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*The Education and Training Inspectorate -  
Promoting Improvement*



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**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**

#### **Down High Preparatory Department Downpatrick**

**June 2007**

## **FOLLOW-UP TO THE INSPECTION OF DOWN HIGH SCHOOL PREPARATORY DEPARTMENT, DOWNPATRICK, CO DOWN, BT30 6EU (461-0085)**

The focused inspection in January 2006 highlighted strengths in the caring and supportive ethos, the high quality of the pre-school provision, the committed and hard-working teachers and the work of the English and information and communication technology (ICT) co-ordinators. The inspection identified the need for improvement in the following key areas:

- to provide more frequent opportunities to use ICT to support learning and teaching; and
- to continue to develop whole-school strategies to monitor, evaluate and review effectively the quality of the learning experiences across the school.

In the interval since the inspection, the following action which affects the work of the school, has taken place. For example:

- a new principal was appointed September 2006;
- while the ICT co-ordinator was absent from school the co-ordination was undertaken by another teacher;
- the teachers have received ICT support from within the school and the South-Eastern Education and Library Board Curriculum Advisory and Support Service officer;

The Education and Training Inspectorate (Inspectorate) carried out a follow-up inspection on 5 June 2007.

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

- the appropriate review of the pastoral care policy;
- the significantly enhanced curricular leadership roles of those staff with posts of responsibility;
- the useful collaborative processes and approaches established to monitor and evaluate the standards the children achieve;
- the increased ICT resources to support learning and teaching;
- the significant increase in the opportunities for the children to use ICT to enhance their learning;
- the increased analysis of external and internal information to support the monitoring of the children's progress; and
- the increased opportunities for the children to write across the curriculum.

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

There are strengths in the school's approach to self-evaluation, for example, the action taken was presented clearly and the processes used to gather the evidence were effective.

Overall, the school has made a sound start to the process of self-evaluation. To make the process more effective the school needs to state more clearly the evaluations which they make of their work and their consequent recommendations for future developments.

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

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