



*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**



Education and Training Inspectorate

Report of a Follow-up Inspection

**St Mary's Primary School
Kircubbin**

October 2011

FOLLOW-UP TO THE FOCUSED INSPECTION OF ST MARY'S PRIMARY SCHOOL, KIRCUBBIN, NEWTOWNARDS, CO DOWN, BT22 2SU (403-6428)

The focused inspection in January 2010 highlighted the following strengths: the motivated children, who were always well-behaved, settled quickly to work and displayed positive attitudes to their learning; the very good quality of the pastoral care provided for the children; the quality of the majority of the teaching observed which was good or better; the good quality of the provision for special educational needs (SEN); the effective role of the Principal in promoting the school and developing the links and communication with parents and the wider community; and the emphasis placed on developing the children's health and well-being including the wide range of extra-curricular activities provided.

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

- to improve the standards achieved in English and to increase the challenge within the learning experiences of all the children; and
- to develop further the role of the Principal and of staff with responsibilities for key areas of the curriculum in monitoring the children's progress in literacy and numeracy and in promoting greater consistency in the quality of the teaching.

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

- since the inspection, the staff received ongoing, targeted support from the South-Eastern Education and Library Board (SEELB) Curriculum Advisory Support Service (CASS);
- the Principal and staff, supported by CASS, developed detailed action plans specifically to target the areas for improvement identified in the inspection report;
- a permanent part-time teacher was appointed to allow the Principal to be released from class to undertake and develop his management and leadership duties;
- all of the staff engaged in middle management training to raise awareness of current policies and how to link them to the core competencies within a variety of self-evaluative tools;
- the Principal and literacy co-ordinator introduced book scoops and classroom observations to monitor the progress in learning and the effectiveness of teaching strategies used by the teachers;
- an appropriate protocol for observing classroom practice was drawn up and agreed by all staff;
- the evaluation of the lessons observed were shared with individual teachers and used to inform future planning and development of literacy across the school;
- all of the staff have had the opportunity to observe classroom practice;
- as a result of training, provided by CASS, the staff implemented learning and teaching strategies to develop the children's writing processes, the outworking of

the training was monitored and evaluated by the Principal and literacy co-ordinator;

- through the ongoing analysis of data, by the leadership team, areas for further development have been identified and the information has been used to inform learning and teaching strategies.

The Education and Training Inspectorate carried out monitoring visits to the school in January and September 2011 and a follow-up inspection in October 2011.

The self-evaluation reports produced by the school in response to the inspection findings were of an outstanding quality.

The school development plan has been adjusted in light of the inspection findings. The development plan meets the statutory requirements as set out by the Department of Education (DE). Excellent progress has been made in the areas for improvement identified during the original inspection.

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

- the Principal has used the class release time very effectively to guide, develop and bring about the necessary improvements that were identified in the original inspection;
- the processes for monitoring and evaluating are now well embedded in the school's working practices;
- the excellent training and the development provided by the SEELB CASS officers have had a very positive impact in bringing about the improvements in learning and teaching;
- the close scrutiny of all available data is now used effectively to track progress, set targets for whole school and individual children, and to identify emerging trends;
- there is now a more systematic, whole-school approach, to bringing about improvement in the interest of the children;
- the Principal and literacy co-ordinator have provided excellent leadership and have been good role models for the staff in the implementation of monitoring and evaluation; and
- through the process of continuous self-evaluation the staff have identified areas for further development within mathematics and the ongoing analysis of data.

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

In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by this school is now very good. The school is meeting very effectively the educational and pastoral needs of the children; and has demonstrated its capacity for sustained self-improvement.

© CROWN COPYRIGHT 2011

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part, except for commercial purposes or in connection with a prospectus or advertisement, provided that the source and date thereof are stated.

Copies of this report are available on the ETI website:
www.etini.gov.uk

