

Provision in the Creative and Expressive Area of Study in a Sample of Primary Schools in Northern Ireland

Education and Training Inspectorate
Report of District Inspections



INSPECTED: 2005

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A number of quantitative terms are used throughout the report when commenting on aspects of provision in art and design, music and physical education. These terms 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 uses four performance grades which may be interpreted as follows:

GRADE	
1	Significant strengths (good ranging to outstanding)
2	Strengths outweigh weaknesses (satisfactory ranging to good)
3	Weaknesses outweigh strengths (fair ranging to satisfactory)
4	Significant weaknesses (poor)

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Education and Training Inspectorate (Inspectorate) has undertaken a number of District Inspections in a sample of primary schools to evaluate the quality of learning and teaching in the creative and expressive area of study, specifically in the contributory subjects of art and design, music and physical education (PE).
- 1.2 The District Inspections involved visits to 77 primary schools. Inspectors observed over 300 lessons distributed evenly within key stage (KS) 1 and KS2, evaluated relevant school documentation, talked with children as they worked in class, and examined samples of their work. In addition, the visits involved discussions with the principals, relevant curriculum co-ordinators, and class teachers. The Inspectorate also had discussions with the advisers within the Curriculum Advisory and Support Service (CASS) who have responsibility for the creative and expressive area of study.
- 1.3 This report presents the findings of the survey in the individual subjects of art and design, music and PE respectively. Evaluative comments are supported with examples which illustrate good practice.

2. ART AND DESIGN

2.1 THE QUALITY OF THE ETHOS IN ART AND DESIGN

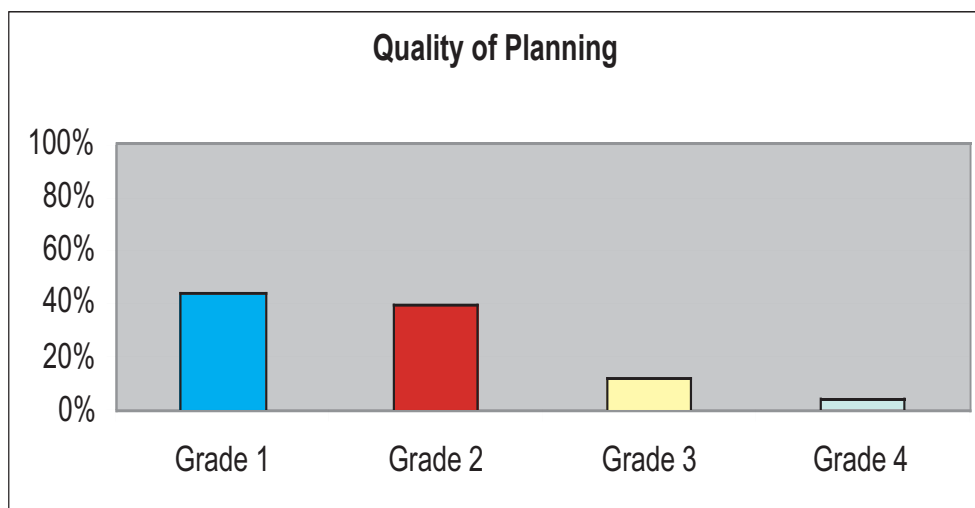
- 2.1.1 In almost all of the lessons the children's behaviour is good or very good, they interact well and work with purpose and enjoyment. The children take pride in their work and there are good levels of discussion related to the learning tasks.
- 2.1.2 The relationships between the teachers and the children are mostly very good. The classes have a friendly, purposeful atmosphere with good evidence of mutual respect between the teachers and the children; the children's work is praised appropriately and the teachers place a strong focus on raising the children's self-confidence.
- 2.1.3 In the majority of schools there is a strong focus on celebrating the children's work in classrooms and in communal areas throughout the school. The displays help to provide stimulating exemplars for learning; they often reflect a broad range of the children's work, demonstrate and promote progression in learning from year to year, and help to raise the self-esteem of the children.

In one class there was an excellent display of the work of year 6 children. The children had undertaken an extended and challenging three-stage project on portraiture. Using examples of the work of Paul Klee and Amadeo Modigliano as reference points, the children had investigated and experimented with the artists' techniques by producing colourful geometric patterns; they developed the work further into self-portraits using fabric crayons on tissue paper and composed ambitious quilted portraits using a range of stitching and colouring techniques. Later, the portraiture theme was integrated well into the topic of the Vikings when the children selected a Viking character from which to make clay relief portraits.



2.2 THE QUALITY OF PLANNING FOR ART AND DESIGN

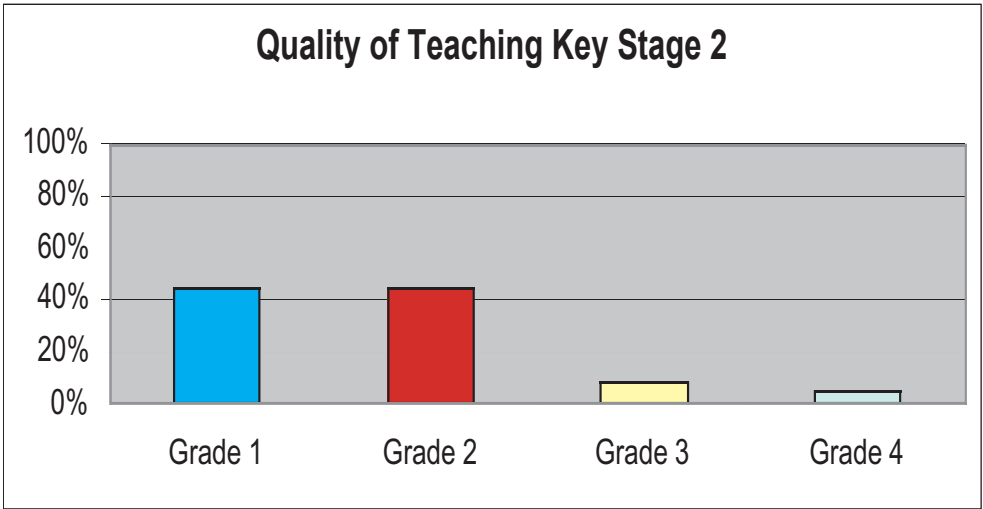
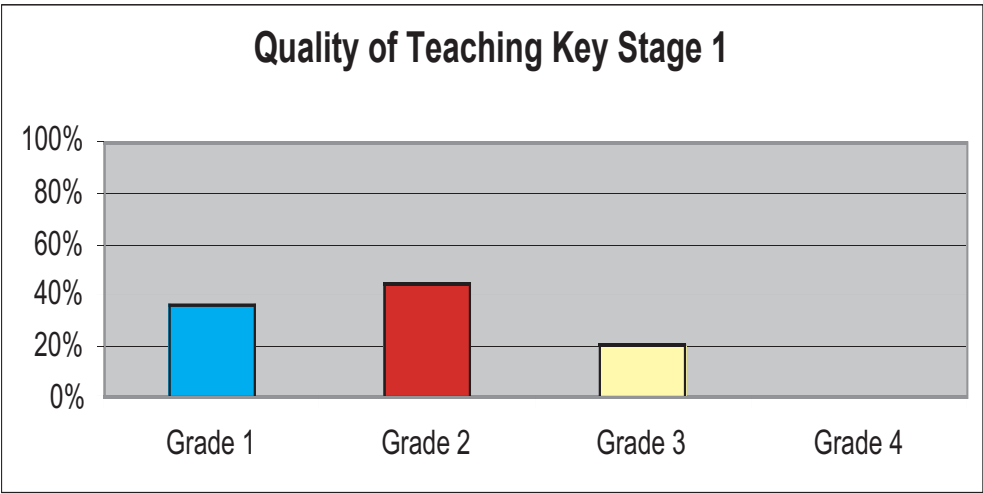
2.2.1 The planning for art and design is satisfactory or better in most of the schools. In a significant minority, the planning is thorough and reflects appropriately the programme of study for the subject. In these schools, the whole-school planning for art and design gives a coherent and progressive framework of topics and skills for each year group, opportunities for the integration of contextual references to artists, and well-selected links with other curricular areas. In addition, the schemes of work are sufficiently flexible to enable teachers to adapt them to enrich the children's work in other subjects. A small number of teachers are beginning to identify, and share with the children, intended learning outcomes. This is a valuable approach as it ensures that the children are clear about the purpose and objectives of the lesson, can focus on working towards specific goals and reflect on how well they have met their targets. In a small number of schools the planning is less effective; while the scheme of work allows flexibility, the teachers' inexperience and lack of confidence in working to an appropriate standard in a sufficiently wide range of media and processes limit the quality of the children's learning and the standards they achieve.



Detailed, coherent schemes of work identify, throughout the school, the range of techniques and processes to be used, such as drawing and painting, print-making and three-dimensional (3D) modelling; art appreciation and references to historical and contemporary artists and designers are well-integrated into almost all lessons and projects. The medium-term plans identify realistic learning outcomes, teaching methods and learning experiences. Well-considered links are made with information and communication technology (ICT), other curricular areas and joint projects with other schools.

2.3 THE QUALITY OF TEACHING OF ART AND DESIGN

- 2.3.1 The quality of teaching in art and design ranges from excellent to poor. In a significant minority of lessons in both key stages it is very good. In almost all of the lessons the children demonstrate enthusiasm and undertake tasks with a clear sense of enjoyment. In lessons where the teaching is most effective, the teachers have clearly defined and realistically high expectations of the children. In the best practice, an appropriate proportion of the lesson is spent on the important introductory phase, ie providing a context or scenario for the learning and a stimulus for the work to which the children can relate. Extensive opportunities are provided at the outset for the children to generate and share ideas and plan how to approach the task, for example, in making decisions about scale, colour, materials and techniques. In addition, these lessons are well-paced and punctuated by opportunities for continuous evaluation, teacher demonstration, and questioning to assess and consolidate the children's learning. Where a suitable emphasis is placed on guiding the children through a creative learning process, the children produce individual responses of a high quality. Appropriately, much of the work in art and design is linked well to other aspects of the curriculum through topic work.



