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*The Education and Training Inspectorate -
Promoting Improvement*

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



Education and Training Inspectorate

Report of a Follow-up Inspection

**Donegall Road Primary School
Belfast**

May 2014

FOLLOW-UP TO THE INSPECTION OF DONEGALL ROAD PRIMARY SCHOOL, BELFAST, BT12 6HE (101-6060)

The focused inspection of Donegall Road Primary School in November 2012 highlighted strengths in the pastoral care, the children's positive attitudes to learning and the very good links with other schools and agencies.

The inspection also identified the need for improvement in the following key areas:

- the leadership and management at all levels to develop a more strategic approach to self-evaluation and development which is more clearly focused on specific actions designed to bring about improvement and the impact they have on improving learning and teaching; and
- the teachers to ensure that their planning and teaching is more consistently matched to the full ability range of the children to improve further the standards they attain.

The inspection conclusion in October 2012 was:

“In most of the areas inspected, the quality of education provided in this school is satisfactory; the strengths outweigh areas for improvement in the provision. The inspection has identified areas for improvement in standards, learning and teaching, and leadership and management which need to be addressed if the needs of all the children are to be met more effectively.”

In the interval since the inspection, the following actions which affect the work of the school have taken place:

- the staff have received training and support from the Belfast Education and Library Board (BELB) in the areas identified for improvement;
- two of the previous teaching staff, who also held senior management posts, have retired and one part-time and two full-time teachers have taken up posts;
- the senior management team and key coordinator roles and responsibilities have been reviewed and reallocated;
- staff have visited other schools to observe and discuss practice.

The Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) carried out a total of two monitoring visits and a follow-up inspection on 14 May 2014.

The action plans received by the Department of Education following the inspection were of a good quality and adjusted appropriately in the light of feedback given by ETI during the interim visits.

The following are the most important improvements since the original inspection:

- the more effective, strategic leadership and management which has better lines of accountability at all levels through regular monitoring and evaluation;
- the more clearly defined roles and responsibilities of co-ordinators who have all made a good start in developing their areas of work;

- the effective communication among the whole staff team leading to a more transparent, supportive and collegial culture among all of the staff who have a better shared understanding of quality teaching and learning;
- the quality of teaching and learning which was all good or better, with the majority being very good and a small number outstanding;
- the children's improved oral responses and improving flexibility in their mathematical thinking in response to the teachers effective questioning;
- the children's higher levels of creativity, independence, and responsibility for making choices and self-managing aspects of their own learning;
- the improved learning environment and resources to support high quality play-based learning in the foundation stage;
- the well differentiated planning which matches more closely the teaching and learning to the full range of children's abilities, and makes meaningful links across the curriculum and real life contexts;
- the better communication and links between the class teachers and the SENCO to implement a more joined up approach to additional support for children; and
- the developing processes for more systematic self-evaluation, including the use of a wider range of evidence to monitor and evaluate outcomes for the children, and regular monitoring and review of standards.

The leadership and management at all levels should continue to measure and track the impact of their action plans against the ongoing improvements in the children's achievements and standards.

CONCLUSION

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

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