



*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**



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## **Education and Training Inspectorate**

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

**Oakfield Primary School  
Carrickfergus**

**March 2009**

## **FOLLOW-UP TO THE FOCUSED INSPECTION OF OAKFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL, CARRICKFERGUS, CO ANTRIM, BT38 9DE (301-6257)**

The focused inspection in March 2006 highlighted strengths in the quality of the teaching, the good behaviour of the children, the school's commitment to development and improvement, the commitment and effective leadership of the Principal and the positive contribution of the support staff.

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

- to monitor and evaluate more effectively the quality of learning and teaching throughout the school, for example in information and communication technology (ICT) and numeracy, in order to promote improvement and track more effectively the children's progress; and
- to ensure that the work in mathematics provides a broader range of experiences and more regular and sufficient challenge for all the children.

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

- a new Vice-principal was appointed;
- the staff have availed of training in child protection, ICT and special educational needs;
- a school audit was carried out to outline strengths and the areas for improvement within the provision;
- two additional learning support teachers were appointed;
- a formative monitoring system has been introduced to track progress throughout the different year groups;
- additional resources have been purchased to further enhance many areas of the curriculum; and
- there has been major refurbishment of the administrative blocks, learning resources areas and the toilet blocks.

The Education and Training Inspectorate (Inspectorate) carried out a monitoring visit and a follow-up inspection on 27 March 2009.

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

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

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

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

- the appropriate restructuring of the roles and responsibilities of the Vice-principal and the co-ordinators to include monitoring and evaluating of the quality of the children's learning experiences;
- the wider range of opportunities to provide greater challenge, investigation and the development of problem-solving and thinking skills for the children to apply their mathematical learning;
- the good start made by the staff in the use of assessment data to set targets and evaluate the effectiveness of the learning and teaching within the classrooms;
- the positive impact of the links with the local primary schools, in particular in ICT and science;
- the well structured support sessions for those children who require additional support with aspects of their learning;
- the very good progress made in applying more rigorous and consistent strategies to monitor and evaluate learning and teaching, such as classroom observations, book scoops and teacher evaluation of planning;
- the improvements in the children's attainment demonstrated in the school performance data;
- the conscientious and highly effective leadership of the Principal, ably supported by the Vice-principal who encourages a collegial approach to school improvement through self-evaluation, and who have a clear vision for the future development of the school; and
- the good progress made in embedding the use of ICT in supporting the children's learning, through the effective professional development of the teachers.

Since the inspection, the school evaluated the progress made in the areas for improvement identified in the original inspection. The Inspectorate recommends that the processes for self-evaluation are developed to focus strongly on self-evaluation as a means to bring about improvement.

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

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