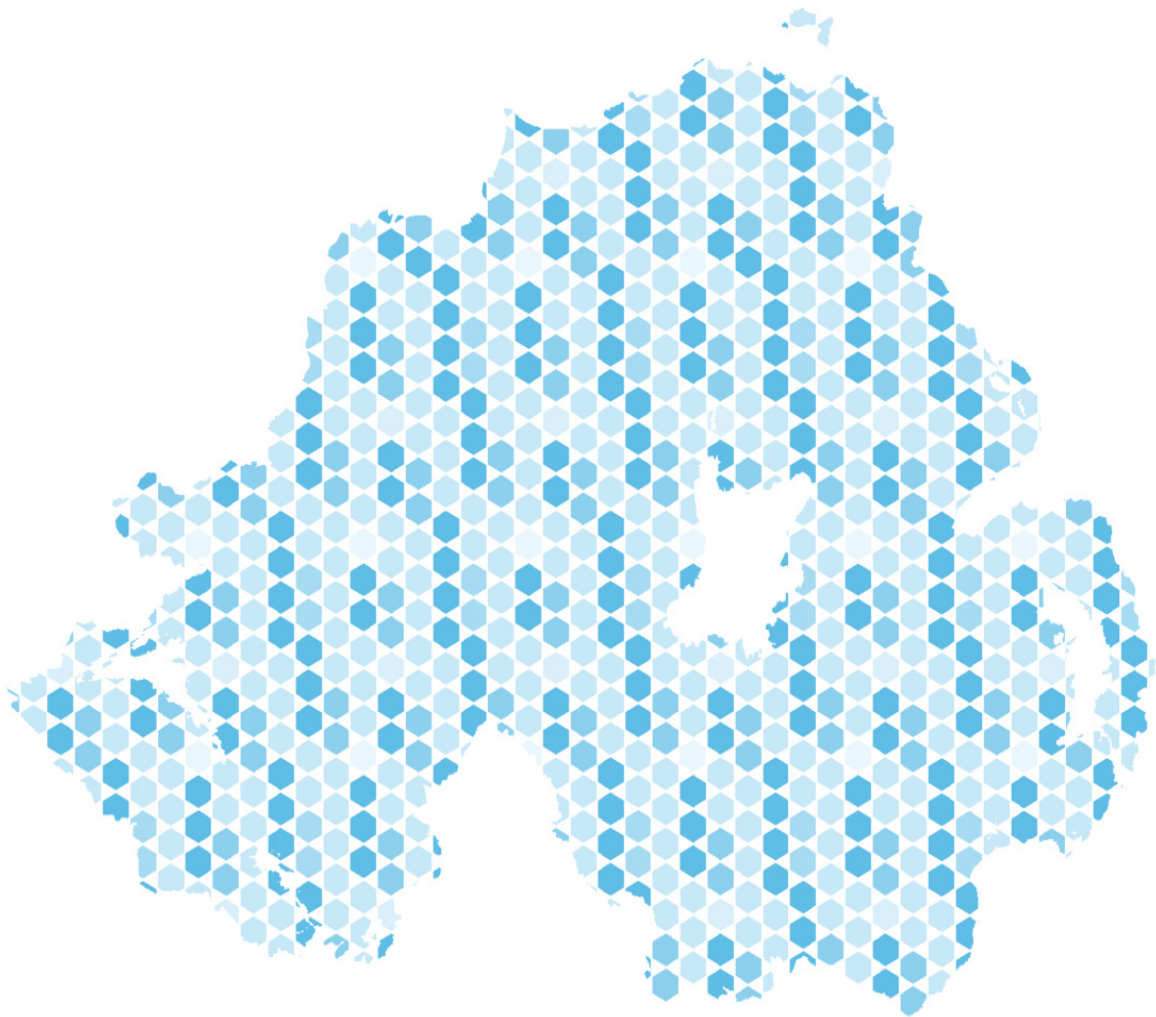


# PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training  
Inspectorate

St Malachy's Primary School  
and Nursery Unit, Camlough

Report of an Inspection  
in December 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

St Malachy's Primary School and nursery unit is situated on the edge of the village of Camlough approximately five miles from Newry. All of the children attending the school come from the village and surrounding rural areas. The enrolment has remained steady in recent years; currently there are 245 children enrolled in the primary school and 53 children in the nursery unit. At the time of the inspection, approximately 35% of the children in the school were entitled to free school meals. The school has identified 20% of the children as requiring 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 FINDING OF THE INSPECTION

In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by this school, including the nursery unit is very good. The school and the nursery unit are meeting very effectively the educational and pastoral needs of the children; and have demonstrated the capacity for sustained self-improvement.