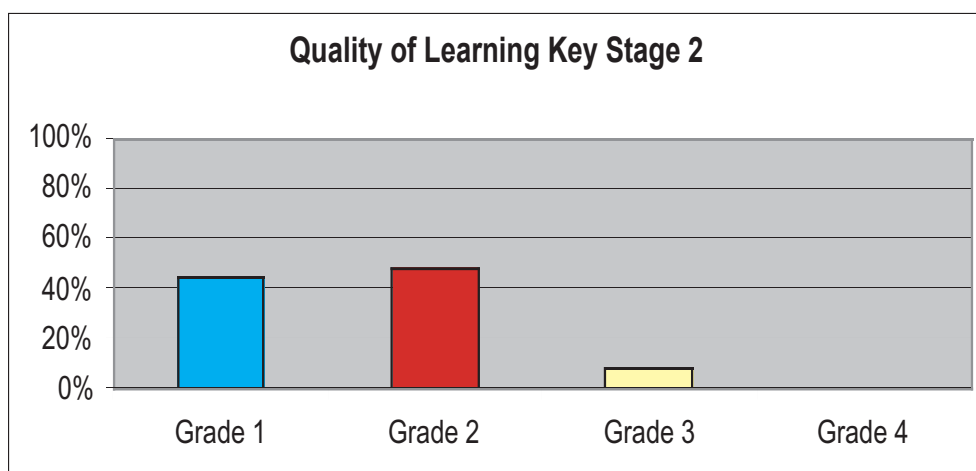
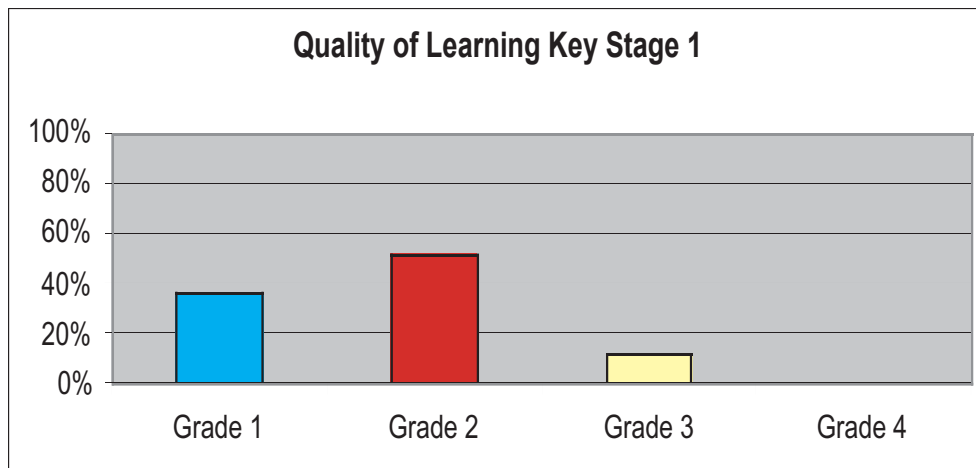
2.3.2 A feature of the very good art and design lessons is the extensive well-integrated opportunities for the children to discuss or record aspects of their own work and the work of others. These reviews enable the teacher and the children to consolidate learning and to evaluate together the extent to which the proposed learning outcomes have been achieved. In a minority of the lessons, where the teaching is less effective, the children have insufficient opportunities to discuss or share ideas which motivate them, and to enable them to plan and to make choices and decisions about their work. This absence of stimulus, combined with the lack of

adequate skills, often result in the children copying the teacher's modelled work. In addition, in a significant minority of instances, the teacher's own skills are not sufficiently well-developed to teach the children the necessary range of techniques and processes to enable them to produce work of an appropriate standard.

In a year 3 class, the theme of bears was used in the programme of work in history and in art and design. There was an excellent introduction to the lesson with very good opportunities for discussion about drawings prepared by the teacher. The children were clear about the intended outcomes for the lesson and were highly motivated by the task. They prepared a scene for a teddy bears' picnic and, using this as a primary source, made a still-life drawing and added background with good success. The children had an appropriate range of choices and decisions to make regarding their work, for example, in choosing card or paper and discussing the colours and textures they would use. The lesson ended effectively with a good evaluative session in which the children had the opportunity to discuss their own work and that of their peers.

2.4 THE QUALITY OF LEARNING IN ART AND DESIGN

- 2.4.1 The quality of the learning ranges from excellent to poor. In a significant minority of lessons the outcomes and the standards achieved by the children are very good. Typically, in these lessons, the children have opportunities to work in pairs or groups or individually as appropriate, to experiment with a range of media, to develop a suitable range of skills and to apply them creatively; they are also accustomed to being involved in the organisation, selection and distribution of materials and equipment.

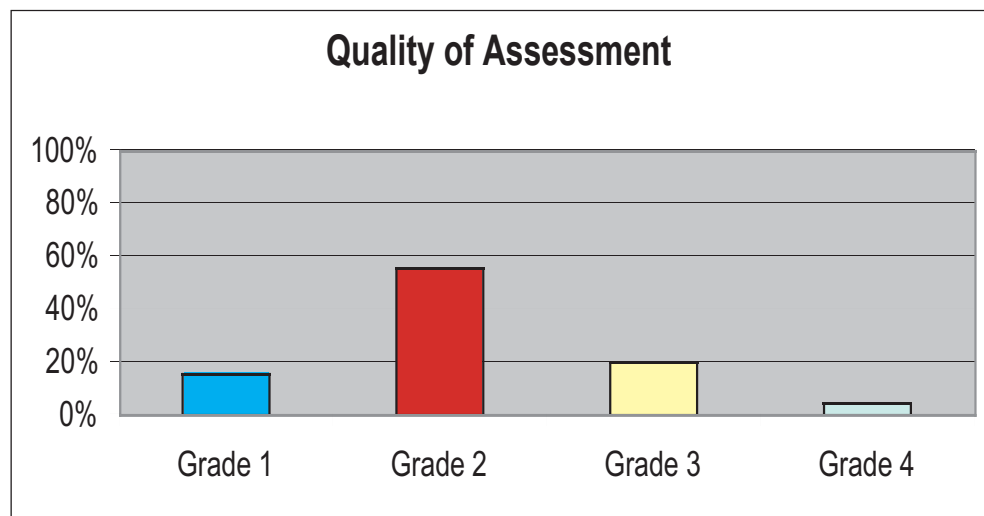


2.4.2 Where the outcomes are poor, the children are constrained to following an over prescriptive set of procedures with very limited opportunity to explore ideas, or experiment with media or materials; consequently the work lacks variety and individuality.

In a rural primary school, the year 5 children used the topic of conflict as a stimulus for art and design and literacy. Using dark lithographs and black and white photographs to stimulate discussion, the children explored the lack of colour as a means of emphasising the starkness of the figures. The children replicated the pictures well using a different medium. Later, in groups, supported by excellent questioning from the teacher, the children produced very good quality writing.

2.5 THE QUALITY OF ASSESSMENT OF ART AND DESIGN

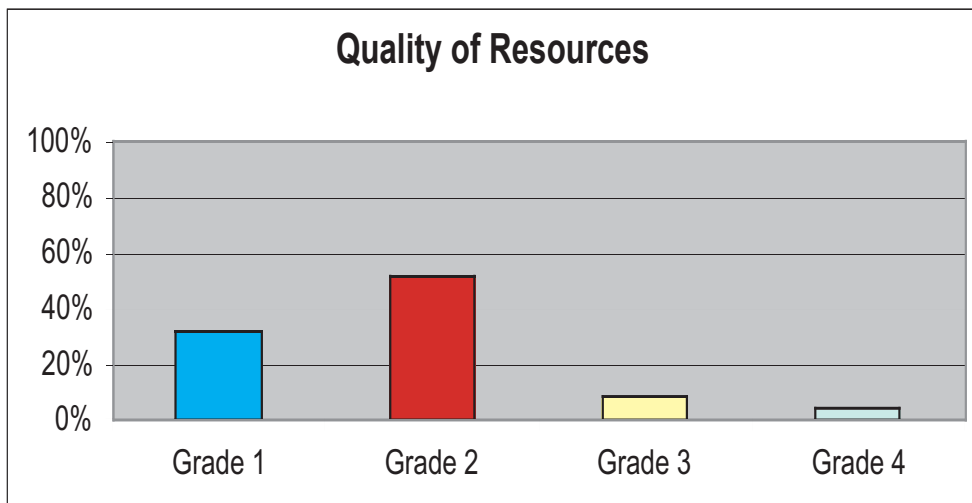
2.5.1 In the main, the teachers provide the children with positive and constructive feedback on their achievement in the subject. In almost all schools, the children's work in art and design is valued, celebrated and displayed well. However, in the majority of schools the assessment of the children's work is limited to an informal evaluation of their progress. In a minority of lessons, the opportunities for the children to evaluate their own work and that of others are good. In general, the quality of the opportunities for evaluation varies within and across schools. In most schools, assessment is an area for improvement, including the need to identify, more systematically, progression in the children's learning, and to use assessment to inform future planning.



A year 5 teacher used her own drawings to stimulate discussion and to talk about her work and what she saw as its strengths and less positive features. At various points throughout the lesson she asked for comment from the children on their progress; at the end of the lesson everyone's work was displayed on the blackboard and the children discussed their work, identifying clearly the strengths and areas for improvement.

