

# PRIMARY INSPECTION



Education and Training  
Inspectorate

Victoria Primary School,  
Carrickfergus, County Antrim

Controlled, co-educational

Report of a Sustaining  
Improvement Inspection  
in May 2018



The Education and Training Inspectorate  
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# **Sustaining Improvement Inspection of Victoria Primary School, Carrickfergus, County Antrim (301-3330)**

## **Introduction**

The previous inspection in September 2013, evaluated the overall effectiveness of Victoria Primary School as very good<sup>1</sup>. Since the last inspection, a new principal and an acting vice-principal have been appointed. The enrolment within the primary school has decreased from 452 to 388 children over a four-year period; attendance has increased steadily over the last two years. The nursery unit will operate at full capacity with pre-school children from September 2018 following a period when younger children were admitted. There has been an increase in the number of children with complex additional needs. A sustaining improvement inspection (SII) was conducted on 24 May 2018.

## **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:

- the development of literacy and numeracy through play-based learning; and
- increasing the 'voice of the child' to take responsibility and contribute to decision making within the school.

## **Key findings**

- The children in the foundation stage benefit from well planned, high quality play-based learning experiences both indoors and outdoors. The children develop their own creative ideas, make independent choices, problem solve and apply their literacy and numeracy skills in meaningful contexts. The very effective child-centred learning and questioning by the teachers and classroom assistants maximise the learning during the play and the daily routines.
- A sample of children from key stage 2 spoke confidently and with pride about their many contributions to school life. They talked about the effective recycling in school being led by the Eco Committee, the satisfaction of teaching younger children about road safety within their role as Junior Road Safety Officers, how they support their friends as anti-bullying ambassadors and their contribution in redesigning aspects of the school environment in their role as youth governors. In addition, the feedback from focus groups of children to the leadership and management about learning and teaching has identified priorities and informed the actions being taken to bring about improvement.
- There are robust processes in place for self-evaluation and school development planning to sustain and effective improvement. The process is focused clearly on raising the outcomes for all of the children in a holistic and child-centred approach. There is meaningful consultation at all levels and an effective use of a wide range of both qualitative and quantitative data to identify strengths and key areas for development. The baseline position, actions to be taken and the impact of the actions are very clearly set out and communicated effectively to the parents and school community.

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<sup>1</sup> From September 2015, the overall effectiveness of a school evaluated previously 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. The sample of year six children reported that they feel happy and safe in school and know who to talk to if they have a concern.

## **Conclusion**

Victoria Primary School 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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