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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
Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Education and Training Inspectorate

Report of a Short Primary Inspection

Bloomfield Collegiate Preparatory Department
Belfast

October 2006

BLOOMFIELD COLLEGIATE PREPARATORY DEPARTMENT, BELFAST

The Preparatory Department of Bloomfield Collegiate is situated just off the Newtownards Road in east Belfast and draws its children from the greater Belfast area and North Down. The enrolment, presently 51 children, has remained at a fairly constant level over the past few years. No children are entitled to free school meals.

The parents and the Board of Governors (BoG) were given the opportunity to express their views about the school. The responses indicated a high level of satisfaction with the school's provision and highlighted, in particular, the hard-working teachers and the wide range of extra-curricular opportunities provided for the children.

The school has identified the need to update staff training, and provide training for the newly constituted BoG in relation to child protection matters, in order to comply fully with the Department of Education (DE) Circular 1999/10, "Pastoral Care in Schools: Child Protection" and DE Circular 2003/13, "Welfare and Protection of Pupils Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order."

The strengths of the school include the:

- hard-working and committed staff;
- excellent links with the parents;
- strong sense of a school community and teamwork;
- welcoming environment, including the attractive displays of the children's work;
- celebration of the children's achievements through the displays and school events;
- excellent ethos which pervades all of the life and work of the school;
- well-motivated children whose behaviour is exemplary and who work hard to produce work of a good standard;
- efforts made by the department to support the children who have specific difficulties with their learning;
- overall quality of the teaching which is sound;
- quality of the management of the head of department who is supportive of her staff and does much to foster the strong collegial atmosphere throughout the prep department;
- quality of the department's self-evaluation conducted as part of this inspection process; and

- good use of a range of information for monitoring and evaluation, including the increased use of quantitative data for target setting, as an integral part of the school's development of its self-evaluation processes.

Areas for improvement include the:

- need to build on the useful start made in the process of self-evaluation and address the key issues identified within the school's own evaluation report. These areas include the need to provide more challenging learning experiences for the children, particularly the more able, in order to promote learning and raise the standards of their achievements; and
- need to build on the useful work undertaken in the process of planning for learning and teaching, in particular, to incorporate more detail on how the identified learning objectives are to be achieved and how the varying needs of the children are to be met.

In the areas inspected, the school has strengths in many aspects of its educational and pastoral provision. The inspection has identified a few areas for improvement in important areas which need to be addressed to meet effectively the needs of all the learners. The Education and Training Inspectorate will monitor and report on the school's progress in addressing these areas for improvement.

A number of quantitative terms are used in the report. In percentages, the terms correspond as follows:-

More than 90%	- almost/nearly all
75%-90%	- most
50%-74%	- a majority
30%-49%	- a significant minority
10%-29%	- a minority
Less than 10%	- very few/a small number.

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