21
- iv. Class Size (Range):                      14 to 26
- v. Ancillary Support:  
 Number of Hours **Per Week**:
- |   |    |
|---|----|
| i. Clerical support:  | 25 |
| ii. Foundation Stage Classroom Assistant Support:           | 20 |
| iii. Additional hours of other classroom assistant support: | 40 |
- vi. Percentage of children with statements of special educational needs:                      7.9%
- vii. Total percentage of children on the Special Needs Register:                      22%
- viii. Number of children who are **not** of statutory school age:                      9
- ix. Percentage of children entitled to free school meals:                      22%
- 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 | Mathematics | Irish |
|---------|-------------|-------|
| 75%     | 83.34%      | N/A   |
- 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 | Year 2 | Year 3 |
|--------|--------|--------|
| 8      | 6      | 0      |

### THE VIEWS OF THE PARENTS, TEACHERS, GOVERNORS, 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 40 questionnaires issued to the **parents**, 58% were returned to Inspection Services Branch (ISB), including 12 which contained additional written comments. Almost all of the parental questionnaires expressed high levels of satisfaction with the life and work of the school. In the written comments, the parents expressed their satisfaction with the high quality of education and care provided by the staff, the children's progress, the dedication and approachability of the staff and the quality of leadership provided by the acting-Principal. The few issues raised were discussed with the acting-Principal and shared with the governors.

Two **governors** met with the inspection team on the first day of the inspection and expressed strong support for the work of the school and the commitment and dedication of the staff.

A small number of the **teachers** and ten members of the **support staff** responded very positively to the staff questionnaires. In particular, they highlighted the strong team approach of the staff, the happy and motivated children and the appreciative parents and their enjoyment of working in the school.

The inspectors also met with the **year 6 children**; they talked enthusiastically about their experiences at school. In particular, the children welcomed the opportunities provided for them to participate in decisions to improve aspects of the provision, and highlighted the support and encouragement they receive from all of the staff. The children reported that they feel safe in school and are aware of what to do if they have worries about their safety and well-being.



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