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*The Education and Training Inspectorate -
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Providing Inspection Services for
**Department of Education
Department for Employment and Learning
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Education and Training Inspectorate

Report of a Follow-up Inspection

**St Francis Primary School
Lurgan**

June 2008

FOLLOW-UP TO THE FOCUSED INSPECTION OF ST FRANCIS PRIMARY SCHOOL, LURGAN, CO ARMAGH, BT66 6DL (503-6633)

The focused inspection in English, information and communication technology and the school's arrangements for pastoral care conducted in November 2006 highlighted strengths in the welcoming, friendly and pastoral ethos. Other strengths included, the excellent working relationships between the teachers and the children, the wide range of extra-curricular activities provided for the children, the good behaviour and responses of the children, the hard-working and committed teachers, the quality of the teaching, the contribution of the non-teaching staff and classroom assistants to the life and work of the school, the excellent quality of provision in the nursery unit, the high quality of provision in the Irish-medium unit and the commitment of all the staff to review and development.

The findings of the follow-up inspection confirm that these areas continue to be significant strengths.

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

- to target developments in teaching and the curriculum to raise significantly the standards in literacy, specifically in reading and writing, across the school; and
- to implement, through strategic leadership at senior management level, robust processes for monitoring and evaluating the effect which planned developments have on raising the children's attainments.

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

- there have been significant changes in personnel with responsibility for literacy and special needs;
- there has been an increase in pupil enrolments, from 749 to 768;
- there has been a slight decrease in the number of children who are entitled to free school meals, from approximately 22% to 18%;
- there has been an increase in the number of children with English as a second language;
- the school's development plan has been adjusted in light of the original inspection findings;
- comprehensive action plans have been produced to address each of the areas for development;
- the Management Team and teachers have realistic expectations of children's potential;
- there has been a significant focus on the development of literacy across the curriculum; and
- the school has received good support from the Southern Education and Library Board's Curriculum Advisory and Support Services.

The Education and Training Inspectorate carried out two monitoring visits prior to the follow-up inspection in June 2008.

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

- The planning for literacy has been reviewed effectively to provide a more holistic, integrated approach to the development of talking and listening, reading and writing.
- The staff have begun to make good use of internal and external data to inform planning, to set individual targets and to improve learning.
- There is appropriate differentiation within teaching and learning to meet the range of ability within each class.
- The management team has implemented systematic arrangements for monitoring and evaluation across the school.

Since the inspection, the school has evaluated the progress made in the areas for improvement identified in the original inspection. The Education and Training Inspectorate recommends that the school continues to develop the processes for self-evaluation as a means to bring about improvement.

Good progress has been made in most of the areas for improvement identified during the original inspection but there is a need for the school to extend the use of internal data in order to fully address underachievement in the children's attainment.

The school's progress in the area for improvement will be followed-up by the District Inspector.

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