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*The Education and Training Inspectorate -  
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**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**

**St Malachy's Primary School**  
**Castlewellan**

**March 2007**

## **FOLLOW-UP TO THE FOCUSED INSPECTION OF ST MALACHY'S PRIMARY SCHOOL, CASTLEWELLAN BT31 9DN (403 -6454)**

The focused inspection in May 2005, highlighted strengths in the caring, friendly and welcoming atmosphere, the hard-working and committed teachers, the good working relationships and the work of the special unit. The inspection identified the need for improvement in the following key areas:

- the need to provide a greater consistency in the quality of the learning and teaching across the school; and
- the need to provide stronger curricular leadership, and agree shared expectations on the standards expected and achieved by the children across the curriculum.

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

- a new Principal was appointed; and
- professional development was provided by the Curriculum Advisory and Support Service (CASS)

The Education and Training Inspectorate (Inspectorate) carried out a follow-up inspection on 23 March 2007.

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

- the higher profile given to the senior management team and the curriculum co-ordinators; their roles and responsibilities are more clearly defined and understood;
- the extensive work of the co-ordinators, including the sound development of a self-evaluative process, managed by the information and communication technology (ICT) co-ordinator and ICT team;
- the more cohesive working partnerships across the school;
- across the school, the children have a wider range of opportunities for writing and using ICT;
- the more rigorous and structured monitoring and evaluation of the quality of the children's work;
- the start made to the collation and use of external assessment data to improve standards;
- the team approach used to develop an understanding of good practice in learning and teaching; and

- the strong leadership and management of the Principal, including his vision for the continued work of the school focused on the findings in the inspection report.

As part of the follow-up inspection process, the school conducted its own evaluation of the progress in an area for improvement identified in the original inspection. The school submitted a self-evaluative report to the Inspectorate setting out its findings.

The inspection confirms that, through effective self-evaluation, the school has identified appropriately its priorities for future development and improvement.

There were strengths in the school's approach to self-evaluation. The quality of the report was good. The report provided clear evidence of good progress made following the inspection. The processes used to gather the evidence were effective. The Inspectorate confirms that the findings and recommendations contained in the self-evaluative report are accurate and appropriate, and are an effective response to the areas for improvement identified in the original inspection report.

The school has made good progress in addressing the key areas for action. The parents and broader community can have confidence in the school's commitment to and action for improvement, and the effectiveness of its response to the findings of the focused inspection.

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