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*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

**Churchtown Primary School
Cookstown**

May 2014

FOLLOW-UP TO THE INSPECTION OF CHURCHTOWN PRIMARY SCHOOL, COOKSTOWN, CO TYRONE, BT80 9XA (501-6141)

The short inspection of Churchtown Primary School in September 2012 highlighted strengths in the pastoral care provision, the children's behaviour and dispositions to learning, the working relationships and the collegial approach to school improvement.

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

- to match the learning activities more closely to the children's abilities;
- to improve the provision for activity-based learning; and
- to develop a more strategic approach to school development planning in order to improve the learning experiences for, and the standards achieved by, the children.

The inspection conclusion in September 2012 was that:

In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by this school is satisfactory; the strengths outweigh the areas for improvement in the provision. The inspection has identified areas for improvement in standards, learning and teaching, and leadership and management which the school needs to address if the needs of all the children are to be met more effectively.

The Department of Education acknowledged the school's post inspection action plans and the positive response that the school had made, and planned to make, regarding the areas for improvement identified in the report. The Education and Training Inspectorate carried out two monitoring visits and a follow-up inspection in May 2014.

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

- the staff received support from the Southern Education and Library Board's Curriculum Advisory and Support Service in relation to leadership and management, literacy and numeracy; and from the North Eastern Education and Library Board in relation to play-based learning; and
- the staff visited other schools to observe and share effective practice.

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

- the well-planned learning activities are matched to the abilities of the children and supported by a range of appropriate resources, including information and communication technology. The staff build skilfully on the children's prior learning and set the work in purposeful, real life contexts which reflect the children's interest and experiences;
- the staff develop the children's thinking skills and personal capabilities in a coherent and progressive manner throughout the school and across the curriculum. As a result, the children collaborate well in pair and group work and manage their own learning successfully;

- the children's learning in literacy and numeracy is promoted effectively through play-based learning in the foundation stage and key stage one;
- the children express themselves articulately and confidently; they explain their strategies and respond sensitively to the views of others. From an early age, they are able to reflect on and improve their learning;
- the children's views are sought and acted upon to involve them in school improvement; they play a meaningful role in the ongoing development of the outdoor learning environment; and
- the school development planning process is underpinned by a culture of self-evaluation and focuses clearly on learning and teaching and improving further the standards achieved by the children.

In the areas inspected, the quality of the education provided by this school is now very good, the school is meeting very effectively the educational and pastoral needs of the learners; and has demonstrated its capacity for sustained self improvement.

It continues to be important that the employing authority, governors and the staff plan for, and manage, issues related to the sustainability of the school provision and school budget, in order to address the current and future needs of the children and the staff.

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