2.6 THE QUALITY OF RESOURCES FOR ART AND DESIGN

2.6.1 In almost all schools, the teachers have access to an adequate range of materials and equipment to support the children's learning across all aspects of the programme of study. In general, the art and design co-ordinators organise effectively the overall school materials and resources which are supplemented by individual class requisitions. In a few schools, the parents raise funds for additional resources; many teachers support lessons by providing their own artefacts; they demonstrate high levels of resourcefulness by collecting an imaginative range of materials to be used in class. In general, the children have access to sufficient CD-ROMs, the Internet, and contextual reference materials from other sources. In a minority of schools the resources are inadequate. A small number of schools have identified the need to develop further the use of ICT programs to support learning and teaching in art and design; this area for improvement is endorsed by the survey findings.



2.7 THE QUALITY OF MANAGEMENT OF ART AND DESIGN

2.7.1 In a significant minority of schools, where those with management responsibilities (eg principal, vice-principal and co-ordinators) place a high value on the subject, the organisation of art and design is

good. The commitment of senior staff and that of their colleagues is reflected in the identification of clear targets for the development of the subject in the School Development Plan (SDP), the quality of the subject policy and whole-school scheme of work, the range and quality of art and design opportunities afforded to the children and the resources provided. In these schools, all of the children are provided with frequent opportunities, including structured play, to develop their skills in a sequential and coherent manner. In a small number of schools, however, art and design is not taught as regularly as it should be.

- 2.7.2 In most schools the art and design co-ordinators support well the provision for art and design across both key stages, and the staff benefit from practical guidance to support their teaching and knowledge of art and design. However, only a minority of teachers, mostly co-ordinators, have benefited from recent professional development in art and design, provided by the Education and Library Boards' (ELBs) CASS. The teachers report that they gained significant knowledge, advice and confidence from these courses. There is a need to extend this professional development to all staff involved in teaching the subject, to develop more effectively their competence in an appropriate range and level of art and design techniques and processes, and to ensure that they understand more fully what constitutes appropriate progression within and across the key stages.
- 2.7.3 In a significant minority of schools, the co-ordinators' roles and responsibilities are not defined clearly, the identification of the need for, and provision of, staff development are inadequate, and the dissemination of the information gained from in-service courses and the sharing of good practice are poor. Furthermore, the evaluation of how staff development influences the quality of learning and teaching lacks rigour.
- 2.7.4 A minority of schools have made good use of the work of visiting artists. Occasionally, the artists are parents or local artists, but in general, artists visit the school through the Arts Council for Northern Ireland's (ACNI) 'Artists in Schools Programme'. The Creative Youth

Partnerships (CYP) initiative has now replaced this programme, and includes appropriate procedures for the selection of the artists and joint planning between the schools, the artist and the CYP Development Officer. Often the schools involve the artists very effectively to offer new and creative experiences for the children and to provide good opportunities for staff development. In a small number of schools, although these links are beneficial to the children, the schools do not use the opportunities effectively to provide staff development for a larger number of teachers.

The art and design co-ordinator is an effective curriculum leader in the school. She guides the work of individual teachers as required and up-dates the staff regularly with new ideas which she has researched, for example, from art journals or the Internet. Evidence portfolios of the school's art and design work are maintained and used to guide the work of substitute teachers if required.

- 2.7.5 In a majority of schools, good links are established with other schools, parents and the local community in the development and implementation of art and design projects. Often art and design is used as a medium to promote Education for Mutual Understanding (EMU) and links with other schools; these sessions are usually supported well by professional artists. In a few schools the children experience the work of professional artists and are given an opportunity to display their work in public places. Other schools make valuable visits to artists' workshops or to other centres where the children can use their own design skills. For example, in one school, the year 7 children visited a technology centre where they designed and made wooden bird boxes. Increasingly, partnerships are developing with professional artists which increase considerably the range of the children's experiences in art and design. These partnerships have the potential to develop a greater understanding and appreciation of art and design in a broader context and its valuable role in society. Most schools participate in local and national competitions.

In a medium-sized urban school a comprehensive action plan has been devised to guide the development of art and design within the school. The targets set by the school, include the need to organise visits to galleries, organise workshops for parents, incorporate an 'artist' theme into the school's topic base, and arrange visits to, and display within the school, the work of, artists.

2.7.6 Almost all of the teaching of art and design is carried out in the same classroom which is also used for the majority of subjects within the curriculum; in most cases the size and organisation of the classrooms are adequate. However, organisational issues arise when the children are undertaking clay or wet work, or producing large-scale work. In almost all schools there is inadequate storage for materials and work in progress, and insufficient display space. A small number of schools have a room designated for art and design.

2.8 SUMMARY OF STRENGTHS AND AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT IN ART AND DESIGN

2.8.1 Strengths in the learning and teaching in art and design include:

- ▶ the good behaviour of the children and their positive interaction;
- ▶ the good relationships and the friendly, purposeful atmosphere of mutual respect in classrooms;
- ▶ the strong focus on celebrating the children's work and raising their self-esteem;
- ▶ the adequate range of materials and equipment available in almost all schools;
- ▶ the good support given by the art and design co-ordinators in schools and the in-service support provided by CASS; and

- ▶ the good development of links with parents, schools, the local community and professional artists in a majority of schools.

2.8.2 Areas for improvement in the learning and teaching in art and design include the need:

- ▶ to provide the children with sufficient opportunities to discuss and share ideas which motivate them, and to enable them to plan and to make their own choices and decisions about their work;
- ▶ to provide more opportunities for the children to evaluate their own work and the work of others;
- ▶ to develop further the use of ICT programs to support the teaching of art and design;
- ▶ to develop assessment procedures which identify more systematically the progression in the children's learning and inform future planning;
- ▶ to extend the professional development of all staff involved in teaching the subject, to develop more effectively their competence in an appropriate range and level of art and design techniques and processes, and to ensure that they understand more fully what constitutes progression within and across the key stages; and
- ▶ to evaluate the effect of staff development on the quality of learning and teaching.

3. MUSIC

3.1 THE QUALITY OF THE ETHOS IN MUSIC

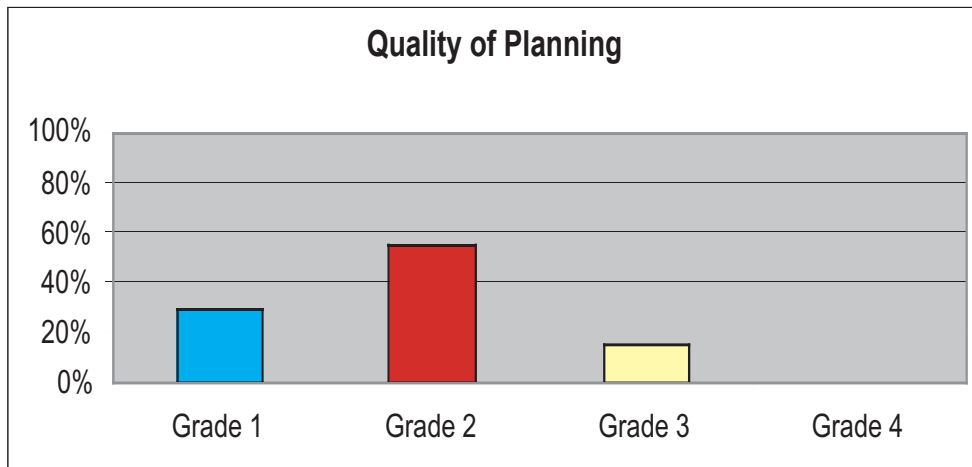
- 3.1.1 The children's behaviour is good or very good in almost all instances. Typically, children show an enthusiastic willingness to take part in the activities provided, are well aware of the procedures and routines for making music, and treat musical equipment responsibly.
- 3.1.2 Relationships between the teachers and the children, and among the children, are of an equally high quality. The children and the teachers demonstrate mutual respect for each other's musical contribution. The children co-operate well in group activities, supporting one another as appropriate.
- 3.1.3 The learning environment for music is good or very good in almost all instances. In the best practice, the lessons take place in an environment conducive to creative and practical activity. Many classrooms contain a range of stimulating and informative displays of the children's music work, commercial music posters, and an instrument corner. The majority of schools place considerable importance on the role of music in school life; this priority is evidenced through displays of photographs, newspaper cuttings and awards celebrating the experiences and achievements of the children over time. There exists, within these schools, an acknowledgement that all children are potentially musical and have a musical contribution to make. In most instances, music lessons take place in the children's classroom or in the assembly hall. In a small number of schools, additional resources have been provided to create specific music areas.

3.2 THE QUALITY OF PLANNING FOR MUSIC

- 3.2.1 The quality of the teachers' planning for music is good in a significant minority of instances and reflects appropriately the programme of study. Increasingly, teachers are focusing their planning for all areas of study on the intended learning outcomes for



the children, and, in the best practice, this process is extended to the music planning. In addition, the planning provides for the continuous development of the children's vocal and instrumental skills, and their understanding and control of the elements of music; it also gives appropriate attention to composing, performing and listening.

