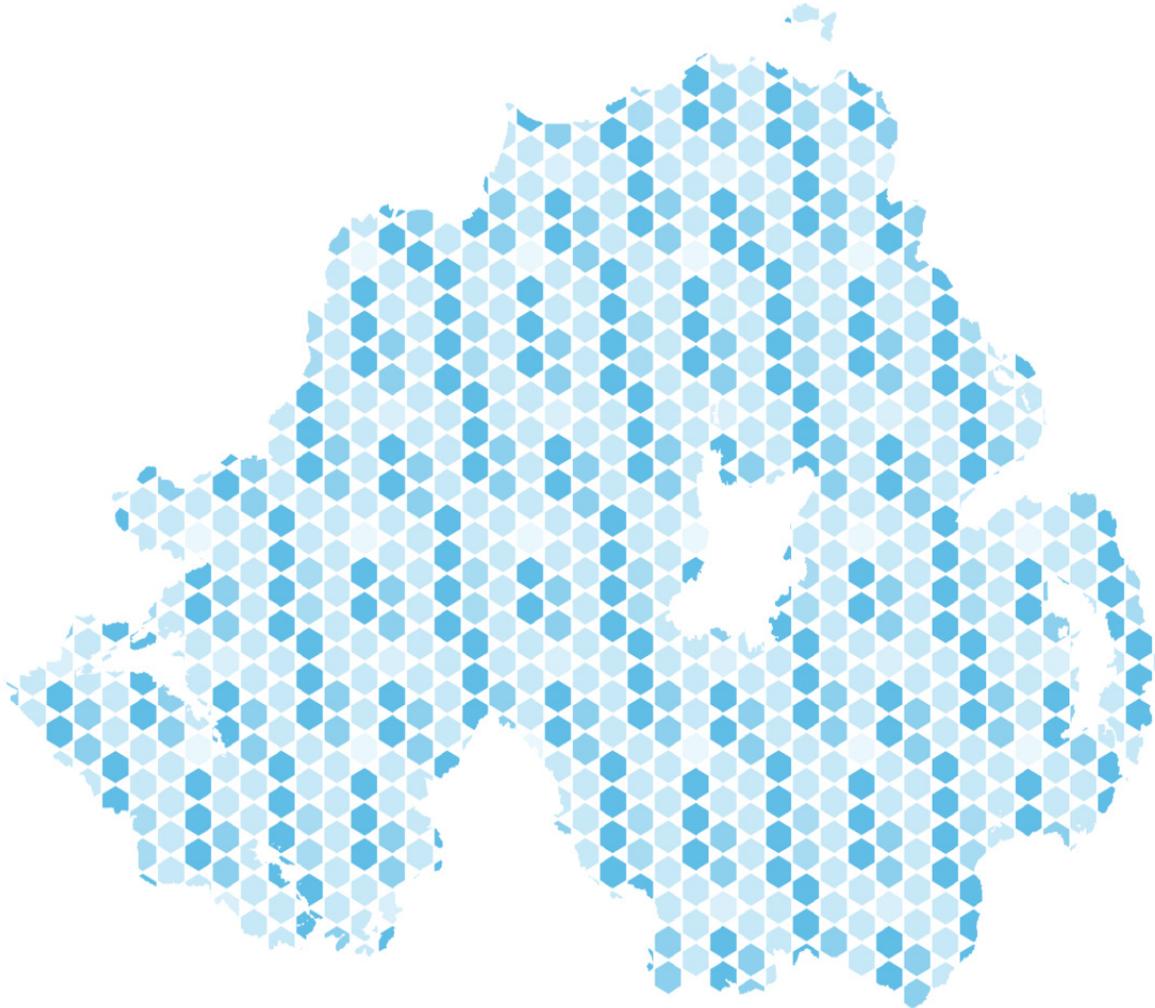


# PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training  
Inspectorate

St John's Primary School,  
Moy

Report of an Inspection  
in September 2010

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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, the Inspectorate relate their evaluations to six descriptors as set out below:

DESCRIPTOR
Outstanding
Very Good
Good
Satisfactory
Inadequate
Unsatisfactory

## BASIC INFORMATION SHEET (BIS) - PRIMARY SCHOOLS

- A. i. **School: St John's Primary School, Moy**                      iii. **Date of Inspection: W/B 27/09/2010**  
 ii. **School Reference Number: 503-2715**                      iv. **Nature of Inspection: Focused**

B.

