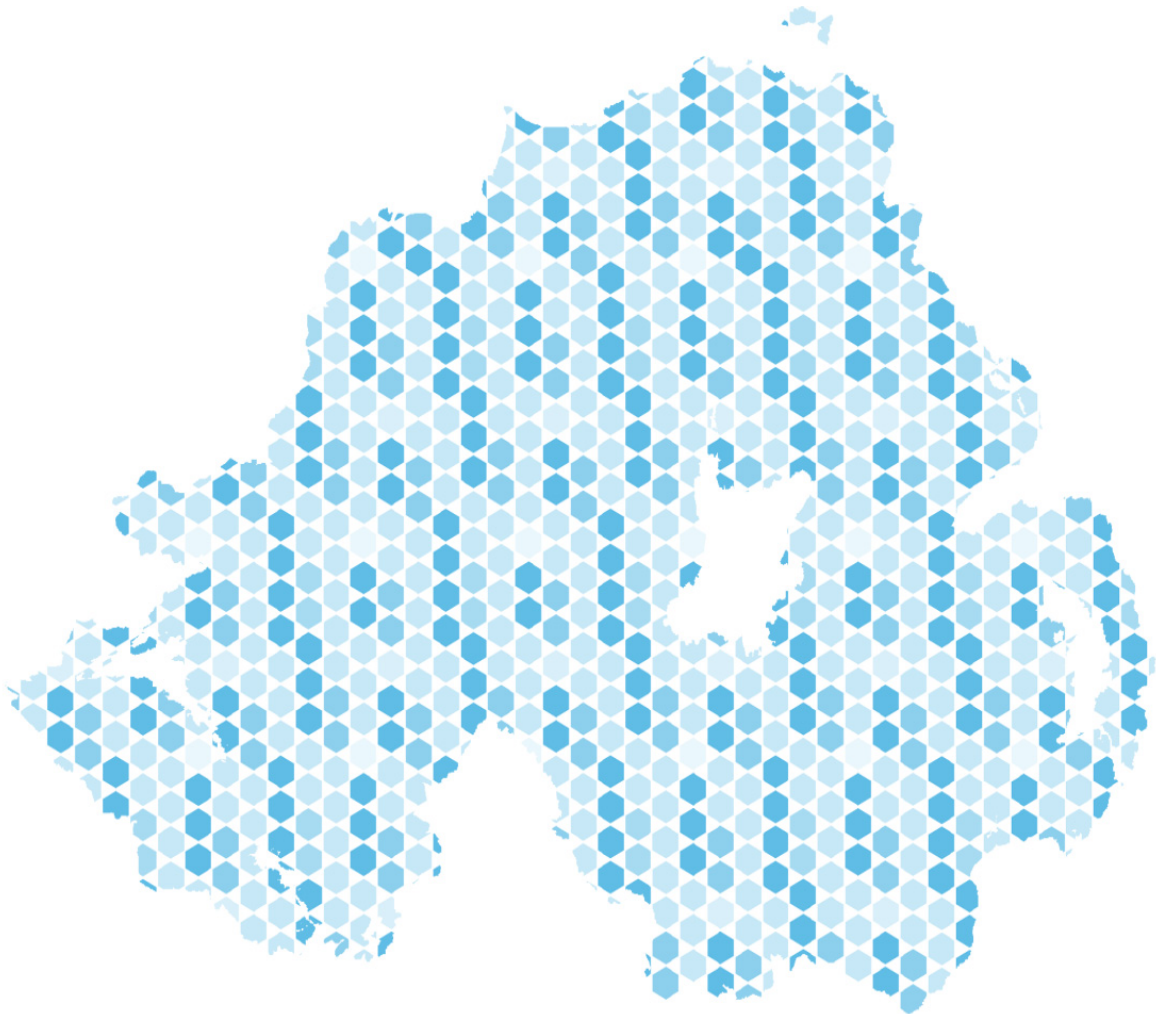


PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Killyhommon Primary School,
Enniskillen

Report of an Inspection
in October 2010

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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



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



CUSTOMER SERVICE EXCELLENCE

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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

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 CONTEXT

Killyhommon Primary School is situated in the parish of Botha, Derrygonnelly and is nine miles west of Enniskillen, Co Fermanagh. Almost all of the children come from the village and surrounding rural area. The enrolment has fluctuated over recent years and has risen to 63 children. At the time of the inspection, 11% of the children were entitled to free school meals; 28.57% of the total children enrolled in the school are on the special needs register; 4.76% have statements of educational need; 7.93% have medical needs; 15.87% have learning needs and 4.76% have specific speech and language needs.