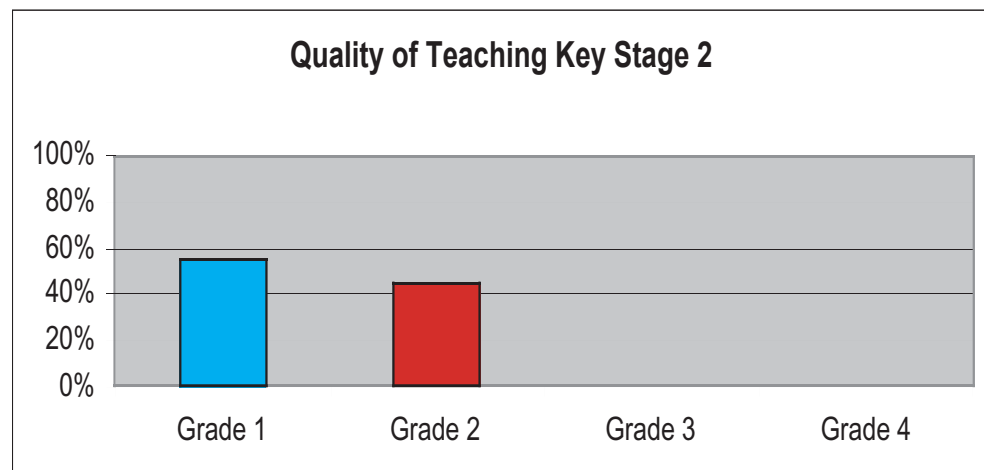
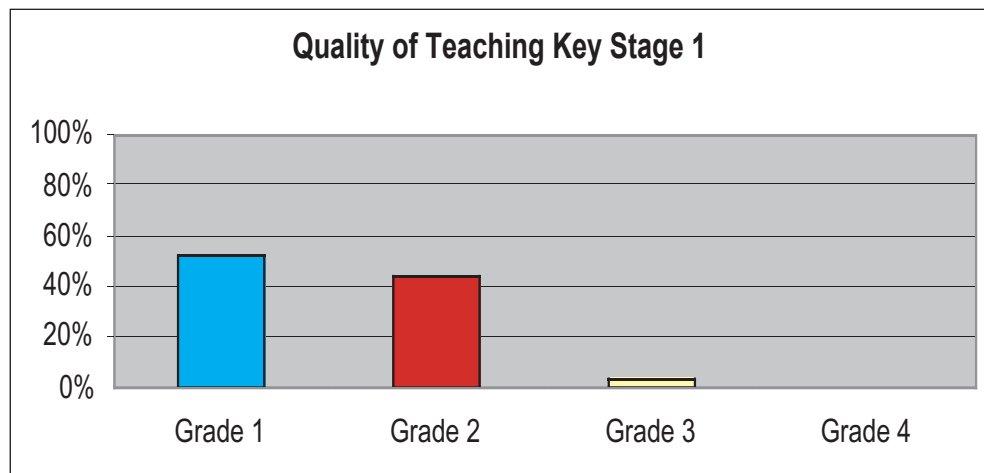


- 3.2.2 In a minority of schools the planning has weaknesses. Usually, this results from the absence of an agreed whole-school scheme of work which, in turn, limits the progressive development of the children's music skills, knowledge, understanding and experiences throughout the primary years.

In a small urban primary school, the planning for music was comprehensive and practical in its guidance for the teachers. The music policy set out clearly how the opportunities for developing the children's composing, listening and performing skills could be provided in a progressive manner from year 1 to year 7. The policy reflected fully the NIC programme of study, placing particular emphasis on building the children's confidence and independence, and importantly, promoting music-making. A yearly overview outlining progression in the key elements was complemented with eight-weekly units of work detailing carefully the intended learning outcomes, content and teaching approaches, the language to be promoted and the resources to be used including broadcasts and recordings. The policy and scheme are monitored regularly to ensure that the children's needs are being met.

3.3 THE QUALITY OF TEACHING OF MUSIC

3.3.1 The quality of teaching of music ranges from satisfactory to excellent; it is good or better in a majority of instances. There is no significant difference in the overall quality of teaching in the two key stages. In the most effective teaching, the teachers set activities and tasks which match well the children's age and stage in their musical development. The musical processes, rather than the end result alone, are the teachers' prime focus. Oral work, particularly good questioning, is used effectively to develop the children's musical thinking. Explanations and demonstrations are used to promote the children's confidence, initiative and independence, and they are encouraged to be creative and inventive. Music technology, including recording equipment, keyboards and computers, is used well to help the children to explore musical concepts. With the youngest children music is often provided as an optional activity during structured play.

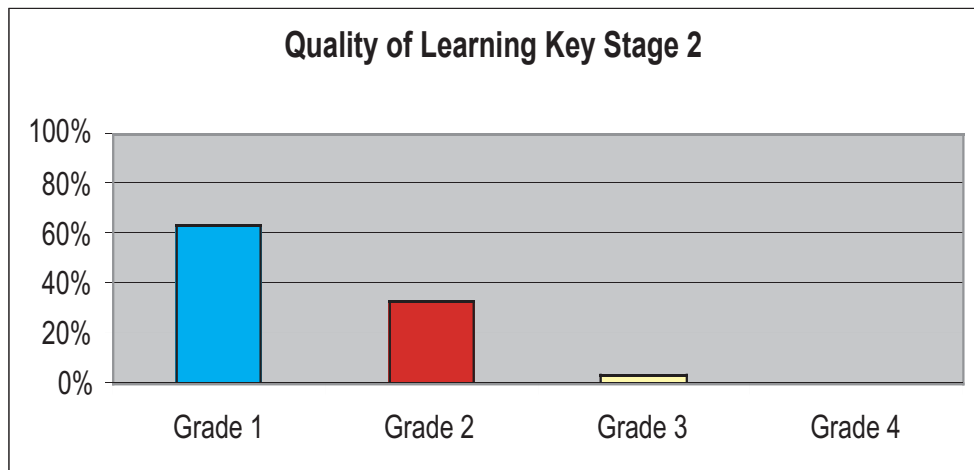
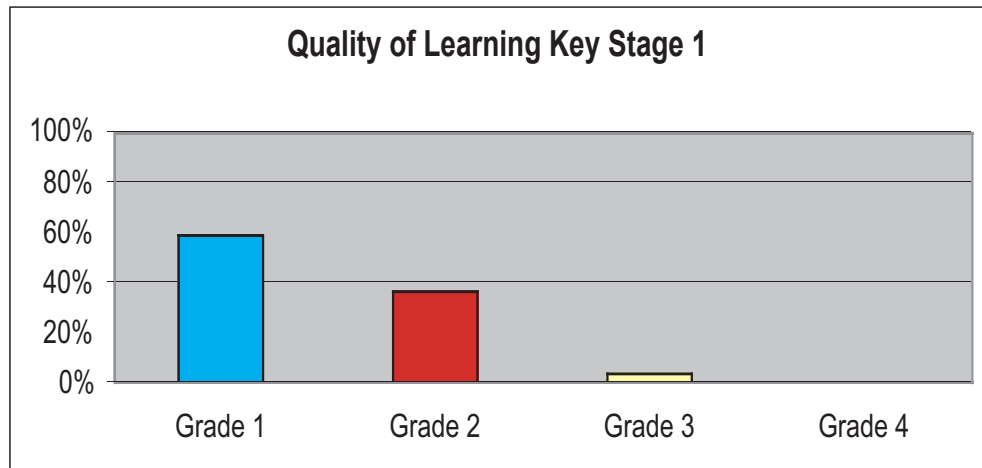


- 3.3.2 Where the teaching is less effective, it presents low level or repetitive activities which do not stimulate or challenge the children; in these circumstances, the children simply carry out the teachers' directions. In some instances, the teaching is constrained by the shortage of resources. In others, the teaching does not provide adequately for the progressive development of the children's musical skills.

In a KS2 composite class in a small rural school, the teacher shared the intended learning outcomes with the children at the outset of the lesson. The activities were designed to meet the children's needs and there was a suitable balance of teacher intervention to support the children, while giving them opportunity to develop their independence and individual creativity. Throughout the lesson, the teacher placed appropriate emphasis on both the musical processes and the quality of the performance. The children were challenged and encouraged to develop their musical thinking through composing and responding to musical stimuli through writing, movement and singing. The children had the opportunity to record and listen to their compositions. They discussed the compositions and suggested improvements.

3.4 THE QUALITY OF LEARNING IN MUSIC

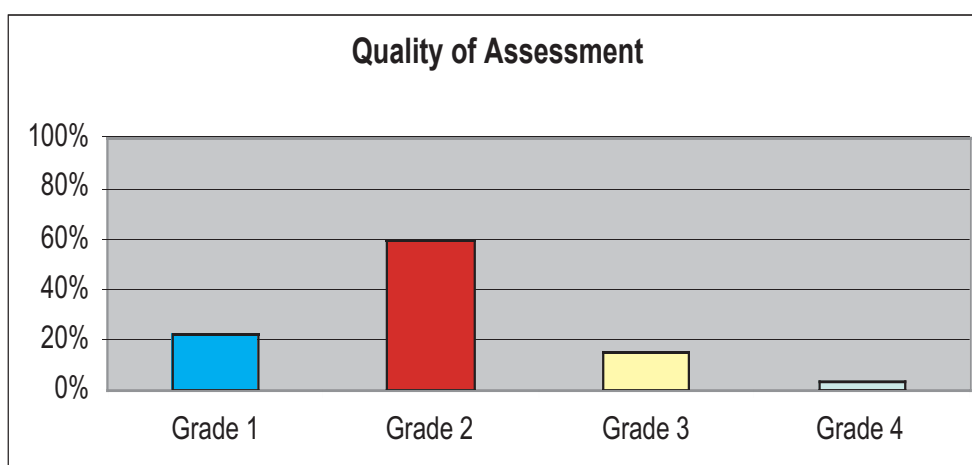
- 3.4.1 The quality of learning in music ranges from satisfactory to excellent and, in a majority of instances, it is good. In the best practice, the children have ample opportunities to talk about their music, to make choices and to contribute to decisions. They have time to experiment, to reflect on what they have done or heard, and to improve and refine their compositions and performances. Increasingly, they are able to talk about and describe their musical experiences using appropriate language. During the course of the lesson there is evidence that their skills in composing, listening and/or performing are being improved.



