



*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

Victoria Park Primary School
Belfast

June 2012

FOLLOW-UP TO THE FOCUSED INSPECTION OF VICTORIA PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL, BELFAST, BT4 1LX (101-6655)

The focused inspection of Victoria Park Primary School, in January 2011, highlighted the following strengths: the exemplary behaviour of the children and the very good arrangements for pastoral care; the links with the parents and the wider community; the very effective leadership of the Principal, Vice-principals and co-ordinators; the quality of the teaching observed; and the good processes in place to monitor and track the children's progress.

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

- to raise further the standards achieved by the children in English and mathematics; and
- to disseminate the excellent practice already existing in the teaching in order to ensure consistently high quality across all classes.

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

- The school received staff training and support for developing the role of the co-ordinator and the use of the active teaching cycle from the Belfast Education and Library Board's Curriculum Advisory and Support Service (CASS).
- The Principal led the staff through the evaluation of effective teaching using two different self-evaluation tools.
- A staff development and resources audit was completed.
- The numeracy co-ordinator attended numeracy cluster meetings with a group of co-ordinators from the area, and a number of staff visited other schools to observe good practice.
- A wide range of monitoring and evaluation strategies were implemented to guide the co-ordinators and the teachers in their work.
- Frameworks for progression in mathematical language, reading skills and talking and listening were produced.
- Staff surveys were completed on the teaching of writing and reading.
- Additional resources were purchased for use in the play ground and the playground walls were painted.
- A school council was established.
- All teachers had the opportunity to take part in the dissemination of good practice in learning and teaching through the use of classroom observation and the creation of whole-school displays to demonstrate progression in literacy and numeracy.

The Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) carried out two interim follow-up visits and a follow-up inspection in June 2012.

The action plan produced by the school in response to the inspection findings was of a good quality. The school's development plan (SDP) was 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 literacy and numeracy co-ordinators and teams benefitted significantly from the support provided by CASS; they provide very effective leadership, monitor and evaluate rigorously the developments and improvements in provision, and guide the teachers effectively through whole-school staff development;
- there is a more systematic and collaborative approach to self-evaluation, including the very effective collation and analysis of performance data to inform planning, to set targets and to track individual, class and whole-school progress;
- the good standards achieved by most of the children in literacy and numeracy which are in line with their ability;
- the quality of most of the teaching in the lessons observed during the follow-up process was good or very good; the teachers have high expectations and use an appropriate range of activities and effective questioning to meet the needs of all the children;
- the collegiate approach of all of the staff to school improvement since the inspection, well supported by the excellent leadership of the Principal; and
- the good opportunities for the children to take responsibility for their learning and to contribute to aspects of school improvement.

CONCLUSION

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

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