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*The Education and Training Inspectorate -  
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*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 Primary School and Nursery Unit  
Carrickfergus**

**September 2013**

## **FOLLOW-UP TO THE INSPECTION OF VICTORIA PRIMARY SCHOOL AND NURSERY UNIT, CARRICKFERGUS (301-3330)**

The original inspection of Victoria Primary School and Nursery Unit in 2011 highlighted strengths in: the exemplary behaviour of the children; the good standards attained by the children; the good quality of the education provided in the nursery and the opportunities provided for the children to participate in a wide range of extra-curricular activities.

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

- to ensure greater consistency in the quality of the teaching and learning and in the children's learning experiences; and
- for the senior leadership team to ensure further that the self-evaluation process is rigorous, effective and leads to further improvement in the children's attainments.

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

- the appointment of co-ordinator teams with clearly defined roles and responsibilities, to oversee the developmental work in English and mathematics and special educational needs;
- the staff have developed the use of internal performance data in literacy and numeracy to track and record the progress of the children within individual year groups;
- new planning, teaching and assessment formats were introduced with a clearer focus on the progression and continuity of learning and meeting the individual needs of all the children;
- there have been changes of staffing in the nursery unit;
- the nursery unit staff have reviewed their planning, teaching and assessment formats and processes to focus more clearly on using all of the time for learning;
- the review and management of, and arrangements for the provision of special educational needs (SEN);
- the observation of lessons to monitor the quality of the learning and teaching by the principal, vice-principal and the middle management team and the provision of feedback to progress the children's learning;
- appropriate refurbishment has taken place of the toilet facilities;
- the implementation of appropriate self-evaluation strategies to guide the co-ordinators and the teachers in their work; and
- the whole school, professional development programme which included cluster training, visits to other primary and nursery schools and the sharing of effective practice within school.

The Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) carried out one monitoring visit on 7 February 2012 and a follow-up inspection on 23 and 24 September 2013.

The action plans received by the Department of Education (DE) following the inspection were of a very good quality and were adjusted appropriately in the light of feedback given by the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI).

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

- the effectiveness of the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO), literacy, numeracy and assessment co-ordinators in leading the developments and improvements in their respective areas;
- the development of a shared understanding among the teachers of what constitutes effective learning and teaching;
- the quality of the teaching in the lessons observed was always consistently good or better, of which 8% was outstanding and 32% was very good;
- the new planning formats and processes in the school and nursery unit guide the work of the staff and ensure that the activities provided are more closely matched to the range of abilities in each class;
- the very good opportunities for the children to develop their thinking skills and personal capabilities through a variety of independent and collaborative learning activities;
- the developments and use made of the stimulating outdoor play area in the nursery unit;
- the staff use the internal performance data more effectively to inform their planning, to meet the needs of individual children and to raise the children's attainment in literacy and numeracy;
- the systematic and rigorous approach to monitoring and evaluating the quality of the provision and the standards attained by the children; and
- the effective collegiate whole school approach to school improvement under the effective leadership of the principal, vice-principal and the senior management team (SMT).

## CONCLUSION

In the areas inspected, the quality of education and pastoral care 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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