School Year	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
Year 1 Intake	21	26	21	25	25
<b>Enrolments</b>					
Primary	189	197	189	182	178
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):                      95.6%                      **NI Avg Att: 94.9%**
- |  | Primary & Reception | Nursery Unit | Special Unit | Irish Medium Unit |
|--|---------------------|--------------|--------------|-------------------|
|--|---------------------|--------------|--------------|-------------------|
- D. i. Number of Teachers  
 (including the principal and part-time teachers):                      8.9                      0                      0                      0  
 (Full-time equivalent = 25 teaching hours)
- ii. PTR (Pupil/Teacher Ratio):                      20.0                      NI PTR: 20.7
- iii. Average Class Size:                      25.4
- iv. Class Size (Range):                      21 to 29
- v. Ancillary Support:  
 Number of Hours **Per Week**:
- |   |      |
|---|------|
| i. Clerical support:  | 25   |
| ii. Foundation Stage Classroom Assistant Support:           | 35   |
| iii. Additional hours of other classroom assistant support: | 36.5 |
- vi. Percentage of children with statements of special educational needs:                      2.2%
- vii. Total percentage of children on the Special Needs Register:                      17%
- viii. Percentage of children entitled to free school meals:                      10.67
- ix. Percentage of children at the end of Key Stage 2 for 2009/10 who attained level 4 and above in English and mathematics:
- |  | English | Mathematics |
|--|---------|-------------|
|  | 96%     | 100%        |
- x. Number of children who are not of statutory school age:                      0
- 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 |
|--|--------|--------|--------|
|  | 0      | 0      | 0      |

## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 SCHOOL CONTEXT

St John's Primary School is situated on the Benburb Road on the outskirts of Moy Village. The majority of the children come from the local and surrounding rural area. The enrolment of the school has fluctuated over recent years and currently stands at 178. Approximately 11% of the pupils are entitled to free school meals and about 17% of the pupils require additional support with their learning; 45 (25%) of the pupils speak English as an additional language (EAL).

### 1.2 FOCUS

The inspection focused on:

- the quality of the children's achievements and standards in literacy and numeracy;
- the quality of provision for learning;
- the quality of leadership and management; and
- the school's arrangements for pastoral care and child protection.

The inspection also evaluated the contribution of information and communication technology (ICT) in developing and supporting learning.

### 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 a representative group of children from years 6 and 7.

One hundred and twenty-six questionnaires were issued to the parents; approximately 37% were returned to Inspection Services Branch of which 22 contained additional written comments. Nearly all of the responses indicated a high level of satisfaction with the school. In particular, the parents highlighted their high regard for the staff and management of the school, the care and support provided by all of the staff for the children and the inclusive ethos of the school. A small number of the responses made comments relating to different aspects of the school's provision and procedures.

Ten teachers and 12 support staff completed the online questionnaire; two of the teachers and three members of the support staff included written comments. The responses were very positive and supportive of the work of the school.

An analysis of the questionnaires and the comments made by the parents and the staff were shared with the Principal and the governors.

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. They also expressed concerns about the school building. These issues are listed in Appendix 1.

In discussions held with the year 6 children which included members of the School Council, they talked enthusiastically about the warm welcome given to new children, the extensive range of extra-curricular activities and the exciting opportunities available within the school to acquire additional languages and to be involved in lessons out-of-doors. 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. Among the strengths are: the contribution made by the staff to all of the children to promote and maintain a well-organised and supportive environment for learning; the planned support lessons provided for the children from three other countries; the quality of the professional relationships throughout the school; the effective ways of communicating with all parents and governors; the inclusive participatory assemblies, and the exemplary behaviour of the children.

#### 1.5 CHILD PROTECTION

The school has very good comprehensive arrangements in place for safeguarding children. These arrangements reflect the guidance issued by the Department of Education.

#### 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 THE PARENTS AND THE WIDER COMMUNITY

The school has developed very good communication and links with the parents; there are regular opportunities for the parents to consult with the teachers both formally and informally. The children's progress is monitored through a combination of class tests, teacher observation and end-of-year assessments. The parents attend one meeting each year, at which they are given information on their child's progress. There is an active parent support group which provides additional resources which have extended significantly the teaching and learning opportunities on offer for the children. The school supports regularly local and global charities, and promotes the community use of the hall for a wide range of sporting and other recreational activities.