1.2 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.

1.3 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 confidential questionnaires prior to the inspection. Meetings were held with representatives from the Board of Governors (governors), and the children from year 6.

Of the 39 questionnaires issued to the parents; approximately 56% were returned to Inspection Services Branch of which ten contained additional written comments. An analysis of the questionnaires and the comments made by the parents and the staff were shared with the Principal and the governors. All of the responses indicated a high level of satisfaction with the school. In particular, the parents highlighted the high regard for the school in the community, the care and support provided by all of the staff for the children and the inclusive ethos of the school.

Three teachers and three support staff completed the online questionnaire and all included positive and supportive written comments about working in the school.

The governors expressed their appreciation of the work of the school, the commitment of all the staff to the children and the leadership provided by the Principal.

In discussions held with the year 6 children they talked enthusiastically about all aspects of school life. They spoke confidently about the range of extra-curricular activities which they enjoy. The children are proud of their school environment and are very pleased with the development of the outdoor play area which they reported helps them to be active at playtimes. They also indicated strongly that they feel happy in school and know what to do if they have any worries about their safety.

1.4 PASTORAL CARE

The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care in the school is outstanding; there is an inclusive atmosphere and a strong community ethos that permeates the school. All the staff are committed to the care and welfare of the children. There is a mutual respect between the adults and children which is reflected in the excellent behaviour observed in all classes during the inspection. A whole school reward system encourages children to work hard and to care for others and their environment.

The children have contributed to informative displays which guide and support the pastoral work of the school. The colourful displays in classrooms and corridors celebrate the children's work and achievements.

1.5 CHILD PROTECTION

The school has satisfactory arrangements in place for safeguarding children. These arrangements reflect the guidance issued by the Department of Education; however, there is a need to address the issue of controlled access and intercom links to the key stage (KS) 2 mobile classroom. Glass panels are required in the doors of the foundation stage (FS) and KS1 classrooms in keeping with best practice in child protection.

1.6 HEALTHY EATING AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

The school gives outstanding attention to promoting healthy eating and physical activity, for example the nutritional quality of the school meals and the involvement of the children in the school fruit and vegetable garden, which encourages them to adopt healthy lifestyles.

1.7 LINKS WITH PARENTS AND THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

The staff and children have worked collaboratively with the local and wider community to produce 'The Third Diary of Inspirational Thoughts', which each year raises a substantial amount of money for charity.

The children are beginning the second year of the Shared Education programme in the Derrygonnelly area and are beginning to form links through the dance and music programmes which are led by music specialists.

2. **ACHIEVEMENTS AND STANDARDS**

2.1 LEARNING

The children are courteous and very well behaved; they are focused on tasks set in their lessons, demonstrate very positive attitudes to their learning and persevering with tasks to completion. Working relationships between the teachers, the support staff and the children are positively affirming and as a result the children learn well in a supportive environment. All staff work together to provide the children with a range of opportunities for independent and collaborative learning in a variety of contexts. The school places an important emphasis on the development of thinking skills and encourages the children's involvement in planning, carrying out and reflecting on their learning.

An analysis of the KS2 assessment data* over the past four years shows that in English, the school's performance is consistently above the Northern Ireland (NI) average. Compared with schools in the same free school meals category, the levels of attainment in English are also above the average.

An analysis of the KS2 assessment data over the past four years shows that in mathematics, the school's performance is slightly below the NI average. Compared with schools in the same free school meals category, the levels of attainment in mathematics are slightly below the average.

An analysis of the other forms of available data shows that the children, including those registered with special needs have made progress commensurate with their ability and most of the children have made very good progress in their learning.

Since 2004 the children have successfully participated in the ICT Accreditation scheme. The school's performance last year was significantly above the NI average and the free school meals average.

2.2 ENGLISH AND LITERACY

The quality of provision of English and literacy is very good.

