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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

**Bunscoil Bheanna Boirche
Castlewellan**

November 2010

FOLLOW-UP TO THE FOCUSED INSPECTION OF BUNSCOIL BHEANNA BOIRCHE, CASTLEWELLAN, CO DOWN, BT31 9EB (404-6648)

The focused inspection in February 2008 highlighted strengths in the welcoming, friendly ethos; the very good behaviour of most of the children; the dedication of the Principal and the staff to the children and the school; the school's commitment to promoting health and well-being among the children; the range of effective links established with other schools; and the dedication of the governors and parents to the life and work of the school.

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

- to develop more detailed whole-school planning, outlining the intended learning, ensuring consolidation and progression, and addressing the needs of the full range of ages and abilities in each class;
- to review the school development plan (SDP) in light of the inspection findings to guide the work of the school more strategically; and
- to establish effective systems to monitor and evaluate the quality of the school's provision in order to promote continuing improvement.

The school entered the formal intervention process in December 2009. The Education and Training Inspectorate carried out monitoring visits in June and December 2009 and indicated that the school had prepared appropriate action plans. A further interim follow-up visit (IFUV) was carried out in June 2010 and the follow-up inspection was conducted in November 2010.

Since the initial inspection in February 2008, the following actions which affect the work of the school have taken place. The school now occupies purpose-built premises on a new site; two new teachers have been appointed; and the enrolment has increased from 51 children at the time of the inspection to 62. In the interval since the original inspection, the school has received support from the Inter-board Irish-Medium Curriculum Advisory and Support Service (CASS) and the South-Eastern Education and Library Board CASS team in the development of strategic planning, aspects of numeracy, notably mental mathematics, play-based learning and information and communication technology (ICT).

The action plans produced by the school in response to the inspection findings were of a satisfactory quality and were adjusted appropriately in light of feedback given by the Inspectorate during the IFUVs.

The following are the most important improvements made:

- the SDP has been adjusted and now meets the statutory requirements as set out by the Department of Education; it has been written in consultation with teachers, governors and the school council and guides effectively the work of the school;
- the associated action plans address the school's priorities and the areas for improvement identified in the focused inspection;
- the school has implemented a new common format for whole-school planning which focuses appropriately on learning intentions, pupil activities, differentiation and meeting the needs of those children who require additional support in their learning;

- the standards achieved by the children in mathematics and Irish have improved; and
- more robust procedures for monitoring and evaluating the quality of the teaching and learning are now in place.

The follow-up inspection has identified some aspects of the areas for improvement still to be addressed, including:

- the more effective analysis and use of data to set targets for improvement; and
- the need to continue to improve the standards attained by the children in English.

In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by this school is now good. The organisation has important strengths in most of its educational and pastoral provision. While the follow-up inspection has identified some aspects of the areas for improvement still to be addressed, the organisation has demonstrated the capacity to address these.

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