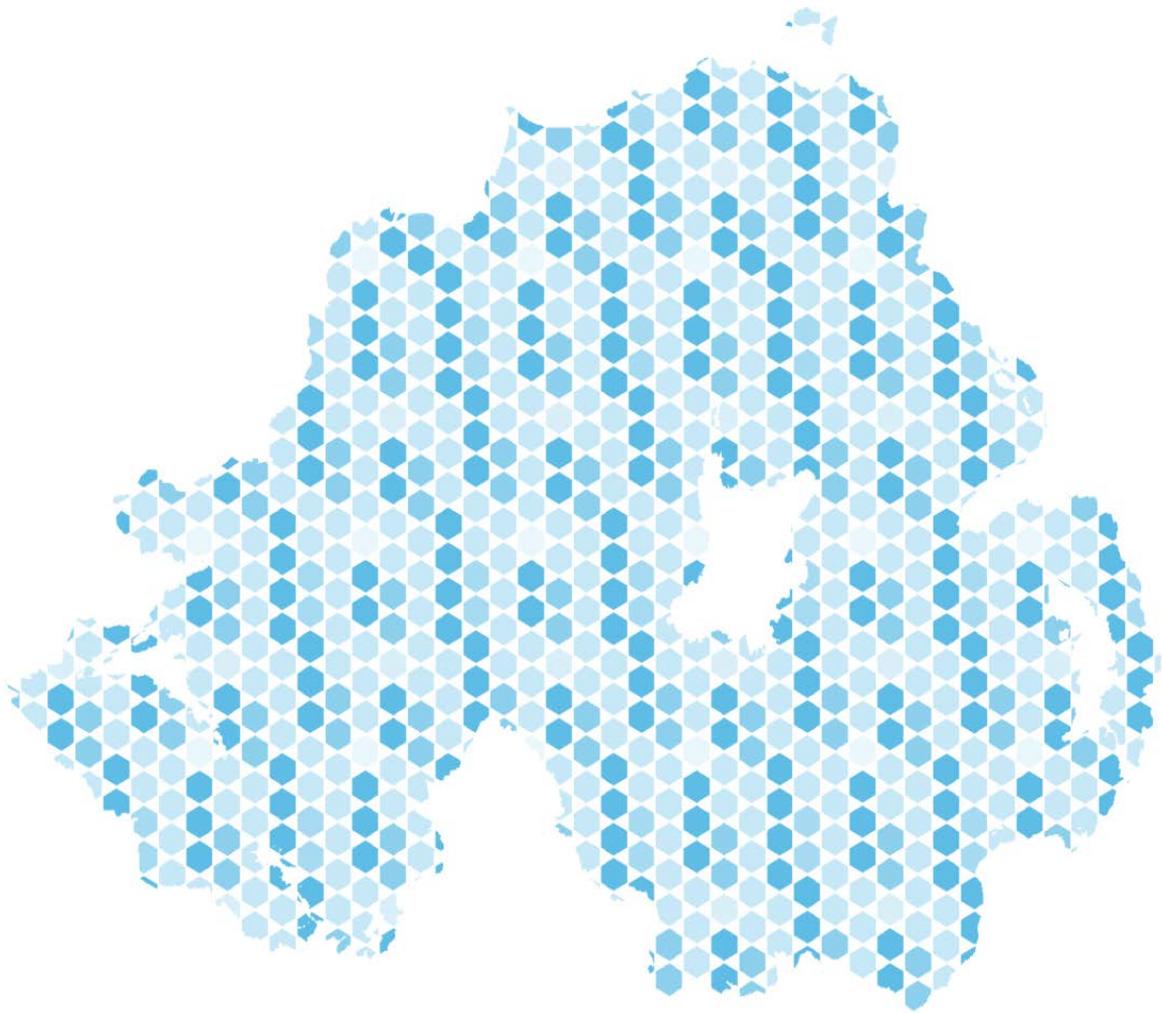


# PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training  
Inspectorate

Wallace High School  
Preparatory Department,  
Lisburn

Report of an Inspection  
in May 2013



Providing Inspection Services for

Department of Education  
Department for Employment and Learning  
Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure

CUSTOMER  
SERVICE  
EXCELLENCE



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:

<b>DESCRIPTOR</b>
Outstanding
Very Good
Good
Satisfactory
Inadequate
Unsatisfactory

## SCHOOL CONTEXT

The Wallace Preparatory Department is situated in purpose built accommodation in the grounds of the Wallace High School, Clonevin Park, Lisburn. The enrolment in the Preparatory Department currently stands at 105 children. The children who attend the school come from a wide catchment area. The school has identified approximately 22.8 % 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.

## OVERALL FINDING OF THE INSPECTION

In the areas inspected, the quality of the education provided by this school is very good. The school is meeting very effectively the educational and pastoral needs of the children and has demonstrated its 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, or better than, their ability. Their oral and written communication is consistently of a very good quality across the year groups. The children demonstrate confidence and flexibility in their mathematical thinking and can apply their knowledge and understanding well in a range of contexts.
- The children identified as having **special educational needs** make very good progress and achieve standards in line with their ability. The school is able to demonstrate clearly the progress made by each child.
- By the end of key stage (KS) 2, the children achieve outstanding standards in **information and communication technology** (ICT). Across the year groups, and, in particular in key stage (KS) 2, the children, on an individual basis and collectively for class analysis, use appropriately the iPads to extend their research, to draft and edit their written responses and to represent their mathematical findings.

