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*The Education and Training Inspectorate -
Promoting Improvement*



Providing Inspection Services for
Department of Education
Department for Employment and Learning
Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure

Education and Training Inspectorate

Report of a Short Inspection

**St Patrick's Primary School
Cullyhanna**

Inspected: November 2009

BASIC INFORMATION SHEET (BIS) - PRIMARY SCHOOLS

- A. i. **School: St Patrick's Primary Cullyhanna** iii. **Date of Inspection: W/B 09/11/09**
 ii. **School Reference Number: 503-6099** iv. **Nature of Inspection: Short**

B.

School Year	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
Year 1 Intake	19	23	21	30	28
Enrolments					
Primary	187	181	175	178	180
Reception	0	0	0	0	0
Nursery Unit	26	26	26	26	25
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): 94.7%

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): 8.62
 (Full-time equivalent = 25 teaching hours) 1 0 0
- ii. PTR (Pupil/Teacher Ratio): 20.8 NI PTR: 20.4
- iii. Average Class Size: 25.6
- iv. Class Size (Range): 19 to 30
- v. Ancillary Support:
 Number of Hours **Per Week**:
- | | |
|---|-----|
| i. Clerical support: | 38 |
| ii. Foundation Stage Classroom Assistant Support: | 50 |
| iii. Additional hours of other classroom assistant support: | 140 |
- vi. Percentage of children with statements of special educational needs: 2.4%
- vii. Total percentage of children on the Special Needs Register: 21.5%
- viii. Number of children who are **not** of statutory school age: 25
- ix. Percentage of children entitled to free school meals: 35%
- x. Percentage of children at the end of Key Stage 2 for 2008/09 who attained level 4 and above in English and mathematics: **English** 76% **Mathematics** 72%

ST PATRICK'S PRIMARY SCHOOL AND NURSERY UNIT, CULLYHANNA, NEWRY, CO DOWN, BT35 0PZ (503-6099)

SCHOOL CONTEXT

St Patrick's Primary School is situated in the village of Cullyhanna in South Armagh. The children come from the village and surrounding areas. The enrolment in the primary school has remained steady in recent years and currently stands at 180; in addition, 25 children attend the nursery unit. At the time of the inspection, approximately 35% of the children in the primary school were entitled to free school meals. The school has identified 45 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;
- the quality of leadership and management; and
- the quality of provision in the nursery unit.

THE VIEWS OF THE PARENTS, TEACHERS, SUPPORT STAFF AND CHILDREN

The arrangements for the inspection included the opportunity for the parents, the teaching staff and the support staff to complete a confidential questionnaire prior to the inspection. Of the 108 questionnaires issued to the parents in the primary school, 54 (50%) were returned to the Department of Education (DE), including 22 which contained additional written comments. Almost all of the parental questionnaires and written comments indicated very high levels of satisfaction with all aspects of school life; reference was made to the high quality of education the children receive, the hard-working, caring and dedicated teachers and support staff, the happy atmosphere and the hard-working, approachable Principal.

In the nursery unit 18 questionnaires were issued to parents; 11 (61%) of the parents responded to the questionnaire and four made additional comments. The responses from the parental questionnaires indicated that the parents regard the nursery unit highly and appreciate the helpful, professional and approachable staff, the progress made by the children and the safe, friendly environment.

Nine teachers and thirteen members of the support staff responded to the online questionnaires. Almost all of the responses were wholly positive about all aspects of the life and work of the school. The very few issues raised in the parent and staff questionnaires were shared with the Principal and a representative of the Board of Governors (governors).

The inspectors also met with a group of the year 6 children; they 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.

PASTORAL CARE

The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care in the primary school is very good. This is displayed through the excellent working relationships between the children and the staff; the supportive, inclusive ethos; the strong pastoral dimension in the curriculum; and the excellent behaviour of the children.

The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care in the nursery unit is outstanding. Among the strengths are the happy, caring and productive atmosphere; the exemplary behaviour of the children; and the high standard of interaction between the staff and the children.

CHILD PROTECTION

The primary school and the nursery unit have very good comprehensive arrangements in place for safeguarding children. These arrangements reflect the guidance issued by the DE.

HEALTHY EATING AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

The primary school and the nursery unit give very good attention to promoting healthy eating and physical activity, for example through the provision of the popular healthy breakfast club and the wide range of sporting opportunities provided for the children which encourage them to adopt healthy lifestyles.

CONCLUSION

The strengths of the school include:

- the highly motivated and very happy children whose behaviour was excellent at all times;
- the quality of the teaching observed which ranged from satisfactory to outstanding and in two thirds of the lessons was very good or better;
- the children's ability to talk about their work with confidence and interest and the very good standards they achieve in numeracy and literacy at the end of key stage 2;
- the enthusiastic, hard-working and approachable teaching and support staff who co-operate effectively in the best interests of the children;
- the very good links established with the parents, the wider community and external agencies; and
- the very good leadership of the Principal and the good start that has been made to establishing processes for self-evaluation and school development planning.

In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by the primary school is very good. The school is meeting very effectively the educational and pastoral needs of the children; and has demonstrated the capacity for sustained self-improvement.

THE NURSERY UNIT

The main strengths within the nursery unit's educational and pastoral provision are as follows:

- There is a very happy, caring and productive atmosphere in the nursery unit. The children are very well settled; they are eager to explore new learning and make full use of the stimulating indoor and outdoor learning environments, respond positively to the staff's high expectations and demonstrate exemplary behaviour. They are learning to share, take turns, follow and lead in the play activities and the vast majority persevere with tasks and seek help when needed.
- Very effective use is made of all of the time available to promote the children's learning; the daily sessions and routines are very well organised with a good balance between free play and adult directed activities.
- There are excellent opportunities for learning in all areas of the pre-school curriculum; the staff provide a wide range of challenging and interesting activities for the children and their observations and assessments are used effectively to ensure that the learning activities are appropriately matched to the children's stage of development.
- The staff have developed comprehensive methods of planning which are used effectively to guide their work with the children.
- The quality of the interaction between the staff and the children is consistently of a high standard and on occasions excellent. The majority of the children can talk about their experiences and express their thoughts and ideas with appropriate confidence and fluency. They listen and respond well to stories and rhymes and enjoy browsing through books.
- The teacher in charge of the nursery unit is an excellent role model and sets high standards for all aspects of its work. The staff are hard-working and dedicated; they work closely as a team and all contribute to the overall effectiveness of the nursery unit.

In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by this nursery unit is outstanding; the quality of pastoral care is also outstanding. The organisation has demonstrated its capacity for sustained self-improvement.

STATISTICAL INFORMATION ON THE NURSERY UNIT IN ST PATRICK'S PRIMARY SCHOOL, CULLYHANNA

1. Details of Children

Number of children:	Class 1	Class 2
Attending full-time	25	0
Attending part-time	0	0
Under 3 years of age*	0	0
With statement of special educational needs*	0	0
At CoP stages 3 or 4**	0	0
At CoP stages 1 or 2**	1	0
With English as an additional language	0	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.	12%
Average attendance for the previous year.	93.7

2. Duration of Sessions

Full-time	Part-time: am	Part-time: pm
4 ¹ / ₃ hours	-	-

3. Details of Staff

Number of:	Full-Time	Part-Time
Teachers	1	0
Nursery Assistants	0	0
Qualified Nursery Assistants	1	0

Number of: ***	
Students	0
Trainees	0

*** Total placements since September of current year

4. Parental Questionnaires

Number issued	18
Percentage returned	61%
Number of written comments	4

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

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