



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

**Harryville Primary School and Nursery Unit
Ballymena**

March 2016

FOLLOW-UP TO THE INSPECTION OF HARRYVILLE PRIMARY SCHOOL AND NURSERY UNIT, BALLYMENA, COUNTY ANTRIM, BT42 4BY (301-0781)

The original inspection¹ carried out in June 2011 concluded that the quality of education provided by the school was inadequate and in the nursery unit it was satisfactory. The school entered the formal intervention process on 22 June 2011. A follow-up inspection² (FUI) was conducted in October 2012. As a result, the quality of education provided by the school was evaluated as inadequate and in the nursery unit it was satisfactory. A second FUI³ was carried out in June 2014. The quality of education provided by the primary school was evaluated as satisfactory⁴ and the quality of education provided by the nursery unit was evaluated as good.

The school and the nursery unit exited the formal intervention process in July 2014.

The Department of Education (DE) indicated that a follow-up inspection would take place and that, in the interim, a follow-up visit would evaluate the progress being made in bringing about the necessary improvements.

The ETI carried out two monitoring visits during 2015 and conducted a third FUI on 7 March 2016.

The following are the most important changes that have taken place since the second FUI:

- the school enrolment rose to 122, including a notable increase in the number of children whose first language is not English;
- three additional teachers were trained in nurture approaches and the school disseminated the use of these strategies across all classes;
- the principal and staff completed further work in creating and updating a range of key policies and school development planning processes;
- the staff engaged in further professional development across aspects of literacy, numeracy, special educational needs and the use of assessment data to set targets for the children's learning; and
- the co-ordinators' roles were developed further to include regular monitoring and evaluation of key aspects of the provision and the standards achieved by the children.

Key findings

- The implementation of nurturing strategies has improved the children's dispositions to learn and their aspirations for what they can achieve. The children show increased confidence and willingness in sharing and explaining their reasoning with one another and with adults, for example, in taking greater responsibility for their own learning in group work and in problem-solving activities.

¹ For further details, see the key strengths and areas for improvement reported originally in the Report of an Inspection of Harryville Primary School and Nursery Unit in June 2011.

² For further details, see the key strengths and areas for improvement in the Report of a Follow-Up Inspection in Harryville Primary School and Nursery Unit in October 2012.

³ For further details, see the key strengths and areas for improvement in the Report of a Follow-Up Inspection in Harryville Primary School and Nursery Unit in June 2014.

⁴ In 2015-16, the ETI changed the conclusions for the overall effectiveness of a school. The equivalent conclusion would be the school needs to address important areas for improvement in the interest of all the learners.

- A majority of the children attain standards in line with their ability in English and in mathematics. Most of the children can talk more confidently about their mathematical understanding, using appropriate mathematical language. The current focus on the development of problem solving is enhancing the children's flexibility in mathematical thinking and perseverance in completing investigations. The quality and progression of the writing in the children's books has improved further across a widened range of forms; the content, accuracy and presentation of their writing are now more consistent across the school.
- The staff have revised further the format for the short-term planning; the evaluations of the children's learning are used appropriately to inform future planning.
- The co-ordinators have embedded further the strategies for monitoring and evaluation to review the impact of the improvement actions on the quality and extent of the children's learning. The staff's improved use of data and their collaborative approach to quality assuring the children's work in English and mathematics is contributing to better progression in the children's learning.
- The parents and the local community have greater involvement in the life and work of the school. A representative of the board of governors reported that the school's reputation in, and support from, the local community have improved significantly.
- There is improved strategic leadership and accountability at all levels; the senior leadership is working more effectively to ensure that all children overcome their barriers to learning and raise further the standards they achieve in English and mathematics.
- Almost all of the teaching observed throughout the follow- up process was good or better; in one-half of the lessons, the teaching was highly effective. The teachers have high expectations of what the children can do and plan engaging, learning activities that are well matched to their needs and interests.

Overall effectiveness

Harryville Primary School has demonstrated the capacity to identify and bring about improvement in the interest of all learners. The ETI will continue to monitor how the school sustains improvement, in particular, the continued focus on raising the children's attainment in English and mathematics.

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