



*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

Beechfield Primary School
Belfast

January 2010

FOLLOW-UP TO THE FOCUSED INSPECTION OF BEECHFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL, BELFAST, BT5 4EQ (101-0271)

The focused inspection in October 2008 highlighted strengths in the ongoing development of the pastoral provision, the meaningful links established with the parents and the local community to enhance the children's learning experiences, and the good start made to using performance data to track individual children's progress.

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

- to define more clearly the roles and responsibilities throughout the school and develop a more collegiate and collaborative approach to review, development and improvement in the interests of the children;
- to improve the quality of the teachers' planning and practice to ensure progression in the children's learning, provide appropriate challenge and to meet the needs of the children more effectively; and
- to raise the standards achieved by the children in English and mathematics.

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

- the enrolment has declined and is currently 51;
- a composite year 1-3 class was formed and the number of classes in the school reduced from four to three;
- a new teacher was appointed to the year 6/7 class; and
- the school availed of intensive support for numeracy and literacy from the Belfast Education and Library Board's Curriculum Advisory and Support Services, as part of the 'Achieving Belfast' Programme.

The Education and Training Inspectorate (Inspectorate) carried out two interim follow-up visits and a follow-up inspection (FUI) on 28 January 2010.

The school 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 development of clearer roles and responsibilities for staff throughout the school;
- the more collegiate and collaborative approach to review, development and improvement;
- the shared understanding and realisation of the need to improve the standards achieved by the children, particularly in numeracy and literacy; and
- the clearer focus on literacy and numeracy within the curriculum.

The action plan produced by the school in response to the inspection findings was of a satisfactory quality and was adjusted appropriately in light of feedback given by the Inspectorate. However, the action plan has not been implemented rigorously or systematically enough and the FUI has identified that the following key areas for improvement remain to be addressed:

- the need to improve the quality of the teachers' planning and teaching to ensure the children's needs are met more effectively and that they make much better progress in their learning; and
- the need to raise significantly the standards attained by the children in literacy and numeracy.

Furthermore, leadership and management needs to focus developments more on learning and teaching to ensure the children's achievements and standards show much needed improvement.

It will be important that the employing authority, school governors and the staff plan for, and manage, issues related to the sustainability of the school provision and school budget, in order to address the current and future needs of the children and the staff.

In almost all of the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by this school remains inadequate; the significant areas for improvement outweigh the strengths in the provision. Important areas for improvement identified in the original inspection in standards, and learning and teaching, and the area for improvement in leadership and management identified in this FUI need to be addressed urgently if the school is to meet effectively the needs of all of the children.

The Inspectorate will carry out a further follow-up inspection within 12 months and a report will be published.

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