In a small urban school, a range of lessons demonstrated the good quality of the children's learning. The children in a year 1 class were asked to select sounds that would best demonstrate the object or mood they wished to convey. To assist them in their thinking, they were able to listen to sounds made by an unseen instrument and, in an enjoyable way, were asked to name them. This approach was developed further for older children in year 5, where they were able to talk about the images that a certain piece of music conjured up for them. Such practices, regularly provided, helped to ensure that the older children felt at ease in sharing their thoughts and ideas with the other children in the class.

3.5 THE QUALITY OF ASSESSMENT IN MUSIC

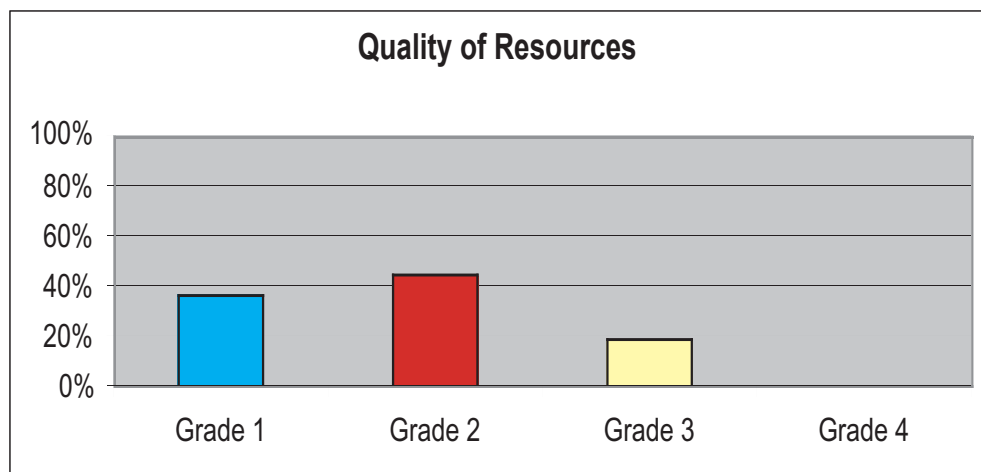
3.5.1 In the main, class teachers assess informally the children's development and progress. Most of the schools include a comment on music in the annual report to parents. In almost all cases this comment refers to the children's involvement in and enjoyment of the subject. More detail is often provided where a particular child is receiving music tuition either through the school's own resources or through the services of a peripatetic teacher. In the best practice, the teachers observe and made evaluations of the children's engagement with music, and their development and improvement in musical skills and understanding. This information is recorded in children's music files and used to inform future provision for them. Results from music festivals, certificates and trophies are used to celebrate success and to motivate further all the children. Appropriately, most schools recognise that assessment is an area that requires further improvement, and that they need to focus particularly on the development of a meaningful and systematic method of recording the children's progress and achievements.



3.6 THE QUALITY OF RESOURCES FOR MUSIC

3.6.1 The provision and quality of resources for music are good in a significant minority of the schools. In the best-resourced schools, the children have access to a suitable variety of instruments

including tuned and untuned percussion. A range of recorded music is used and the children are also able to hear recordings of their own work. Children who learn to play an instrument outside the classroom use it during music lessons, in assemblies and other school activities, and in events for parents and other audiences. This broadening of the use of the individual's skill is a helpful stimulus to learning and achievement; it allows social as well as musical development, and a sense of celebration. In some instances there is evidence of schools in the same neighbourhood sharing resources to their mutual benefit.



3.6.2 In a minority of the schools, the provision of resources is a significant area for development.

3.7 THE QUALITY OF MANAGEMENT OF MUSIC

3.7.1 The organisation of music is good or very good in a significant minority of instances. Characteristics of good practice include the provision for music which amounts to 60 to 90 minutes per week on average for children in KS1, and 45 minutes for children in KS2. In addition to specific music lessons, almost all children enjoy other musical experiences through regular school assemblies, specialist music tuition, rehearsals and performances in school choirs and musical productions.

- 3.7.2 The provision of a music specialist has positive and negative effects depending on his or her deployment. In the best practice, the specialist enhances the children's learning in music and also, through carefully planned work with other teachers and through valuable staff development sessions, disseminates a shared understanding of music and appropriate teaching approaches to others in the school with obvious benefits for the children. Where the music specialist is seen to have overall responsibility for the teaching of music throughout the school, there is often an over-reliance on him/her; this militates against effective teaching of music by other teachers and constrains the integration of music into other areas of the curriculum.
- 3.7.3 Staff development in music is good in a majority of schools. Where it is most effective, the teachers display confidence and enthusiasm. This confidence often stems from recent participation in either school-based or centre-based in-service training (INSET). It is helped too by support from music officers within CASS, the music service within each ELB, and courses provided by the Regional Training Unit (RTU). There is also evidence that when a specialist music teacher or an officer from CASS models good practice for other staff, this results in improvements in the quality of learning and teaching.
- 3.7.4 In a significant minority of schools, there is a need for staff development to enhance the teachers' skills and to promote their confidence in the teaching of music.
- 3.7.5 The evaluation of learning and teaching in music is effective in the majority of the schools inspected. In the best practice, schools had undertaken a review of their music policy and provision within the last three years, with the co-ordinator regularly leading staff discussion about music. As a result of discussion, areas for improvement are identified and incorporated in a time-bound development plan with associated action plans focused appropriately on improving the quality of learning and teaching. The music co-ordinators review the teachers' planning, provide useful feedback, and carry out classroom observations within a

school culture of promoting personal and professional staff development.

- 3.7.6 In a significant minority of the schools, the evaluation of music provision is not undertaken effectively. Where this is the case, schools often suggest that other areas of the curriculum are given a higher priority. In other instances, the school's capacity for self-evaluation and self-improvement is not well-developed.
- 3.7.7 Almost all of the schools have developed good links involving music with parents, other schools and the local community. Typically, this includes opportunities for the children to perform for others in their own school, in the community, at music festivals and in competitions. The children also have opportunities to attend performances by others, often in local schools, and sometimes recitals given by professional musicians. In a few instances, professional musicians contribute to the music provision in the school. Most schools take the opportunity to celebrate the children's music experiences and accomplishments through the display of photographs around the school, video productions and coverage in press media.

In a medium-sized rural school, the children were provided with opportunities to work with a local historical group. The programme enabled them to gain an appreciation of the local culture and history. Through this involvement, they were able to write poems and compose songs based on the locality and some of its characters. They also learnt about the instruments of their own tradition and those of other traditions. In another year group, the children combined, through the EMU programme, with a neighbouring school to learn set dancing and to play the tin whistle. In this way, the children from both schools gained an appreciation for, and understanding of, other traditions reflected in society. In conclusion, the children performed their songs and dances for the local community in the Town Hall.

3.7.8 The quality of the accommodation for the teaching of music is good in the majority of schools inspected. In the best instances, it permits musical activity, whether in the classroom or in another area, to take place without undue sound interference. In situations where instrumental tuition is provided, it is usually carried out under appropriate conditions.

3.7.9 In a minority of the schools where the accommodation is poor or inadequate, this is often due to factors such as, a child being given musical tuition on a one-to-one basis in an unsuitable room presenting a potential child protection issue; the poor storage of musical instruments presenting a health and safety hazard; inadequate use being made of extra available rooms in the school; and poor provision and/or poor acoustics in the assembly hall.

3.8 SUMMARY OF STRENGTHS AND AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT IN MUSIC

3.8.1 The strengths in the learning and teaching of music include:

- ▶ the children's good behaviour, their enthusiasm and their willingness to participate during music lessons;
- ▶ the importance afforded to music by many schools, creating a positive environment for learning in which creative and practical activities are seen as paramount, and in which all children are viewed as potentially musical;
- ▶ the increasing focus, in the teachers' planning, on the intended learning outcomes for the children;
- ▶ the quality of teaching of music which is judged to be good or better in a majority of instances;
- ▶ the focus on musical processes rather than on the end result alone, the good use of oral work to promote the children's understanding, and the use of music technology to help the children to explore musical concepts;

- ▶ the quality of the children's learning in music which enables them to explore sound through practical activities, to talk about their music, to make choices and contribute to decisions, and to reflect on what they have done with the intention of improving their compositions and performances;
- ▶ the variety of musical opportunities provided for the children in addition to class lessons, including involvement in school assemblies, and performances in school choirs and other musical productions;
- ▶ the valuable contribution of many music specialists within schools who enhance significantly the children's musical development and provide valuable leadership and guidance for other staff;
- ▶ the good support for schools in their provision for music from other agencies, including CASS, RTU, and the instrumental tuition provided by the music service;
- ▶ the development of good links, involving music, with others including the parents, other schools and the local community; and
- ▶ the opportunities provided to further the children's musical development through participation in music festivals and competitions, performing for a variety of audiences, and attendance at performances given by professional musicians.

3.8.2 The areas for improvement in the learning and teaching of music include:

- ▶ the need to develop the planning for music to ensure the progressive development of the children's music skills and understanding throughout the primary years;

- ▶ the over-directed nature of the teaching in a minority of schools, which presents activities for the children that lack stimulation and challenge and do not promote creativity;
- ▶ the need to develop assessment procedures which inform more effectively subsequent provision and which record more meaningfully the children's progress and achievements;
- ▶ the need, in a minority of schools, for better resources for learning and teaching in music;
- ▶ the need to re-appraise the deployment of the music specialist, in some instances, to ensure he/she has a key role in the dissemination of good practice in music throughout the school and in the professional development of other staff;
- ▶ the need to extend the monitoring and evaluation processes, already developed in most schools, to learning and teaching in music; and
- ▶ the need to address issues in accommodation which have implications for child protection, and health and safety.