Most of the children demonstrate very good oral communication skills and speak confidently to peers, teachers and other adults in the school. In the FS and KS1, these skills are developed through the skilful interactions of the adults during play-based learning activities. The children's language is further developed through the effective questioning of the teachers during the literacy lessons, which are well-paced and challenging. In KS2, the children engage in a wide range of class activities, including investigative work in the World Around Us curricular area, which provide very good opportunities for the further development of their talking and listening skills.

The children achieve very good standards in reading. Throughout the school the children learn to read through a range of reading material and methods to suit all abilities, and ages. During the inspection, groups of children from years 4 and 7 read with fluency, expression and understanding. The children were able to discuss their text preferences, favourite authors and characters. The school has an attractive, well-stocked central library which further enriches the children's reading experiences. The class libraries provide very good opportunities for reading across the curriculum.

The standards achieved in writing are very good. In the FS children are well-supported to develop letter formation, to write words and to express their ideas in simple sentences. In KS1 the children develop increasing accuracy, fluency and clarity in their writing. They are becoming more independent and make very good use of word banks and other resources to enhance their work.

In KS2 the children are writing with increased proficiency across the curriculum. The children are given opportunities by the teacher to redraft their work and to self-evaluate their writing. They are able to write very effectively for a variety of audiences and have achieved high standards in the presentation of their project work. Excellent use of ICT appropriately supports the development of literacy. As a priority, the literacy action plan has appropriately identified the development of a wider range of writing genres throughout the school.

* The key stage outcomes should be interpreted with caution for small primary schools as a large percentage change from year to year can often be attributed to a very small number of children.

The literacy co-ordinator effectively leads the development of literacy throughout the school. She is well-supported by the school team in action planning for improvements in English and literacy provision. Developments have included a review of the teaching of reading with a focus on guided reading as a teaching method to raise standards.

2.3 MATHEMATICS AND NUMERACY

The quality of provision in mathematics and numeracy is very good.

Across the key stages, effective questioning and opportunities for discussion deepen the children's understanding of key concepts. In the best practice observed, effective links were made with prior learning and learning intentions were shared, clarified and revisited over the course of the lesson. The school is well-equipped with interactive whiteboards, programmable devices and computers; these are used effectively to engage the children and to stimulate their thinking.

In the FS, the children are developing mathematical language and an understanding of mathematical concepts such as shape and number through a range of practical sorting activities, the effective use of the interactive whiteboard and play-based learning. The children demonstrate an understanding appropriate to their age and ability.

At KS1 and 2, the children use mathematical language with increasing fluency and demonstrate a very good understanding of number, measure, shape and space and handling data. Mental mathematics activities feature strongly in the lessons and practical equipment, such as programmable devices are used effectively to support the children's learning. Problem-solving tasks, the use of real-life contexts and links to other curricular areas such as the World Around Us are used to promote mathematical thinking and to make the learning more meaningful for the children. During the inspection, the children demonstrated effective use of ICT knowledge and skills when representing information gathered through a mathematical investigation on spreadsheets.

Within KS2, the children enjoy their mathematics and continue to grow in mathematical competence and confidence. During the inspection, the older children demonstrated their secure knowledge of important mathematical concepts, including place value, factors and multiples, and three-dimensional shapes and their properties. They also demonstrated an agility and accuracy in their mathematical thinking. Overall, the standards achieved by the children, including those identified with special needs in mathematics and numeracy, are very good.

The co-ordinator effectively leads and is well-supported by the school team in action-planning for improvements in the mathematics provision. Developments included a review of planning for mental mathematics, a focus on improvements in specific areas in numeracy and early intervention strategies for individual children.

3. THE QUALITY OF PROVISION FOR LEARNING

3.1 PLANNING

The teachers prepare their work diligently and are guided by the principles of the revised curriculum. The teachers prepare effective long, medium and short term planners to guide learning and are adopting the use of topic webs to support connected learning across the curriculum. The planning for composite classes demonstrates clarity of progression and appropriately identifies the learning outcomes, teaching strategies, language and

differentiation by task and outcome. Evaluations assess the quality of the children's learning, quality of resources and appropriateness of teaching strategies, and are used effectively to inform future planning. The school is aware of the need to continue to develop the planning and assessment for play-based learning.

3.2 TEACHING

During the inspection, the quality of the teaching ranged from good to outstanding; almost all of the teaching was very good or outstanding. The children are taught with rigour the skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT, both through direct teaching, practical activities and by effective staff interaction which supports learning matched to individual needs. The teachers shared the learning intentions and negotiated the success criteria with the children to effectively focus the children's attention, scaffold thinking and consolidate learning. Teachers' questioning was open-ended and challenging, and plenary sessions were used to summarise and consolidate learning.

