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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

**St Mary's Primary School
Saintfield**

March 2015

FOLLOW-UP TO THE INSPECTION OF SAINT MARY'S PRIMARY SCHOOL, SAINTFIELD, BT24 7JD (403-1672)

The original inspection of Saint Mary's Primary School in 2013 highlighted strengths which included: the good standards achieved in English and mathematics by most of the children, the effective provision for special educational needs and the very good arrangements for pastoral care.

It also highlighted the following areas for improvement:

- the need to review the provision for the children in the reception class; and
- to develop further the processes for self evaluation, to include the strategic monitoring and evaluation of the quality of learning and teaching, in order to inform better the school development planning process, to improve the overall quality of the teaching and to raise further the children's levels of attainment in literacy and numeracy.

The following information is relevant to the work of the school since that inspection.

- There was an acting principal in place between March 2013 and September 2014.
- A new principal was appointed in September 2014.
- The Board of Governors made the decision to discontinue the reception class in June 2013.
- A special education needs co-ordinator was appointed.
- A new house system was established.
- A breakfast club was introduced.
- The library area was refurbished.
- The school received targeted support for literacy, numeracy and learning and teaching from the South-Eastern Education and Library Board Curriculum Advisory and Support Service (CASS) officers and Council for Catholic Maintained Schools have provided support in other aspects of the provision.
- The staff introduced new planning formats which have led to more rigorous self-evaluations.
- The staff reviewed the marking policy.
- The staff visited another school to continue their professional development through liaising with other co-ordinators.

The Education and Training Inspectorate carried out two monitoring visits.

The action plans received by the Department of Education following the inspection were of a good quality.

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

- the quality of the teaching observed which was either good or very good and included clear learning intentions with the children contributing skilfully to the success criteria;
- the systematic and rigorous programme for self-evaluation leading to improvement, which includes book looks, classroom observations and opportunities for the children to discuss their learning;
- the well-focused and effective programme of capacity building in, for example, the more strategic monitoring and evaluation role of co-ordinators within the school;
- the wider range of quantitative performance data and qualitative information from all stakeholders informs effectively the action-planning process and helps the co-ordinators identify priorities for school improvement; and
- the school's internal data which indicates that most of the children continue to achieve in line with or above the expected level of attainment.

CONCLUSION

In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by this school is good. The school has important strengths in most of its educational provision. The inspection has identified an area for improvement which the school has demonstrated the capacity to address. This is the need to:

- build on the clear strategic vision for school improvement to embed the effective system of self evaluation and raise further the standards the children achieve across the ability range.

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