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*The Education and Training Inspectorate -
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Education and Training Inspectorate

Report of a Follow-up Inspection

St Michael's Primary School
Belfast

December 2006

FOLLOW UP TO THE FOCUSED INSPECTION OF ST MICHAEL'S PRIMARY SCHOOL, BELFAST, BT6 0BW (103-6140)

The focused inspection of mathematics, information and communication technology (ICT) and the school's arrangements for pastoral care conducted in November 2004 highlighted strengths in: the strong sense of community which pervades the life and work of the school and the positive ethos; the quality of the relationships between the teachers and the children; the well-maintained and attractive learning environment; the arrangements for the pastoral care of the children; the hard-working and well-prepared teachers; the willingness of the teachers to undertake curriculum development work; the commitment to meeting the needs of the children with learning difficulties; the work in ICT; the commitment of the Principal, Vice-principal and Board of Governors to the welfare and well-being of the children; and the quality of the communication between the school and the parents.

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

- the need to review the current range of teaching strategies in mathematics in order to meet more effectively the individual learning needs of the children; and
- develop further the strategies for monitoring and evaluating the teaching and learning, and the standards achieved by the children, and to develop the role of the subject co-ordinators.

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

- the co-ordination of mathematics is temporarily being undertaken by the principal and another member of the senior management team.

The Education and Training Inspectorate carried out a follow-up inspection in December 2006.

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

- a positive response to the inspection findings from the Board of Governors was sent to the Department of Education and the teachers produced comprehensive action plans to address the key issues identified in the inspection report;
- the teachers have continued to develop their planning for learning and teaching with particular emphasis being given to the development of a wider range of opportunities for the children to engage in meaningful investigative work in mathematics;
- the subject co-ordinators have been given more responsibility for monitoring and evaluating the quality of the work in their subjects. Their evaluations have identified appropriate areas for further development;

- the senior management team is making effective use of a wide range of evidence in their monitoring and evaluation processes. In particular, they are making good use of performance data to set appropriate targets for improvement; and
- there is clear evidence to support the school's evaluation that the standards attained by the children in mathematics have improved significantly, and in a sustained manner, since the inspection.

The school has made very 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 action in response to the findings of the focused inspection.

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