### 2. **ACHIEVEMENTS AND STANDARDS**

#### 2.1 LEARNING

The children are friendly, courteous and very well behaved; they are well motivated and demonstrate a very positive attitude to their learning. Working relationships between the teachers, the support staff and the children are very good and 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 to reflect on the skills they are acquiring.

An analysis of the key stage 2 (KS2) assessment data over the past four years shows that the school's performance is significantly above the Northern Ireland (NI) average. When compared with schools in the same free school meals category, the children's attainment in English and mathematics is very good. Given that a sizeable proportion of the school's population are children with EAL, this is a considerable achievement.

The quality of the provision for children with special educational needs (SEN) is very good. The data indicates that most children with special educational needs make good progress over time.

## 2.2 ENGLISH AND LITERACY

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

The children display very good talking and listening skills. In all classes, the teachers recognise and value the language and culture of each child. Their use of effective questioning scaffolds and extends the children's oral responses. In the foundation stage (FS) and key stage 1 (KS1), carefully planned activities such as themed play-based learning, shared reading and songs and dramatised stories, promote and develop the children's spoken skills and confidence. As the children progress through the school, they talk enthusiastically and with increasing maturity about their work and listen and co-operate fully during well-managed group tasks.

The standards achieved by the children in reading are very good. By the end of KS1, most of the children read with growing skill and fluency. In KS2, the children are developing further their reading skills through shared, guided and independent reading from a stimulating selection of fiction and non fiction books. Additional support is provided through the Reading Partnership Programme for those children who require help with their reading. As a result, by the end of KS2, most of the children read with understanding and enjoyment.

The children achieve good standards in writing. The school has identified the further development of writing across the curriculum as a priority and the inspection would endorse this. A very good start has been made to the implementation of an agreed phonics programme throughout the school to extend and consolidate the children's spelling strategies. The School Development Plan (SDP) indicates how the school intends to broaden the range of the children's writing experiences and raise further the standards they achieve. At FS and in KS1, the children are able to write purposefully and with enjoyment in the context of play-based learning and role-play. In KS2, the children write for a widening variety of purposes and audiences. The teachers respond to the children's writing with constructive comments thus enabling them to make further improvement to the quality of their work. Information and communication technology, including the use of the interactive whiteboards, is used successfully to stimulate interest and support all aspects of literacy learning and teaching across the school.

The Literacy co-ordinators have led the school in a number of effective improvement strategies, including a detailed review of planning and the regular and systematic monitoring and evaluation of the children's written work. The Literacy team show an insightful understanding of the next stage in the school's literacy priorities and is well placed to take this important work forward.

## 2.3 MATHEMATICS AND NUMERACY

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

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 activities including 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 is 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.

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 and these are used well to engage the children and to stimulate their thinking.

The co-ordinator has been pro-active in raising the profile of mathematics in the school and has worked hard to improve provision. Developments include a detailed review of planning, a focus on early intervention including the implementation of the Catch-up programme, the acquisition of new resources and the increased use of ICT to support learning. The co-ordinator is leading the school very effectively in addressing underachievement, which has been identified through the detailed analysis of the school's data.

## 3. THE QUALITY OF THE PROVISION FOR LEARNING

### 3.1 PLANNING

The teachers prepare very well for lessons. The medium-term planning provides a clear overview to ensure continuity and progression in the children's learning. There is clear evidence that the planning is implemented well into the practice and is used to guide the teachers in their work with the children. The evaluations made reflect the children's responses and are used to inform future learning and teaching.

The staff show commitment to achieving the best for the children on the SEN register and, to ensuring that the diverse needs of all of the children, including those with EAL, are understood and met. The pupils with SEN are included fully in the majority of lessons; the succinct and purposeful individual educational plans inform well the learning and teaching activities.

The staff, who provide literacy support for all of the children who require additional support with aspects of their learning, have created a safe and nurturing ethos in the withdrawal sessions designed to develop the children's reading, writing and language skills. There is effective communication with the class teachers who, in turn, build appropriately on the children's prior attainments and interests and motivate them to achieve their very best.

### 3.2 TEACHING

During the inspection the quality of the teaching observed ranged from good to outstanding. All of the teachers have embraced the underlying principles of the NI Curriculum and employ a wide range of teaching strategies to develop active learning. Very good use is made of the outdoor environment to support learning.