## KEY FINDINGS OF THE INSPECTION

### Achievements and Standards

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

- In English and mathematics, most of the children attain **standards** in line with their ability.
- The children identified **with special educational needs** make very good progress and reach the standards of which they are capable.
- The children in the **Nursery Unit (NU)** develop very good early literacy, numeracy and scientific skills through the very good opportunities for learning in the pre-school curriculum.

### Provision for Learning

**The provision for learning is very good.**

- The **children's** behaviour is exemplary; they are highly respectful of the staff and each other and have a positive disposition to learning.

- The quality of the **teaching** observed ranged from good to outstanding; it was very good in one-half and outstanding in one-fifth of the lessons. The teachers set high expectations for the children's learning; they provide challenging and creative opportunities for the children to extend and apply their knowledge, skills and understanding across the curriculum.
- The provision for **special educational needs (SEN)** is very good. The children's needs are identified early and a combination of high quality withdrawal sessions and in-class support is provided for the children. In addition, a range of intervention programmes is used effectively to target specific needs and to progress the children's learning.
- The quality of the arrangements for **pastoral care in the school, including the nursery unit**, is outstanding. This is evident through the excellent working relationships at all levels and the caring, supportive and child-centred ethos throughout the school. The school has worked hard to put family and community at the centre of school life. In addition, there is a very effective student council and the children have many opportunities to contribute to decision-making processes that influence the life and work of the school.
- The school, including the nursery unit, has very good arrangements in place for safeguarding children. These arrangements reflect the **child protection** guidance issued by the Department of Education (DE).
- The school, including the nursery unit, gives very good attention to promoting **healthy eating** and physical activity.

### Leadership and Management

#### **The quality of leadership and management is outstanding.**

- The **Principal** provides outstanding strategic and pastoral leadership. He sets high standards for himself, the staff and the children. He has successfully led and implemented significant curricular changes focused on raising the standards of learning and teaching throughout the school and the standards the children attain.
- The whole-school **self-evaluation** and **school development planning (SDP)** processes are outstanding. The Principal and teachers make very effective use of a wide range of internal and external data, including the views of governors, teachers, parents and children to set realistic targets and effect improvement.
- The **governors** are well-informed and involved in the life and work of the school.
- The **Vice-principal** and the **co-ordinators** provide effective leadership. They use a range of very good strategies to monitor, evaluate and review the areas of provision for which they have responsibility.
- The **nursery unit** is prioritised appropriately in the school development plan and is an integral part of the school improvement processes. The quality of the leadership in the nursery unit is very good. There are well-developed links between the nursery unit and the foundation stage.

## **CONCLUSION**

In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by this school, including the nursery unit is very good. The school and the nursery unit are meeting very effectively the educational and pastoral needs of the children; and have demonstrated the capacity for sustained self-improvement.

## ST MALACHY'S PRIMARY SCHOOL NURSERY UNIT

### Key Findings of the Inspection

- There is a caring, supportive and inclusive ethos in the nursery unit based on the excellent working relationships at all levels.
- The quality of the staff's interactions with the children is consistently good and, at times, very good. The staff develop effectively the children's decision making capabilities and thinking skills.
- The children develop very good early literacy, numeracy and scientific skills through the very good opportunities for learning in the pre-school curriculum
- The staff's planning and assessment practices are very good. They evaluate effectively the children's progress and the information is used appropriately to meet the needs of all of the children.
- The quality of the leadership in the nursery unit is very good. There are well-developed links between the nursery unit and the foundation stage (FS), particularly with regard to the progression in play-based learning and the SEN provision. These links support the smooth transition of the children to year one in the primary school and inform appropriately the FS planning.
- The nursery unit leader has developed a systematic process for self-evaluation. The staff have identified appropriate areas for development and there is very good evidence that their approach has enhanced the children's learning experiences.

In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by this nursery unit is very good. The nursery unit is meeting very effectively the educational and pastoral needs of the learners; and has demonstrated its capacity for sustained self-improvement.

No follow-up inspection of the NU is required.

## BASIC INFORMATION SHEET (BIS) - PRIMARY SCHOOLS

- A. i. **School: St Malachy's Primary** iii. **Date of Inspection: W/B 05/12/11**  
 ii. **School Reference Number: 503-6064** iv. **Nature of Inspection: Short**

B.

