

Education and Training Inspectorate

Report of a Follow-up Inspection

Reception Provision

in

St Eugene's Primary School Strabane

June 2016

FOLLOW-UP TO THE INSPECTION OF ST EUGENE'S PRIMARY SCHOOL, STRABANE: RECEPTION PROVISION (203-2682)

The original inspection carried out in October 2014 concluded that the reception provision was satisfactory and there was a need to provide an appropriate pre-school programme that reflects the guidance issued by the Department of Education.

The Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) carried out two monitoring visits on 24 September 2015 and 8 February 2016 with a follow-up inspection on 1 June 2016.

The action plans received by the Department of Education following the inspection were of a good quality. The school's development plan was adjusted in light of the inspection findings.

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

- the school re-deployed a classroom assistant and provided additional working hours;
- the staff engaged in additional training and visits to other pre-school settings to improve their knowledge and understanding of the pre-school curriculum;
- the learning environment has been re-organised to provide a range of stimulating play areas. There is improved access to resources in the classroom, an additional spacious indoor play area has been provided and the school grounds have been developed to create a new secure outdoor play area, including a wheeled vehicle track and additional growing areas; and
- the school has been very well-supported by the work of the Education Authority in auditing the needs and the learning environment of the pre-school children and reviewing the planning and provision.

Key findings

- The children's standards and achievements are now very good. The children are well-settled, relaxed and happy in the school learning environment. They co-operate well with the staff and can reflect on and discuss their learning during whole class plenary sessions about play. The children are able to express their ideas and thoughts, solve problems and make decisions and choices. They demonstrate their natural curiosity and confidence by asking regularly questions of the staff. The children are making very good progress with early writing skills and can recognise and write their name in context, for example, on their detailed representational paintings and junk models. They participate enthusiastically at storytime and are developing very good dispositions to early reading skills. The children are able to use an appropriate vocabulary to discuss early mathematical concepts including sorting and matching, number, shape and space and money.
- The improvements to the learning environment have improved significantly the provision for learning across all areas of the pre-school curriculum.
- The quality of learning and teaching is very good. The methods for planning, observation and assessment have been reviewed robustly and new procedures put in place. The detailed observations for individual children across all areas of learning are evaluated to inform future planning and the children's progress is monitored and recorded carefully in a variety of appropriate forms. The staff use effective questioning and provide the children with appropriate access to a range of resources.

- The quality and effectiveness of leadership, management and action to promote improvement is very good. The class teacher and the school leadership team have in place a strategic and robust process of self-evaluation and have brought about significant improvements to the quality of the reception provision. Throughout the follow-up process, there is clear evidence of significant, sustained improvement in the provision for the reception children which has been built upon incrementally. The board of governors provide support and challenge for the improvement process and have made financial provision for sustaining adult support for the reception children in the long-term.

Overall effectiveness

In the development of the provision for the reception children, the school has demonstrated a high level of capacity for sustained improvement. The ETI will continue to monitor how the school sustains improvement.

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