3.3 ASSESSMENT

There are effective procedures and records for keeping the parents informed about their children's progress. These include written reports and formal parent-teacher consultations and an open-door policy for informal consultations. The annual written reports provides detailed information about progress in learning.

There is a whole-school approach to the assessment of and for learning. The teachers mark the children's written work regularly and during class activities provide prompt oral feedback to improve learning. In the best practice, there is effective marking to promote improvement and the children are encouraged to engage in self-evaluation of their learning. The school uses a suitable range of standardised and non-standardised testing to assess the children's level of achievement in English and mathematics. Recently, the school developed a tracking system of the children's progress; an appropriate IT program is used to manage the information and to track individual children's progress over the last four years. The staff are effectively using the information to target-set and plan for the continued raising of standards.

3.4 SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

The quality of the provision for special educational needs (SEN) is very good.

The Principal is the special educational needs co-ordinator and provides very good leadership through the dissemination and implementation of the shared understanding among the staff and governors of the special needs policy. There is a very inclusive and welcoming ethos and the provision for SEN is given a high priority. The school uses the teachers' knowledge and expertise, as well as a wide range of standardised tests, to identify early those children requiring additional help and to understand the holistic needs of children and their families. Appropriate early intervention is planned to support the children in both literacy and numeracy and the children make very good progress in their learning. This assistance is provided for the children through in-class teacher and classroom assistant and withdrawal support sessions by the Principal.

The teachers take responsibility for the in-class implementation of individual education plans (IEPs). Generally, the IEPs are well-developed and feature precise targets; the school has recognised the need to continue to review the content of some of the IEPs. The staff effectively match teaching and learning to individual needs.

The school receives beneficial multi-disciplinary support for those children requiring specialised help through, for example, the services of the Occupational Therapy Service, the Western Education and Library Board Curriculum Advisory and Support Service Outreach Support Team and the Educational Psychology Service.

4. LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

4.1 LEADERSHIP

The dedicated Principal has been in post for ten years and provides very good leadership and management of the school. She oversees the effective implementation of the revised curriculum and has developed a range of policies to inform the work of the staff and promotes a sense of well-being and care for all in the school. She is ably-supported by the skilful and hard-working teachers and support staff. The school has established a culture of inclusivity and has openness to building partnerships in the local community.

All of the co-ordinators provide very good curriculum leadership within their areas of responsibility.

4.2 PLANNING FOR IMPROVEMENT

The improvement process is effectively linked to the target-setting process. There is a collegial approach to self-evaluation leading to a School Development Plan (SDP) based on sound professional teacher judgements and clear evidence about raising attainment for the children in literacy, numeracy and ICT. There are very good opportunities for consultation about the school development plan within the school community. The school policies are regularly reviewed, and effectively support a broad and balanced curriculum implementation. The school gives very good attention and meets fully the requirements of the School Development Plans Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2005.

4.3 RESOURCES, FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE

The governors are fully involved in the strategic planning and policy development for the school and effectively support the Principal and the staff in the implementation of the SDP. The governors have efficiently managed the financial needs of the school to sustain staffing levels and to meet the identified priorities in the SDP.

4.4 ACCOMMODATION

The school building is well-maintained; however, storage space is limited. The standard of caretaking is outstanding and the children take pride in helping the teachers and the support staff to maintain their school. The bright and inviting classrooms and corridors are used to display children's work, and topical displays arouse children's natural curiosity and imagination. The ICT suite and central library enhance the learning environment; the large outdoor play area is well-resourced and used to develop children's physical skills and outdoor interests.

5. CONCLUSION

5.1 The strengths of the school include:

- the outstanding quality of the pastoral care;
- the courteous and well-behaved children who are focused on achievement and demonstrate very positive attitudes to their learning;

- the well-matched support programmes provided for all of the children with special needs;
- the quality of the teaching observed, which was almost always very good to outstanding;
- the very good standards achieved by the children in literacy, numeracy and ICT at the end of the Key Stage 2; and
- the very good leadership of the Principal and co-ordinators, and the purposeful engagement of the teaching staff with the parents and the local and wider community.

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

5.3 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.

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