School Year	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Year 1 Intake	24	42	32	35	34
<b>Enrolments</b>					
Primary	249	257	255	248	245
Reception	0	0	0	0	0
Nursery Unit	52	52	52	52	53
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): 94.8% **NI Avg Att: 94.7%**

Average Attendance for those children on the  
 Special Educational Needs Register: 87.2%

Primary & Reception	Nursery Unit	Special Unit	Irish Medium Unit
---------------------	--------------	--------------	-------------------

- D. i. Number of Teachers  
 (including the principal and part-time teachers): 11.8 1 0 0  
 (Full-time equivalent = 25 teaching hours)
- ii. PTR (Pupil/Teacher Ratio): 20.8 NI PTR: 20.2
- iii. Average Class Size: 24.5
- iv. Class Size (Range): 20 to 29
- v. Ancillary Support:  
 Number of Hours **Per Week**:
- |   |     |
|---|-----|
| i. Clerical support:  | 32  |
| ii. Foundation Stage Classroom Assistant Support:           | 50  |
| iii. Additional hours of other classroom assistant support: | 160 |
- vi. Percentage of children with statements of special educational needs: 4.9%
- vii. Total percentage of children on the Special Needs Register: 20%
- viii. Number of children who are **not** of statutory school age: 0
- ix. Percentage of children entitled to free school meals: 34.7%
- 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> | <b>Mathematics</b> | <b>Irish</b> |
| 88.2%          | 85.2%              | N/A          |

**STATISTICAL INFORMATION ON ST MALACHY'S PRIMARY SCHOOL NURSERY UNIT, CAMLOUGH**

**1. Details of Children**

<b>Number of children:</b>	<b>Class 1</b>	<b>Class 2</b>
Attending full-time	0	0
Attending part-time	27	26
Under 3 years of age*	0	19
With statement of special educational needs	2	0
Without a statement but receiving therapy or support from other professionals for special educational needs	1	0
At CoP stages 3 or 4**	5	0
At CoP stages 1 or 2**	1	0
With English as an additional language	1	0

\* On 1 July.

\*\* The stages refer to those set out in the Code of Practice for the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs.

Percentage qualifying under DE admission criteria 1 or 2.	
Average attendance for the previous year.	88.9%

**2. Duration of Sessions**

<b>Full-time</b>	<b>Part-time: am</b>	<b>Part-time: pm</b>
-	2½ hours	2½ hours

**3. Details of Staff**

<b>Number of:</b>	<b>Full-Time</b>	<b>Part-Time</b>
Teachers	1	0
Nursery Assistants (qualified)	1	2
Nursery Assistants (non-qualified)	0	0

<b>Number of: ***</b>	
Students	1
Trainees	0

\*\*\* Total placements since September of current year

**4. Parental Questionnaires**

Number issued	
Percentage returned	%
Number of written comments	



### 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, and for a group of children from year 6 including representatives of the school council to meet the inspectors.

One hundred and twenty four questionnaires were issued to the parents of the children in the **primary school**: 28 (22.6%) were returned to Inspection Services Branch and eleven contained additional written comments. Almost all of the responses from the questionnaire were highly affirmative of the school. All of the written comments were extremely positive and praised the Principal and the staff for their professionalism, hard work and the care that they give to the children.

In the **nursery unit**, 52 questionnaires were issued to the parents of the children; 16 (30.8%) were returned to ISB and five contained additional written comments. The responses indicated that the parents appreciate the very good communication between home and the nursery unit, the welcoming learning environment, and the approachable staff.

Eleven of the **teachers** and ten of the **support staff** completed confidential questionnaires, all of the staff were highly positive about all aspects of the school. In addition, two of the teachers and three of the support staff included written comments indicating high levels of satisfaction with the ethos of collegiality among all of the staff, the support and encouragement from the Principal and the stimulating learning environment provided for and contributed to by the children.

The inspectors also met with a group of the year 6 children; the children talked happily and enthusiastically about their experiences at school, and the support and encouragement they receive from all of the staff. The children are aware of what to do if they have worries about their safety and well-being.

© CROWN COPYRIGHT 2012

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part, except for commercial purposes or in connection with a prospectus or advertisement, provided that the source and date thereof are stated.

Copies of this report are available on the ETI website: [www.etini.gov.uk](http://www.etini.gov.uk)