4. PHYSICAL EDUCATION

4.1 THE QUALITY OF THE ETHOS IN PHYSICAL EDUCATION

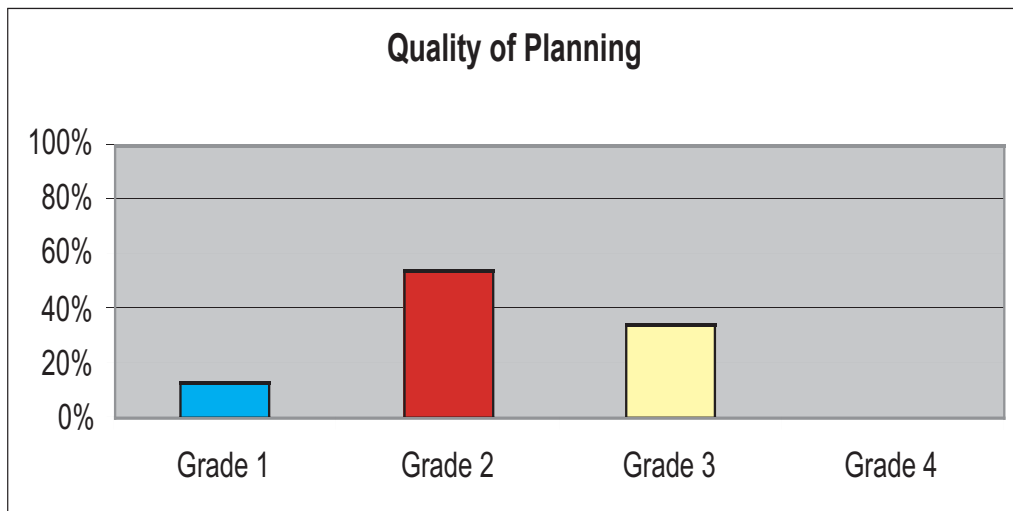
- 4.1.1 In most of the schools, the principals and teachers acknowledge the importance of PE and other aspects of health promotion. The behaviour of the children, in almost all instances, is very good; they are motivated, enthusiastic, keen to participate, confident and interested in learning. They change into suitable clothing for PE and nearly all of the teachers act as good role-models by also dressing appropriately.
- 4.1.2 In the vast majority of schools, the relationships between the teachers and the children are good or excellent; when given opportunities, the children are keen to share ideas and benefit from the skills and ideas of others.
- 4.1.3 In a minority of schools, the environment for learning is enhanced greatly by displays which highlight specific vocabulary related to PE. In addition, children's written evaluations of their work, health-related posters and digital photographs showing the children participating in activities, help to promote the children's interest and learning in PE.
- 4.1.4 A significant number of schools use well the funding from the "Promoting and Sustaining Positive Behaviour" initiative to develop the playground as a resource to extend further opportunities for the children's purposeful play. Often, this involves the classroom assistants and children participating together in playground games, for example, during break and lunch time.

4.2 THE QUALITY OF PLANNING FOR PHYSICAL EDUCATION

- 4.2.1 The whole-school planning for the subject is satisfactory or better in a majority of schools; in a significant minority of schools there are weaknesses in planning. In the best practice, the teachers develop their own planning which highlights skills they want the children to



learn. Alternatively, the schools adapt effectively the guidance materials provided by CASS to address the needs of the children. A number of schools use effectively such materials to link to and support learning in other areas of the curriculum. This good practice in planning gives the teachers support and confidence to teach PE.



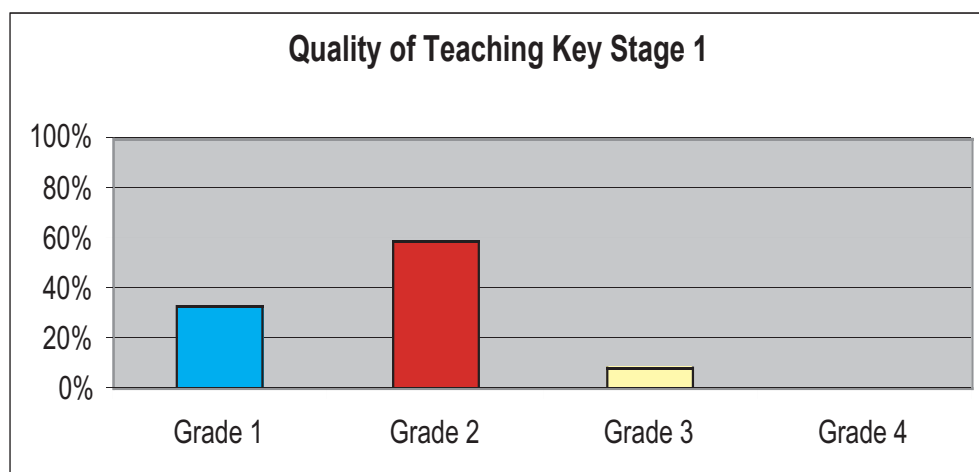
- 4.2.2 A significant minority of planning has weaknesses. The teachers rely too heavily on standard guidance materials and do not build on the children's previous learning before moving on to the next lesson or activity. In these schools, while individual teachers often plan good lessons, there is, however, little progression in the children's learning within and across the key stages. Often there is a lack of breadth in the provision; games activities predominate and there is insufficient emphasis on the teaching of important body management skills and the provision of creative activities.

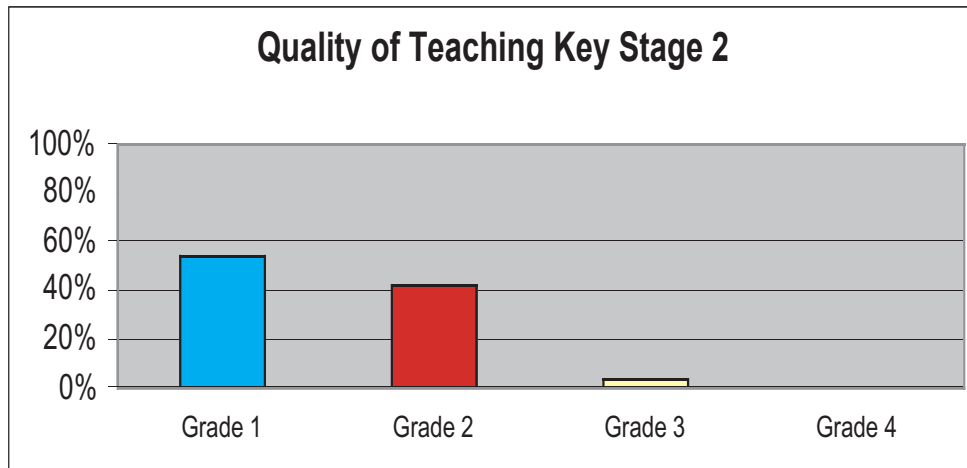
There is good whole-school planning for athletics, dance, games and swimming; the PE co-ordinator, in discussion with the teachers, has adapted and developed further the ELB schemes and resources to suit the needs of the school. The planning has clear learning outcomes, with detailed suggestions and possible extension activities for lessons or a series of lessons; appropriate language is highlighted. In

addition, yearly planners for each class show when activities should take place to ensure that there is progression in all aspects of the programme of study. The very good work of the co-ordinator and the useful guidance materials support greatly the non-specialist teachers who can use their own expertise and adapt the materials to link with other curricular areas or class topics.

4.3 THE QUALITY OF TEACHING OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION

- 4.3.1 In a significant minority of instances, the quality of teaching is good or better. Good quality teaching is associated with the children's high levels of achievement and motivation. The children are very responsive and their skills demonstrate significant improvement in lessons where there is appropriate pace, a range of challenging activities, good opportunities for them to refine their skills and to plan, perform and evaluate their work. In these lessons, skilful questioning by the teachers focuses on developing the children's language, knowledge and understanding and they are given opportunities to express their opinions, to think creatively and to make supportive and evaluative comments. In the best practice, the teachers use PE time to develop well the children's understanding of safety and to establish the links amongst exercise, a healthy diet and a healthy lifestyle.



