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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 Patrick's Primary School
Aghagallon**

April 2012

FOLLOW-UP TO THE FOCUSED INSPECTION OF ST PATRICK'S PRIMARY SCHOOL, AGHAGALLON, CO ARMAGH, BT67 OAR (503-3324)

The Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) carried out a focused inspection of St Patrick's Primary School in the week of 11 October 2010 when the quality of the provision was evaluated as inadequate; as a result the school entered the formal intervention process. The Department of Education (DE) indicated at the time that a follow-up inspection (FUI) would take place and that, in the interim, follow-up visits (IFUV) would monitor the progress being made in bringing about the necessary improvements.

The original inspection highlighted strengths in:

- the friendly, well-behaved children;
- the warm rapport between the children and the staff;
- the effective use of the outdoor space and resources to engage the children constructively during playtime; and
- the good links established with the parents and the wider community.

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

- to improve the quality of leadership throughout the school, through the development and implementation of rigorous self-evaluation and school development planning processes;
- for the teachers to develop a shared understanding of what constitutes effective learning and teaching, differentiation and progression in the children's learning; and
- to raise the children's levels of attainment in literacy and numeracy.

The ETI carried out an IFUV on 25 May 2011 and a second IFUV was carried out on 18 November 2011 at the request of the Board of Governors (governors). The ETI conducted the FUI on 2 and 3 April 2012.

The school received extensive support from the Curriculum Advisory and Support Service (CASS) of the Southern Education and Library Board (SELB) in developing action plans to address the key findings of the inspection report. The action plans produced by the school were of good quality and the school's development plan has been adjusted in light of the inspection findings. The Principal and the Chair of the governors report that the school has received high levels of support from the CASS of the SELB and from the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools.

The following important changes, which affect the work of the school, have taken place since the inspection:

- two new members of the teaching staff and one new member of the support staff have been appointed;
- the non-teaching time has been used to facilitate professional discussion and collaborative decision making amongst the staff;
- the roles and responsibilities of the teaching staff have been reviewed;

- the Principal, in consultation with the staff, has devised a monitoring schedule to monitor the progress of the outworking of the action plans;
- revised arrangements have been put in place for the administration of the standardised testing; and
- a well-stocked library has been created and a book banding system has been implemented in order to provide the children with guided reading materials.

At the time of the FUI, two permanent members of the teaching staff with responsibilities for aspects of leadership and management, and co-ordinating literacy, numeracy and special educational needs (SEN) within the school were absent.

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

- the whole-staff involvement in the school's decision-making processes, including their contribution to school improvement;
- the quality of the teaching observed during the FUI, with all of the lessons being satisfactory or better;
- the impact of a wide range of staff development to improve the provision in literacy through the greater understanding by the teachers of how to develop the children's reading and extended writing;
- the quality and effectiveness of the Principal's leadership and management which is now satisfactory; and
- the improved quality of the learning environment and the accommodation for the staff.

However, the quality of the provision for mathematics, SEN and the overall standards attained by the children in literacy and numeracy remain inadequate. While the school has made progress in important aspects of its work, the areas for improvement outweigh the strengths in the provision and remain to be addressed urgently if the school is to meet effectively the needs of all of the children. Overall, the quality of education provided by the school remains inadequate.

The main areas for improvement are:

- to ensure more consistent year-on-year progress in the children's learning in order to raise the standards which they attain in literacy and numeracy;
- for the Principal and the teachers to ensure that the quality of the teaching is consistently good or better, including the more effective differentiation of the learning to meet better the needs of all the children; and
- to improve further the overall effectiveness of the leadership and management of the school.

The Education and Training Inspectorate will carry out a further FUI within 12 months and a report will be published.

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