## Provision for Learning

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

- Almost all of the **children's** behaviour is exemplary; they are highly motivated by the teachers' child-centred approach to learning which results in a positive response from the children. From the beginning of the foundation stage (FS), the children work effectively, both independently and collaboratively, in pairs and in groups. A significant strength of the provision for learning is the children's application of their thinking skills and problem-solving capabilities to a range of learning activities. For example, during mathematics sessions, the children complete effectively problem-solving and practical activities set in meaningful real life contexts. The children enjoy reading and give well-informed opinions about preferred genres and authors. In the foundation stage (FS), the children's play-based learning experiences provide them with very good opportunities to develop their language and enrich their mathematical understanding.
- All of the **teaching** is good or better; in 85% of the lessons observed, it was very good and outstanding. The well-structured lessons focus on the progression in learning and the development of the children's knowledge and skills in literacy and numeracy through a very good range of active learning approaches. The teachers use skilful questioning to engage and challenge the children, and encourage them to reflect on and explain their thinking using the appropriate vocabulary.
- The teachers' **planning** is very effective. The medium and long-term planning provides a clear overview in English and mathematics and ensures continuity and progression in the children's learning. The teachers' short-term planning is detailed, systematic and includes well-focused differentiation that meets the needs of most of the children.
- The provision for **special educational needs** is very good. The children's needs are identified early and a variety of appropriate programmes of support is in place; this includes very effective in-class and withdrawal sessions. The classroom assistants engage actively with the children and provide them with appropriate support in their learning. The Trustees have identified the need to provide disability access to the upper floor level of the Preparatory Department.
- The quality of the arrangements for **pastoral care** is outstanding. The inclusive ethos is characterised by mutual respect and excellent working relationships at all levels. The needs of the children are accorded paramount importance and the holistic approach by the staff to the children's development meets their personal, social and emotional needs well. In discussions with a group of year 6 children, they indicated that they feel happy in school, they enjoy their learning and the range of the extra-curricular activities and they appreciate how all staff care for and support them. The children know who to speak to if they have concerns about their well-being. The School Council provides the children with a very good consultative process whereby their views are presented on future improvements within the Preparatory Department.
- On the basis of the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the school has comprehensive arrangements in place for **safeguarding** children. These arrangements reflect the guidance issued by the Department of Education.

- The school gives good attention to promoting **healthy eating** through the effective emphasis placed on healthy breaks and lunches. The children have very good opportunities for physical activity, in particular through the wide range of extra-curricular activities available to them. They benefit from the very good links with the Grammar School staff, who provide specialist physical education teaching, combined with the use of the facilities, to enhance significantly the sporting opportunities available to the children.

### **Leadership and Management**

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

- The **Head of the Preparatory Department** is in her second year in post; she provides outstanding strategic and pastoral leadership. She is clearly focused on leading curricular change, the development of the children's learning and the staff's continuing professional development in order to raise further the standards achieved by the children.
- A collegial approach to school development planning ensures that all members of staff are involved in the improvements of the provision and the standards attained by the children. She receives very good support from all members of the staff, the parents and the Principal of the Grammar School. The whole-school **self-evaluation** and **school development planning** processes are very good. The well-focused action plans are informed increasingly by the effective analysis and use of the school's performance data. The **co-ordinators** provide effective leadership in their areas of responsibility.

### **CONCLUSION**

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

No follow-up inspection is required.

## BASIC INFORMATION SHEET (BIS) - PRIMARY SCHOOLS

- A. i. **School: Wallace High School Preparatory Department**      iii. **Date of Inspection: W/B 13/05/13**  
 ii. **School Reference Number: 462-0051**      iv. **Nature of Inspection: Short**

B.

School Year	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
Year 1 Intake	12	7	13	13	17
<b>Enrolments</b>					
Primary	129	110	104	109	105
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 are based on the total of the primary and reception enrolments only.

- C. Average Attendance for the Previous School Year (expressed as a percentage): 97.3%      **NI Avg Att: 94.7%**

Average Attendance for those children on the Special Educational Needs Register: 96.3%

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      0      0      0  
 (Full-time equivalent = 25 teaching hours)
- ii. PTR (Pupil/Teacher Ratio): 13.1      NI PTR: 20.2
- iii. Average Class Size: 15
- iv. Class Size (Range): 10 to 20
- v. Ancillary Support:  
 Number of Hours **Per Week**:
- |   |    |
|---|----|
| i. Clerical support:  | 20 |
| ii. Foundation Stage Classroom Assistant Support:           | 26 |
| iii. Additional hours of other classroom assistant support: | 5  |
- vi. Percentage of children with statements of special educational needs: 2.8%
- vii. Total percentage of children on the Special Needs Register: 22.8%
- viii. Number of children who are **not** of statutory school age: 0
- ix. Percentage of children entitled to free school meals: 0%
- x. Percentage of children at the end of Key Stage 2 for 2011/12 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> |
| 95%            | 100%               | N/A          |

### 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 85 questionnaires issued to the **parents**, 22 (25.9%) were returned to Inspection Services Branch including 13 which contained additional written comments. Almost all of the parental questionnaires expressed very high levels of support for the life and work of the school. In the written comments, the parents expressed their appreciation of the welcoming, inclusive and family ethos; the high expectations of the staff for the children's learning; their commitment to the children's holistic development; and the leadership of the Head of the Preparatory Department.

Fifteen members of **staff**, including the teachers and the support staff, responded very positively to the staff questionnaires indicating that they work well as a team, they are fully involved with the school development planning process and curricular developments and they feel that their contributions are highly valued.

Prior to the inspection, representatives of the **governors** met with a member of the inspection team and expressed the governors' appreciation of the work and the high level of commitment of the Head of the Preparatory Department and the staff. The governors praised the children's high standards of academic attainment and the effective manner in which the staff work as a team to meet the needs of all the children.

The key messages and a few issues arising from the parental questionnaires have been shared with the Principal, Head of the Preparatory Department and representatives of the Board of Governors.

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