



*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**

**St Joseph's Primary School  
Strabane**

**June 2012**

## **FOLLOW-UP TO THE SHORT INSPECTION OF ST JOSEPH'S PRIMARY SCHOOL, STRABANE, CO TYRONE, BT82 0ER (203-2683)**

The short inspection of St Joseph's Primary School in February 2010 highlighted the following strengths: the strong community and family ethos in the school and the children's excellent behaviour; the good standards achieved by the majority of the children in English and most of the children in mathematics; the good opportunities provided to involve the parents in the children's learning; the good attention given to promoting healthy eating and physical activity; and the effective use made by the teachers of the local environment to enhance the children's learning experiences.

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

- for the Principal to identify clearer priorities for curriculum development and plan, monitor and evaluate these more effectively in order to raise further the standards the children attain; and
- for the teachers to develop further their planning and evaluations to provide learning opportunities that are differentiated to reflect more fully the wide range of the children's ages and abilities within the composite classes and to meet their needs more effectively.

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

- the Principal was not present at the time of the interim follow-up visits and the follow-up inspection;
- the composite classes have been reorganised to separate the foundation stage (FS) and key stage 1 children for literacy and numeracy;
- the acting-Principal has received appropriate training as the Designated Teacher for Child Protection;
- the school has included in their policies and procedures a clear code of conduct for staff and information to guide parents on how to raise a concern; and
- systematic whole-school approaches to the teaching of writing and to developing the children's problem-solving skills have been introduced throughout the school.

The Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) carried out two interim follow-up visits and a follow-up inspection in June 2012.

The action plan produced by the school in response to the inspection findings was of a satisfactory quality and was adjusted appropriately in the light of feedback given by the Inspectorate. The school's development plan has been adjusted in light of the inspection findings.

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

- on the basis of the evidence available at the time of the inspection the school now has comprehensive arrangements in place for safeguarding children which reflect the guidance issued by the Department of Education;

- the acting-Principal has worked diligently with all the staff and consulted widely to identify key priorities for curriculum development and there are associated action plans that target effectively improvements in the children's standards;
- there is a more strategic focus on improving the provision for literacy, numeracy and ICT and this is having a positive impact on the children's achievements and standards;
- the acting-Principal and the teachers have made a good start in developing a more collegial approach to school improvement with a broader range of processes now in place for self-evaluation including the monitoring of the children's written work and the more systematic tracking of their progress;
- the restructuring of the composite classes has increased opportunities for the teachers to give more focused and sustained support to the children; and
- the children benefit from the enhanced resources in the FS classroom and in the outdoor play areas, which are used effectively to develop their creativity and investigative skills.

The following issue requires further development:

- the teachers need to ensure that quality of the medium and short term planning is more consistent in identifying appropriate differentiation in the teaching and learning to meet the needs of all of the children.

## **CONCLUSION**

In the areas inspected the quality of the education provided by the school is now good. The organisation has important strengths in most of its educational and pastoral provision. The follow-up inspection has identified some aspects of the areas for improvement still to be addressed but equally the organisation has demonstrated the capacity to address these.

It will be important that the employing authority provides clarification on the roles and responsibilities in the school.

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