



*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 Star of the Sea Primary School**  
**Belfast**

**November 2012**

## **FOLLOW-UP TO THE FOCUSED INSPECTION OF ST MARY'S STAR OF THE SEA PRIMARY SCHOOL, BELFAST, CO ANTRIM, BT15 4HL (103-6048)**

The focused inspection in May 2011 highlighted strengths in the good or better quality of the majority of the teaching, the children's engagement in their learning, the very good pastoral care provision, and the comprehensive special educational needs provision.

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

- the need for the Principal to provide a more strategic overview and direction for the work of the school in order to raise standards; and
- the need for the Principal and Senior Leadership Team to work together more effectively to embed further a culture of self-evaluation, raise teacher expectations and effect improvement.

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

- the re-organisation of roles and responsibilities with a key focus on improving teaching and learning;
- the greater sharing of good practice throughout the school;
- the review of the school development planning process and the use of quantitative and qualitative data to inform the agreed improvement targets;
- the programme of continuing professional development for staff supported by a range of agencies, including the Belfast Education and Library Board's Curriculum Advisory and Support Service;
- the appointment of a new Chair and vice-Chair of the Board of Governors; and
- the significant increase in the number of children enrolling in the school in Year 1.

The Education and Training Inspectorate carried out monitoring visits to the school in September 2011 and June 2012. A follow-up inspection was conducted in November 2012.

The action plans produced by the organisation in response to the inspection findings, and adjusted appropriately in response to the monitoring visits, were of a good quality.

The school's development plan has been adjusted in light of the inspection findings. The development plan meets the statutory requirements as set out by the Department of Education.

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

- the significant improvement in the standards achieved by the children in literacy and numeracy which are now in line with the Northern Ireland average;
- the very good work of the co-ordinators in leading the improvements in their respective areas of responsibility;

- the quality of teaching in the lessons observed which was always good or very good;
- the effective use made of data to track progress, set targets for the whole school, class and individual children, identify emerging trends, raise expectations and modify classroom practice; and
- the collegiate approach to continuing school improvement, including the further embedding of a culture of self-evaluation, under the effective and strategic leadership of the Principal.

## **CONCLUSION**

In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by this school is now 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.

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