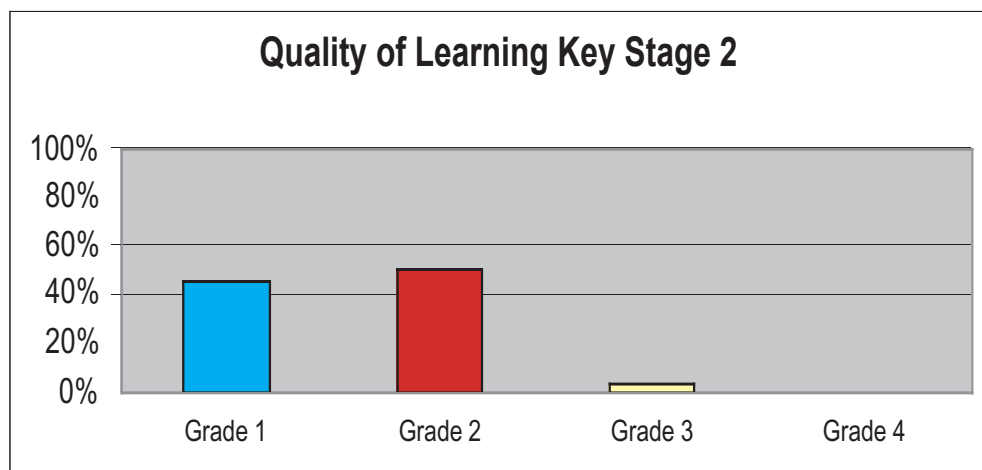
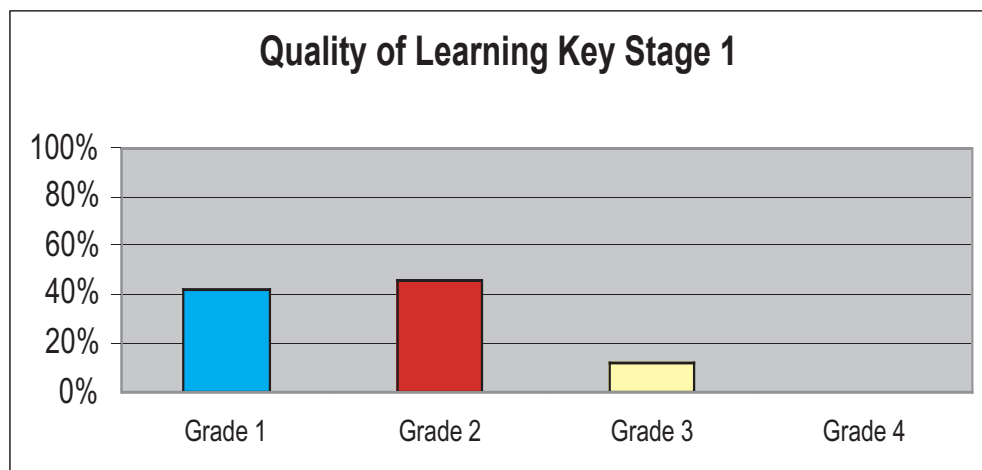


- 4.3.2 By contrast, in a minority of instances, weaknesses in teaching affect adversely the quality and standards of the children's work. In these lessons, the children's skills and learning are not developed effectively, often because the teacher is unclear about the purpose of the lesson; expectations are too low; the teaching approaches do not facilitate supporting those children who need help; and insufficient time is given for the children to practise and improve their skills.

The creative dance lesson with a composite year 5 and 6 class had a good structure. The children were clear about what they were going to do and the introduction gave good opportunities for them to develop new skills and refine others. During the warm-up the children travelled in pairs and responded to different types of music. Each child followed and worked with their partner, learning and creating a range of ways to travel. The teacher reviewed the steps and formations from the previous lesson. Working in groups the children completed a task using their own steps and formations within a defined short section of music. The teacher encouraged the children to improve their sequence through effective use of open-ended questioning. The children practised and improved their work and later performed their sequences. They responded well to evaluating the work of the other groups. A short, appropriate, cool-down activity settled the children before they returned to class.

4.4 THE QUALITY OF LEARNING IN PHYSICAL EDUCATION

4.4.1 Most of the children enjoy participation in PE and are given good opportunities to develop talking and listening skills and to work in pairs and groups. In general, they know the importance of warming-up and show an understanding of safety issues. At KS1, the children usually experience a range of activities across the programme of study. A significant minority of children are given appropriate opportunities to respond to instructions, to work co-operatively with others, to progress to more challenging activities and to develop their skills. In a significant minority of lessons they are given insufficient opportunities to be creative, to talk about their activities, to improve skills through practice and to sequence their movements.

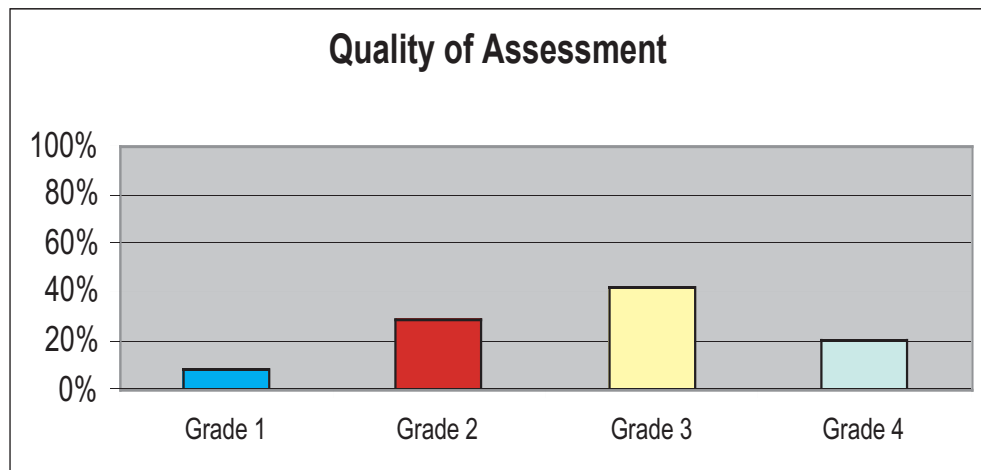


- 4.4.2 In the best practice in KS2, when the teachers have high expectations and have developed an understanding of the standards of performance to expect, they set targets which challenge individual children to improve their skills, knowledge and understanding. In addition, the children have a clear understanding of the relationship between exercise and a healthy lifestyle.
- 4.4.3 In a majority of instances, the children are given opportunities to watch the performances of others, and in a small number of lessons, the teachers are beginning to share with the children the criteria by which to evaluate performance. This good practice needs to be increased to develop further the children's evaluative skills and to ensure progression in their skills, knowledge and understanding.
- 4.4.4 In both key stages, particularly in gymnastics and dance, the development of the children's movement skills is not supported effectively. A stronger focus needs to be placed on increasing the children's basic movement competence so that the quality of, and knowledge about, their movement improves, and they can be more successful in applying specific movement in different contexts. In a significant minority of instances, insufficient emphasis is placed on providing movement tasks which promote the effective creation and sequencing of movements. There is a need to develop the teachers' competence in evaluating the children's performance, and to help them to focus on strategies to help the children improve their control and finer movements as the work becomes more complex.

In a year 6 lesson, the children showed high levels of motivation and were clear about the learning outcomes for the lesson. They talked about the reasons for the warm-up and had good opportunities to develop talking and listening skills and to work co-operatively in groups and pairs to experiment and improve a movement sequence. The children were confident in demonstrating their skills and the progress they had made. They valued the opportunity to review and comment on their own practice and the practice of others.

4.5 THE QUALITY OF ASSESSMENT OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION

4.5.1 A small number of schools have developed their own record of progress, which is then passed to the next teacher at the end of the year to inform subsequent planning. This good practice is, however, inconsistent. While a majority of schools report to parents on children's progress in PE, usually in very broad terms, the assessment and recording of the children's progress are mostly informal and do not inform future planning. However, most schools celebrate individual or team achievements in assemblies with, for example, the presentation of certificates and awards.



A notable exception to the general approach to the recording and planning for PE was for those children who had physical disabilities. Individual teachers monitored their progress very well and noted significant modifications to elements of the programme to ensure that these children were included in lessons and had as full an experience in PE as possible.

4.6 THE QUALITY OF THE ACCOMMODATION IN PHYSICAL EDUCATION

- 4.6.1 The facilities in primary schools have a major influence on learning and teaching in PE. The accommodation in 29% of the schools visited was poor; 37% of the indoor facilities were multi-purpose spaces and not available for PE for a significant part of the day. Due to the size of some of the halls and the lack of storage space for chairs, pianos and large apparatus, often items around the hall become a health and safety hazard for the teachers and the children. While a majority of schools have either a play area or a grass area, in a significant minority of schools, the poor condition of the playing area militates against its use for much of the year. A majority of schools have invested in demarcated play areas painted with shapes and lines which prompt outdoor play activities during break times.
- 4.6.2 Most schools make arrangements for children to change for PE. The lack of changing facilities for older children in all schools needs to be addressed.
- 4.6.3 A good number of schools use other facilities such as local leisure/sports centres to support their programme. An imaginative approach to the resourcing and use of such facilities would be a useful development, particularly if the schools already use the centre for swimming lessons.

4.7 THE QUALITY OF MANAGEMENT OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION

- 4.7.1 The management of the PE programme is most effective when the principal, the co-ordinator and staff are enthusiastic about PE and the potential contribution of the subject to children's overall learning. In just over one-quarter of the schools inspected, PE was included in the SDP and one school had selected PE as an area for self-evaluation. However, in at least two ELB areas, there is no practical specialist support for PE, and schools have to undertake reviews of programmes and learning and teaching using their own expertise.

The process is hindered further by the fact that only a small number of schools have specialist teachers of PE to support development within the school. This lack of specialist support and expertise is an area which needs to be addressed urgently if the quality of the provision for PE is to be improved. Where CASS support has been available, in a minority of schools, it has been used effectively to improve planning and has had a positive impact on learning and teaching.

- 4.7.2 In the most effective practice, the principal supports the co-ordinators by allocating sufficient time to enable them to monitor the planning and to support staff. In a small number of schools the co-ordinators teach alongside other staff; this increases the teachers' confidence and helps them to adapt ELB lesson plans to the needs of their children. In the main, there is insufficient monitoring and evaluation, by the co-ordinators or the principals of schools, of the quality of learning and teaching and the standards achieved by the children.

The nursery teacher is the PE co-ordinator and is deployed in the afternoon to support the staff in developing their teaching skills and in raising the children's standards of performance. She demonstrates lessons and engages in a team teaching process to support improvements in learning and teaching. Her valuable support for her colleagues is fully appreciated and has helped them to improve their confidence, the quality and range of provision for the subject and the outcomes, in terms of the children's learning and development.

