

PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

St Malachy's Primary School and
Nursery Unit, Castlewellan,
County Down

Maintained, co-educational

Report of a Sustaining Improvement
Inspection in October 2017



The Education and Training Inspectorate
Promoting Improvement

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CUSTOMER
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Sustaining Improvement Inspection of St Malachy's Primary School and Nursery Unit, Castlewellan, County Down (403-6454)

Introduction

The previous inspection in January 2015 evaluated the overall effectiveness of St Malachy's Primary School and Nursery Unit as very good¹. In the interim, a new management structure has been put in place with the appointment of a leader of literacy and early years, and a leader of information and communication technology (ICT) and e-Learning. A sustaining improvement inspection (SII) was conducted on 23 and 24 October 2017.

Focus of the inspection

The inspection focused on evaluating the extent to which the school is capable of demonstrating its capacity to effect improvement through self-evaluation and effective school development planning. The school also provided evidence of provision for safeguarding as part of the inspection.

The lines of inquiry during the SII were:

- to raise further the quality of the children's learning experience in numeracy, in particular, ensuring progression within measures; and
- to raise further the children's skills and attainment in ICT.

Key findings

- The senior leadership team is highly strategic, reflective and embodies the school's vision of 'Always learning. Learning all ways.' The comprehensive school development plan has been developed through wide consultation and the priorities identified address the pastoral and curricular needs of the whole school community. The learning co-ordinators know the impact of their work on the learning, teaching and outcomes for the children through rigorous tracking and analysis of the school's internal assessment data, classroom observations and reviewing the children's work.
- A review of the numeracy curriculum has resulted in a clear progression and a balanced approach to the teaching of measures throughout the school. Increased opportunities for the children to engage in practical measuring activities within meaningful contexts has led to improved outcomes for the children. The children use appropriate mathematical language to ask and answer questions, discuss ideas and explain their ways of working. Information and communication technology is well-embedded across all areas of the curriculum. The children use ICT confidently to research, present and exchange their ideas, solve problems and collaborate within and beyond the classroom. The work of the school has been recognised recently through the Digital School of Distinction award.

¹ From September 2015, the overall effectiveness of a school previously evaluated as outstanding or very good has been reported as a school demonstrating a high level of capacity for sustained improvement.

Safeguarding

During the inspection, the school provided evidence that the arrangements for safeguarding children reflect the guidance from the Department of Education.

Conclusion

St Malachy's Primary School and Nursery Unit continues to demonstrate a high level of capacity for sustained improvement in the interest of all the learners. The ETI will continue to monitor how the school sustains improvement.

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