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*The Education and Training Inspectorate -
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Education and Training Inspectorate

Report of a Follow-up Inspection

**Fane Street Primary School and Nursery Unit
Belfast**

November 2008

FOLLOW-UP TO THE FOCUSED INSPECTION OF FANE STREET PRIMARY SCHOOL AND NURSERY UNIT, BELFAST, BT9 7BW (101-6205)

1. THE PRIMARY SCHOOL

The focused inspection in Fane Street Primary School in February 2005 highlighted strengths in the ethos, much of the teaching of mathematics and the hard working staff. The inspection also identified the need for improvement in the following key areas:

- the attainment in mathematics for a minority of children; and
- the need for more systematic mechanisms to monitor and evaluate the progress of the school in key elements of its work.

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

- a new Principal was appointed and took up post in September 2006;
- there was a significant turnover in the teaching staff, subsequent changes in responsibilities and appropriate focus on their induction;
- the number of children attending the school with English as an additional language (EAL) increased significantly from two in February 2005 to 59 recorded in November 2008;
- the overall school enrolment reduced by 20%;
- the school employed additional staff to support children with EAL;
- the school received support from the Education and Library Board's Inclusion and Diversity Service;
- a new numeracy co-ordinator was appointed in 2006; and
- key policies were reviewed and updated, including the monitoring and evaluation policy.

The high turnover of staff, the significant increase in the number of children attending who speak English as an additional language, and the appointment of a new Principal have all impacted on the pace of change and progress made.

The Education and Training Inspectorate carried out a monitoring visit in May 2008 and a follow-up inspection on 10 November 2008.

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

- the improvement in the overall standards for mathematics; the performance for most of the children is at or above the expected level, and a significant minority reach a high level of attainment in mathematics which compares favourably to similar schools;
- the new mathematics co-ordinator is well organised, highly motivated and is developing her role effectively to bring about improvement;
- the quality of the teaching observed ranged from satisfactory to outstanding; the majority was good;
- the improved resources to support the teaching of mathematics;
- the school has increased communication and involvement with parents, both in the life of the school generally and in their children's learning;
- the monitoring and evaluation of, the planning for, and the teaching of numeracy and information and community technology;
- the clear improvement in the monitoring and evaluation of standards through a broader range of approaches at both class and whole school level;
- the appropriate targets for numeracy being set in conjunction with the Belfast Education and Library Board; and
- the wider range of approaches are supporting the pastoral care of the children and promoting positive behaviour and mutual respect; on the day of the inspection visits the children's behaviour was very good.

The new Principal fosters a strong sense of collaboration and teamwork among the staff; they use an appropriate framework to engage in a systematic approach to self-evaluation. The school development plan is updated annually and reflects the key areas for improvement. The associated action plans are well focused and relevant. The progress of these action plans are regularly monitored by the co-ordinators, staff and senior management.

Very good progress has been made in the areas of improvement identified during the original inspection. In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by this school is now good. The organisation is meeting very effectively the educational and pastoral needs of the learners; and has demonstrated its capacity for sustained self-improvement.

2. NURSERY UNIT

The inspection in February 2005 highlighted strengths in the wide range of activities provided for the children and the commitment of the staff. The inspection also identified the need for improvement in the following key areas:

- review the level of interaction by the staff in order to engage all the children and promote effectively their language and engagement with the activities;
- develop strategies which help the children to maintain concentration and lead to settled and sustained play; and
- review the daily routines to ensure that opportunities are developed which promote the children's sense of responsibility and their independence.

In the interval since the inspection, the following action which affects the work of the nursery has taken place:

- the staff attended some relevant training including Language for Life;
- the number of formalised parental meetings have increased;
- an additional nursery assistant was employed to support the high number of children with additional needs;
- a grant received from "Awards for All" is used to develop the resources for outdoor play; and
- key policies including those related to Child Protection were reviewed and updated and additional policies were developed to guide staff in their daily practice.

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

- the increase in the liaison between the nursery and Key Stage 1 staff to ensure progression in the children's learning;
- the revised layout of the classroom environment provides greater choice and is improving the quality of settled and more productive play;
- the staff are more consistent in promoting and celebrating the children's positive behaviour;
- the written planning provides more detailed guidance on the resourcing of areas, and the promotion of language and literacy; the staff promote the children's language and learning more effectively through the play activities;
- the additional assistant makes a significant contribution to the overall quality of teaching and learning;

- the children's sense of responsibility and independence are developed more effectively; and
- the immediate availability of a language assistant in the school provides a very helpful resource to meet the needs of individual children.

The following are the areas for continued development:

- continue to develop opportunities for learning outdoors; and
- align the action plans for the nursery more closely to the whole school development plan.

Good progress has been made in the areas for improvement identified during the original inspection. In most of the areas inspected the quality of education provided by this nursery unit is now satisfactory; the strengths outweigh areas for improvement in the provision.

The staff have demonstrated evidence of improvement but a few areas for improvement in learning and teaching and leadership and management remain to be addressed if the needs of all the learners are to be met effectively. The Education and Training Inspectorate will monitor the organisation's progress in addressing the remaining areas for improvement.

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