- 4.7.3 In the schools inspected, the allocation of curricular time to PE varied amongst schools and between KS1 and KS2. Less than half of the schools offered 90 minutes of PE each week; most offered between 60 and 90 minutes. Just over half of the schools offer two sessions per week, while some offered only one extended period. In KS1, the allocation of time is mostly poor with the allocations of time between 90 minutes and 35 minutes. In the schools inspected,

the allocation of time in KS2 is slightly better, however, this is often reduced in years 6 and 7 when it is most necessary. In almost all schools swimming is also offered at KS2. At a time when research indicates that children need frequent and regular physical activity to promote their physical development, and to develop habits and patterns of participation so that they experience and understand the personal health benefits of physical activity, it is unsatisfactory that very few of the schools inspected allocated the two hours of PE recommended by the Department of Education in Circular 1996/30.

- 4.7.4 Links with other schools and the community are good or better in most schools. The children have good opportunities to take part in sport with other schools or to perform in assemblies and parents evenings.

In two rural schools, effective cross-community links were established through a dance programme that involved parents, children and teachers becoming actively involved in learning about the dance traditions and pastimes of both communities.

- 4.7.5 In a majority of the schools, the teachers give a considerable amount of time to supporting after-school activities and to providing a good range of extra-curricular activities. A small number of schools usefully fund staff to gain coaching qualifications which support the school's curricular and extra-curricular programme. Approximately 72% of the schools are linked effectively to the 'Youth Sport' programme developed by the Sports Council, the ELBs and local district councils, and linked to local post-primary schools.
- 4.7.6 In addition, most schools use Governing Body of Sport coaches, coaches from sports clubs and also parents to complement the extra-curricular programme; the teachers often gain professional development from this provision. The schools report that all coaches are vetted in relation to Child Protection. A significant minority of schools use coaches inappropriately during curriculum time which often skews and sometimes replaces the planned PE

programme. In a few of the schools there is a need to extend further links with local clubs to increase opportunities for those children who are interested in improving their skills and taking part in competitive events.

4.8 SUMMARY OF STRENGTHS AND AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT IN PHYSICAL EDUCATION

4.8.1 The strengths in the learning and teaching in PE include:

- ▶ the value placed on PE and other aspects of health promotion by most of the principals and teachers;
- ▶ the very good behaviour of the children, in almost all of the schools;
- ▶ the good or excellent quality of the relationships between the children and the teachers;
- ▶ the satisfactory or better whole-school planning for PE in a majority of schools;
- ▶ the motivated and responsive children;
- ▶ the use made of PE to develop well the children's understanding of safety, and establish the links amongst exercise, having a healthy diet and a healthy lifestyle;
- ▶ the quality of the support offered by CASS officers;
- ▶ the good extra-curricular provision in the majority of schools; and
- ▶ the effective links established with the 'Youth Sport' programme.

4.8.2 The areas for improvement in the learning and teaching in PE include the need:

- ▶ to develop planning further to ensure there are clear learning outcomes and activities which support the children's learning and raise their standards of performance;
- ▶ to raise teachers' expectations and provide more opportunities for the children to be creative, to practise and refine their skills and to talk about their own performance and the performance of others;
- ▶ to develop approaches to the assessment of the children's progress and to monitor and evaluate the quality of learning and teaching and the standards achieved by the children in PE;
- ▶ for teachers to agree what a child should be able to understand, know and do having completed a unit of work and the PE programme at the school; and
- ▶ to increase considerably the allocation of time to PE in all schools in line with the two hours recommended by the Department of Education in Circular 1996/30.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION: SCHOOLS

5.1 In primary schools the three subjects, art and design, music and PE collectively make up the creative and expressive area of study. There are common themes which have emerged from the evaluation of the three subjects which have implications for development and improvement in the area of study as a whole. The following recommendations are made for action by schools.

5.2 PLANNING

- ▶ Effective planning should be undertaken as carefully and comprehensively for the creative and expressive area of study as it is for other areas of the curriculum.
- ▶ Planning should provide for the progressive development of the children's knowledge, skills and understanding throughout the seven years of primary education to ensure that their experiences are enriched and their standards of achievement raised in art and design, music and PE.
- ▶ Planning should support non-specialist teachers, where appropriate, and should be flexible enough to enable them to use their own practical expertise.

5.3 LEARNING AND TEACHING

- ▶ Teaching approaches should guide the children through a creative learning process and provide them with sufficient opportunities to discuss and to share ideas, and to plan and to make more of their own choices and decisions about their work and their performance.
- ▶ Children should have more opportunities to be creative, to practise and refine their skills, and learn how to improve by evaluating their own work and that of others.

5.4 ASSESSMENT

- ▶ Assessment processes need to identify, more systematically, the progression in the children's learning, and inform future planning.

5.5 STAFF DEVELOPMENT

- ▶ The professional development of teachers needs to be extended to ensure their competence in the creative and expressive area of study, and importantly, to help them plan more effectively for the development of the children's knowledge, skills and understanding throughout the primary years.

5.6 MONITORING AND EVALUATION

- ▶ The monitoring and evaluation processes, which are already evident in the majority of schools for some areas of the curriculum, need to be applied consistently to the creative and expressive area of study. Specifically, such reviews need to focus on the quality of learning and teaching and the standards which the children attain in art and design, music and PE.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION: OTHERS

- 6.1 This report also identifies a number of issues which need to be addressed if the quality of the provision in the creative and expressive area of study is to be improved. These include the need:
- ▶ to provide suitable and sufficient resources and storage for each of the three subjects;
 - ▶ to improve the existing poor accommodation and outdoor facilities for PE in a significant minority of schools;
 - ▶ to address the lack of changing facilities for PE for older children in schools;
 - ▶ to address the lack of practical specialist support for teachers within the area of study; and
 - ▶ to increase the opportunities for professional development in the creative and expressive subjects throughout initial, induction and early professional development of teachers.

7. CONCLUSION

- 7.1 The survey has shown that whilst there are areas for improvement there is clear evidence of a sound foundation for the enhancement of provision and outcomes in the creative and expressive area of study. In particular, the discretionary effort of many teachers in terms of their provision of valuable extra-curricular experiences, not least in PE and music, but also in art and design, is indicative of a professional commitment to this important dimension of children's experience. Art and design, music and PE can play an invaluable part in stimulating the creative thinking and imagination of young learners, as well as their skills and all-round development.
- 7.2 This report presents an opportunity for all schools to self-evaluate their provision in the context of the findings with the intention of maintaining what is good and improving the quality where appropriate.
- 7.3 It has been written to prompt reflection and promote action for improvement on the part of all those who can make a difference to the quality of learning and teaching in this area of study.

LIST OF SCHOOLS INSPECTED

All Saints Primary School, Ballymena
Ballinamallard Primary School, Enniskillen
Bellarena Primary School, Limavady
Bloomfield Collegiate Preparatory Department, Belfast
Blythefield Primary School, Belfast
Bready Jubilee Primary School, Strabane
Bunscoil an Iúir, Newry
Bunscoil Cholmcille, Londonderry
Cairncastle Primary School, Larne
Carrick Primary School, Lurgan
Castle Gardens Primary School, Newtownards
Cedar Integrated Primary School, Crossgar
Clea Primary School, Armagh
Cliftonville Primary School, Belfast
Conlig Primary School, Newtownards
Derryboy Primary School, Crossgar
Derrygonnelly Primary School, Enniskillen
Desertmartin Primary School
Drumahoe Primary School, Londonderry
Dungannon Primary School
Dunmurry Primary School, Belfast
Dunseverick Primary School, Bushmills
Edendork Primary School, Dungannon
Elmgrove Primary School, Belfast
Enniskillen Integrated Primary School
Forth River Primary School, Belfast
Gaelscoil na bhFál, Belfast

Gillygooley Primary School, Omagh
Glendermott Primary School, Londonderry
Glengormley Integrated Primary School, Newtownabbey
Holy Child Primary School, Belfast
Kilkeel Primary School
Knockmore Primary School, Lisburn
Lisnagelvin Primary School, Londonderry
Loreto Convent Primary School, Omagh
Mercy Primary School, Belfast
Millennium Integrated Primary School, Saintfield
Mossgrove Primary School, Newtownabbey
Mullavilly Primary School, Tandragee
Sacred Heart Primary School, Belfast
Saints' and Scholars' Integrated Primary School, Armagh
Springfield Primary School, Belfast
St Anne's Primary School, Londonderry
St Anthony's Primary School, Larne
St Bernard's Primary School, Belfast
St Bernard's Primary School, Newtownabbey
St Brigid's Primary School, Cloughmills
St Catherine's Primary School, Belfast
St Colman's Primary School, Dromore
St Colmcille's Primary School, Armagh
St Colmcille's Primary School, Claudy
St Columban's Primary School, Belcoo
St Finian's Primary School, Newtownards
St James' Primary School, Newtownabbey
St John's Primary School, Coleraine
St Joseph's Primary School, Belfast
St Joseph's Primary School, Lisburn
St Joseph's Primary School, Poyntzpass

St Malachy's Primary School, Belfast
St Mary's Primary School, Ballygowan
St Mary's Primary School, Cloughcor, Strabane
St Mary's Primary School, Draperstown
St Mary's Primary School, Greenlough
St Mary's Primary School, Maghery, Dungannon
St Mary's Primary School, Newcastle
St Mary's Star of the Sea Primary School, Belfast
St Oliver Plunkett Primary School, Omagh
St Patrick's Primary School, Newtownstewart
St Ronan's Primary School, Newry
St Teresa's Primary School, Sixmilecross, Omagh
St Therese's Primary School, Lenamore, Londonderry
Stewartstown Primary School
Stranmillis Primary School, Belfast
Tandragee Primary School
Templepatrick Primary School
Tummery Primary School, Dromore, Omagh
The William Pinkerton Memorial Primary School, Dervock

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