In the best practice observed:

- the teachers had high expectations of the children's learning and lessons were differentiated and well paced;
- previous learning and personal experiences were built upon effectively;
- the learning intentions were clear and the success criteria were negotiated skilfully with the children;
- the teachers' focused questions supported well the development of the children's self-esteem and confidence, and promoted thinking and extended responses; and
- good use was made of practical resources and ICT to support learning and teaching.

### 3.3 ASSESSMENT

There are agreed procedures in place for keeping parents well informed about their children's learning, including parent-teacher consultations and detailed written reports.

The school promotes a strong sense of inclusion in which each child, and their contribution to the school community is valued. Assessment procedures single out sensitively those children whose needs are greatest and who would benefit from additional support. Appropriate targets have been set to enhance the provision, and are met primarily through one-to-one in-class support and withdrawal sessions.

Across each key stage there is regular and effective observation, monitoring and recording of individual children's progress. In all classes, the teachers mark the children's work regularly and constructively in accordance with the school's agreed Marking Policy. The children receive helpful oral and written feedback on how to improve various aspects of their work.

The school has made a very good start to using a comprehensive and meaningful range of agreed assessment data. The Assessment co-ordinator has developed very effective systems of recording, analysing and sharing this data with the rest of the staff, who use the information to inform planning for learning, track longitudinally the progress of all learners and respond appropriately to their individual needs.

It is appropriate that the SDP indicates how this work will be taken forward.

## **4. LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

### **4.1 LEADERSHIP**

The Principal has been in post for ten years and works closely with the Vice-principal to foster a strong sense of team spirit among the staff and an inclusive ethos throughout the school. He has a clear vision for the future development of the school within the local community. The senior management team are reflective in their work and foster a culture of self-evaluation leading to improvement.

The Principal and a teacher co-manage the Special Education Needs Co-ordinator role. They are well informed, have clear lines of responsibility and have formed an effective professional partnership in consultation with the teachers, classroom assistants, education and library board personnel and external agencies, in support of the children's learning and personal and social development.

### **4.2 PLANNING FOR IMPROVEMENT**

The SDP meets the requirements of the Department of Education School Development Planning Regulations 2005/19 and is supported by appropriate action plans. There are effective processes for self-evaluation leading to improvement. The provision for SEN has been audited recently to inform development planning and policies are in the process of being updated. The SDP prioritises clearly an additional requirement for support for those children experiencing difficulty in numeracy; arrangements are in place to employ a part-time numeracy teacher from available SEN funding.

### **4.3 STAFF DEVELOPMENT**

The Principal is committed to the staff's professional development. In addition to in-service training opportunities for the staff appropriate school-based training has also been provided for various areas of the curriculum. Key roles in the school have been identified and developed in recent years and all teaching staff have an opportunity to apply to join the senior management team for a fixed term of office.

### **4.4 ACCOMMODATION**

Very good use is made of all the available space in the school and the staff work hard to create bright and inviting classrooms and corridors celebrating the children's work. The standard of caretaking is very good.

Accommodation and health and safety issues are detailed in Appendix 1.

### **4.5 RESOURCES, FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE**

The school works very hard to ensure that all of the children receive a broad and varied programme within the allocated budget. Two years ago a large investment was made in upgrading the ICT provision in the school and the parents made a major contribution to this. The school has a good range of resources to support the children with their learning. There is very good communication between the Principal and the governors who play an active and supportive role in the life and work of the school.

## 5. CONCLUSION

5.1 The strengths of the school include:

- the outstanding quality of the pastoral care;
- the extensive support provided for all of the children with diverse or special needs;
- the quality of the teaching observed, which ranged from good to outstanding;
- the very good quality of the provision in literacy and numeracy and the high standards achieved by the children by the end of the KS2;
- the exemplary behaviour of the children who demonstrate high levels of motivation and the ability to learn collaboratively, and
- the reflective, committed team approach to school improvement promoted by the Principal and Vice-principal.

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.

**ACCOMMODATION**

The dimensions of several classrooms are inadequate for the delivery of aspects of the curriculum.

**HEALTH AND SAFETY**

1. The staffroom facility incorporates substantial Information and Technology and reprographic equipment due to a lack of alternative storage.
2. The speed of passing traffic on the main road at the front of the school is hazardous, particularly at the beginning and end of the school day.
3. Appropriate changing facilities for physical education are not available within the school.
4. The boys' toilet facility is both odorous and inadequate.
5. The door from the disabled toilet opens out into the main corridor area.

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