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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

**Lourdes Primary School
Whitehead, Carrickfergus**

June 2010

FOLLOW-UP TO THE FOCUSED INSPECTION OF LOURDES PRIMARY SCHOOL, WHITEHEAD, CARRICKFERGUS, CO ANTRIM, BT38 9QU (303-6093)

The focused inspection of Lourdes Primary School in February 2007 highlighted strengths in the friendly, caring and well behaved children and the provision for those children identified with special education needs. The inspection identified the need for improvement in the following key areas:

- to widen the range of teaching approaches adopted in lessons in order to raise the children's literacy; and
- the wider use of information communication technology (ICT) throughout the school to enhance the children's learning experiences.

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

- a number of Curriculum Advisory and Support Service officers have supported the teachers in developing their literacy, ICT and the World Around Us programmes;
- the school reports that the school's child protection policy and procedures are shared with the parents every two years;
- all the staff and the governors have received child protection training;
- the enrolment in the primary school has decreased and currently stands at 23;
- the Principal was absent for a period of two months during the second term and the other member of the permanent staff has been absent for most of the academic year, both due to illness;
- two new reading schemes and a variety of novels have been introduced to the literacy programme;
- the school acquired additional resources to support the use of ICT within the classrooms; and
- the school has established effective links with the local post-primary school to develop further the children's experiences through ICT.

The Education and Training Inspectorate (Inspectorate) carried out one interim follow-up inspection visit and a follow-up inspection on 1 June 2010.

The action plan produced by the school in response to the inspection findings was of a 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.

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

- teaching approaches observed provided opportunities for the children to work through a topic which connected well the components of talking and listening, reading and writing;
- the children are using ICT well in many areas of learning across the curriculum;

- when given the opportunity, the children are able to write creatively, extensively and independently; and
- the children are receiving more enriching experiences through activity based learning.

The areas for further development include the need to:

- address the lack of continuity in the teaching and leadership in the school due to staff absence;
- develop more systematically the approaches to monitoring and evaluating the children's progress to inform and improve further the standards they attain; and
- ensure adequate challenge in more of the work provided for the children including less use of decontextualised literacy exercises and worksheets.

In most of the areas inspected the quality of education provided by this school remains satisfactory; the strengths outweigh areas for improvement in the provision.

The school has demonstrated some evidence of improvement but significant areas for improvement in standards, learning and teaching, leadership and management remain to be addressed if the needs of all the children are to be met effectively.

The Inspectorate will monitor and report on the school's progress in addressing the remaining areas for improvement.

It will be important that the employing authority, school governors and the staff plan for, and manage, issues related to the sustainability of the school provision and school budget, in order to address the current and future needs of the children and the staff.

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