



*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**

**Whitehouse Primary School Nursery Unit  
Newtownabbey**

**June 2011**

## **FOLLOW-UP TO THE INSPECTION OF WHITEHOUSE PRIMARY SCHOOL NURSERY UNIT, NEWTOWNABBEY, CO ANTRIM, BT37 9NZ (301-0827)**

Whitehouse Primary School Nursery Unit was inspected in January 2008 as part of the focused inspection of Whitehouse Primary School. The inspection of the nursery unit highlighted strengths in the examples where the adults promoted the children's language, thinking and learning, the good balance between extended periods of free play and the enjoyable group sessions.

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

- the nursery co-ordinator and staff need to ensure that the best practice observed is disseminated and built upon to ensure the quality of the teaching and learning is of a consistently high quality throughout the nursery; and
- the staff need to continue to develop their systems for observation and record keeping that it is systematic and is used more consistently to match the programme and to support the children's individual interests and needs.

In the interval since the inspection, the following actions which affect the work of the nursery unit have taken place:

- the staff have devised and implemented new planning and assessment formats;
- the nursery staff have received regular support including intensive on-site training, where appropriate, from the Curriculum Advisory and Support Service officers of the Northern-Eastern Education and Library Board relating to the improvement of staff interactions with the children, the Effective Early Learning project, the development of planning and assessment, the effective use of routines, and the promotion of the self-evaluation process; and
- a member of staff has benefited from visiting another nursery unit.

The Education and Training Inspectorate (Inspectorate) carried out one interim follow-up visit in April 2010 and a follow-up inspection on 16 June 2011.

The action plan produced by the nursery unit in response to the original inspection findings was of a good quality.

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

- the learning environments in both classrooms and outdoors areas have been enhanced;
- the Principal has ensured that the nursery staff have received a wide range of internal and external support and through the employment of a rigorous system of monitoring and evaluating he has provided valuable and appropriate feedback to the nursery staff.

The two teachers who job-share in one classroom have worked collaboratively to ensure that:

- there is a more systematic and comprehensive process in place for recording observations of the children's progress;

- their medium and short-term planning is focused more effectively on identifying the learning intentions in the play activities;
- all the children engage in sustained purposeful play with the wide range of interesting activities provided across the pre-school curriculum;
- the teaching observed in this classroom during the follow-up inspection was outstanding; and
- a culture of self-evaluation exists within this classroom which has enabled both staff to demonstrate clear evidence of improvement.

The following key issues require further development:

- the provision within one classroom remains inadequate; and
- the need to continue to improve the quality of teaching across the nursery unit.

## **CONCLUSION**

In most of the areas inspected the quality of education provided by this nursery unit remains satisfactory; the strengths outweigh areas for improvement in the provision. The nursery unit has demonstrated some evidence of improvement but significant areas for improvement in standards, learning and teaching, leadership and management remain to be addressed if the needs of all the children are to be met effectively.

The Inspectorate will monitor and report on the Nursery unit progress in addressing the remaining areas for improvement.

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