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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**



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Education and Training Inspectorate

Report of a Follow-up Inspection

**Cygnnet House Preparatory Department
Bangor**

May 2007

FOLLOW-UP TO THE INSPECTION OF CYGNET HOUSE PREPARATORY DEPARTMENT, BANGOR, CO DOWN, BT20 4TH (461-0097)

The focused inspection in May 2005 highlighted strengths including the caring and supportive ethos; the very good working relationships; the exemplary behaviour of the children and the hard-working and committed staff.

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

- provide more frequent opportunities for the children to use information and communication technology (ICT) across the four ICT strands;
- review the department's policy and practice for structured play, to ensure continuity and progression in the development of skills and understanding across key stage (KS) 1.

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

- the classes in the department have been timetabled to use the ICT suite in the senior school;
- all of the staff have attended relevant courses;
- the staff have received very good support from members of the South-Eastern Education and Library Board's Curriculum Advisory and Support Service Officers for ICT and structured play;
- the staff have worked very hard to develop their own skills in using a range of ICT software;
- an additional classroom has been built to provide extra space to accommodate the needs of the year 2/3 composite class;
- a general assistant has been employed to provide additional support for learning and teaching in the year 2/3 composite class; and
- additional resources have been purchased to support the development of the structured play programme.

The Education and Training Inspectorate (Inspectorate) carried out a follow-up inspection in May 2007.

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

- good use is made of a range of software, across both key stages, to support the children's learning in many areas of the curriculum;
- the regular use of the ICT suite is providing good opportunities for the children to develop a wider range of skills in ICT;
- individual files containing examples of the children's work in ICT, from years 1 to 7, have been developed;
- electronic files for years 4 to 7 have been developed for the children to save their work;

- the children in KS2 have been e-mailing homework to their teachers;
- the staff are beginning to monitor and evaluate the children's progress in ICT;
- the staff have been disseminating the good practice that already exists within the department; and
- the KS1 teachers are working together to develop the planning for the structured play programme.

As part of the follow-up inspection process, the school conducted its own evaluation of the progress in the areas for improvement identified in the original inspection. The school submitted a self-evaluative report to the Inspectorate setting out its findings.

The inspection confirms that, through effective self-evaluation, the school has identified appropriately its priorities for future development and improvement.

There are many significant strengths in the school's approach to self-evaluation. The quality of the report was good; it provided clear evidence of good progress made following the inspection. The processes used to gather the evidence were effective. The Inspectorate confirms that the findings and recommendations contained in the self-evaluative report are accurate and appropriate, and are an effective response to the areas for improvement identified in the original inspection report. The school development plan has been adjusted accordingly.

The school has made good progress in addressing the key areas for action. The parents and broader community can have confidence in the department's commitment to improvement, and the effectiveness of its actions in response to the findings of the focused inspection.

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