



*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

**Rathmore Primary School
Bangor**

February 2008

FOLLOW-UP TO THE INSPECTION OF RATHMORE PRIMARY SCHOOL, BANGOR, CO DOWN, BT19 1DJ (401-6067)

The focused inspection in Rathmore Primary School, Bangor in January 2005 highlighted strengths in the good working relationships, the good behaviour and manners of the children, the range of extra-curricular activities, the hard-working staff and the excellent work of the mathematics co-ordinator and identified the need for improvement in the following key areas:

- ensure that the areas for improvement identified in the inspection report were included in the School Development Plan (SDP) and developed;
- clarify roles and responsibilities within the school, including the development of the role of the co-ordinators in monitoring and evaluating the quality of learning; and
- disseminate the very good or excellent practice.

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

- the appointment of a new principal in September 2006;
- the appointment of a vice-principal in June 2006;
- the use of 'Together Towards Improvement' to assist staff in the process of self-evaluation;
- the purchase of additional resources to further enhance some of the areas under focus; and
- the major refurbishment of the foyer and office areas.

The Education and Training Inspectorate (Inspectorate) carried out a series of inspection visits to the school as part of the follow-up process. This report was compiled following the inspection visit on 22 February 2008 and also takes account of the findings of the visit in June 2006 and April 2007.

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

- the clear and comprehensive review of the SDP and detailed action plans for the areas under focus to take account of the findings from the previous report;
- the significant developments initiated by the information and communication technology (ICT) co-ordinator which include the greater integration and use of ICT facilities; the effective use of the interactive whiteboard in many of the classes; the increasing use of ICT to motivate the children and develop their literacy and numeracy skills; and the introduction to, and participation in, the Council for Curriculum, Examination and Assessment ICT accreditation;

- the strong commitment by the school to the development and improvement of play-based learning and in particular the good efforts made to liaise with the nursery unit in order to build on the children's previous learning experiences;
- the good start made by staff in the use of a range of assessment data to set targets and evaluate the effectiveness of the learning and teaching;
- the very good support provided by the Curriculum Advisory and Support Service officers of the South-Eastern Education and Library Board;
- the appropriate restructuring of the roles and responsibilities of the Vice-principal, subject co-ordinators and staff improvement teams to include the monitoring and evaluating of the quality of the children's learning experiences; and
- the conscientious and effective leadership of the new Principal who encourages a collegial approach to school improvement through self-evaluation, and has a clear vision for the future development of the work of the school.

The promotion of a self-evaluative culture throughout the follow-up inspection period contributed significantly to the improvement made, and has helped the school identify appropriately its priorities for future development. The inspection confirms that, through effective self-evaluation, the school has demonstrated clear evidence of improvement.

Very good progress has been made in the areas for improvement identified during the original inspection. The educational and pastoral needs of the children are well met. The parents and broader community can have confidence in the school's commitment to improvement, and the effectiveness of its actions in response to the findings of the focused inspection.

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