



*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

**Parkhall Primary School
Antrim**

May 2008

FOLLOW-UP TO THE FOCUSED INSPECTION OF PARKHALL PRIMARY SCHOOL, ANTRIM, BT41 1AZ (301-6058)

The focused inspection in March 2006 highlighted strengths in the ethos of the school, the quality of the provision for those children with special educational needs and the examples of very good to excellent teaching. The inspection identified the need for improvement in the following key areas:

- the raising of standards in the area under focus;
- the integration of information and communication technology (ICT) across the curriculum;
- the planning and provision of play-based learning; and
- the development of stronger curricular leadership at all levels.

In the interval since the inspection, the following actions which affect the work of the school have taken place:

- a new principal was appointed and took up post in November 2006;
- the school's staffing has been reduced by one teacher, due to a decrease in pupil numbers;
- the roles and responsibilities of the staff have been reviewed and re-allocated;
- the school has acquired additional resources for ICT, numeracy and play-based learning;
- the staff have accessed relevant in-service training; and
- the school has become involved in the Council for the Curriculum Examinations and Assessment ICT accreditation and in the Dissolving Boundaries Project.

The Education and Training Inspectorate (Inspectorate) carried out a monitoring visit on 4 April 2008 and a follow-up inspection on 21 May 2008.

The school's development plan has been adjusted in light of the inspection findings.

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

- the newly-appointed Principal has worked hard to build positive working relationships and involve all of the staff in prioritising the areas for further development;
- teachers with special responsibilities have developed appropriate action plans, have provided very useful advice and guidance for staff, and are beginning to use the information from available performance data to monitor the children's progress;
- the school's numeracy policy has been reviewed and updated and the teachers' planning now reflects a greater emphasis on the development of mental mathematics;
- the children experience more opportunities for practical activities which help to consolidate their understanding of mathematical concepts;

- information and communication technology is now more fully integrated within the school's mathematics programme and across the curriculum in general; the children are now developing skills using a range of programmes and equipment;
- the staff have received valuable and effective guidance from the North-Eastern Education and Library Board (NEELB) Curriculum Advisory and Support Service (CASS);
- the teachers in the foundation stage have benefited from valuable advice and support from the NEELB Early Years CASS team; planning and provision for play has been improved and the teachers have begun to implement some aspects of their recent training; and
- the links with the local pre-schools have been strengthened and the classroom assistants provide skilful support for the children during play sessions.

Since the inspection, the school has 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 more strongly on self-evaluation as a means to bring about improvement.

Good progress has been made in the areas for improvement identified during the original inspection but some minor areas still require improvement.

The school's progress in the minor areas for improvement will be monitored by the District Inspector.

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