



*The Education and Training Inspectorate -  
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*Providing Inspection Services for*  
**Department of Education  
Department for Employment and Learning  
Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure**



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## **Education and Training Inspectorate**

### **Report of a Follow-up Inspection**

**Gortin Primary School  
Omagh**

**May 2009**

## **FOLLOW-UP TO THE INSPECTION OF GORTIN PRIMARY SCHOOL, OMAGH, CO TYRONE, BT79 8QB (201-6395)**

The focused inspection in March 2007 highlighted strengths in the good behaviour of the children, the standards achieved by the children in literacy, the quality of the teaching in a majority of lessons, the provision for the children who require additional support with their learning and the commitment and leadership of the Principal, ably supported by the Vice-principal. The inspection identified the need for improvement in the following key areas:

- to improve the children's experiences and their learning in play-based activities; and
- to disseminate the good practice in teaching across the school and, in particular, to improve the teaching that was found to be unsatisfactory.

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

- the Principal has retired and the Vice-principal has taken up the post initially as Acting Principal;
- two new teachers have been appointed to the school in a temporary capacity;
- the teaching staff have availed of a range of professional development opportunities, including play-based learning, and have accessed effective and regular support from the Curriculum Advisory and Support Service (CASS);
- extensive additional resources have been purchased for play-based learning and funding for the development of the outdoor play area has been secured;
- teachers' planning throughout the school has been appropriately reviewed including new topic planners for play-based learning which are informed by the children's interests and ideas;
- the management of play-based learning throughout the school, including monitoring and evaluating procedures, has been appropriately revised and improved;
- a range of effective strategies for the dissemination of the good practice in teaching throughout the school has been put in place; and
- the procedures for consultation and sharing of the Child Protection and Pastoral Care policies with parents and children have been appropriately reviewed and implemented.

The Education and Training Inspectorate (Inspectorate) carried out two monitoring visits on 5 February and 13 March 2009, and a follow-up inspection on 14 May 2009.

The action plan produced by the school in response to the inspection findings was of very good quality.

The school's development plan has been adjusted in light of the inspection findings. The development plan meets the statutory requirements as set out by the Department of Education.

Very good progress has been made in the areas of improvement identified during the original inspection.

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

- the provision, range and quality of play-based resources, including an extensive outdoor area, which are used effectively to extend the children's learning;
- the very good interactions of the teacher and the classroom assistants with the children during play-based activities to promote and extend learning opportunities;
- the good quality of the teacher's individual planning for play which indicates progression and identifies appropriate monitoring and evaluation strategies;
- the very good range of strategies in place to promote the dissemination of good practice in teaching; and the quality of teaching throughout the school, all of which is good or better;
- the impact of the range of professional development opportunities availed of by staff, including the regular support and guidance of CASS, on the teaching and learning throughout the school;
- the commitment, dedication and hard work of the Acting Principal in providing effective leadership in promoting school improvement; and
- the effective procedures in place to ensure that the Child Protection and Pastoral Care policies are reviewed in consultation with parents and children, and shared regularly with parents.

Since the inspection, the school evaluated rigorously the progress made in the areas for improvement identified in the original inspection.

The promotion of a self-evaluative culture throughout the follow-up inspection period contributed significantly to the improvement made, and helped the school identify appropriately its priorities for future development. The inspection confirms that, through effective self-evaluation, the school demonstrated clear evidence of improvement. Accordingly, the Inspectorate recommends that the processes for self-evaluation now in place are maintained.

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

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