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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

**Victoria Primary School
Ballyhalbert**

September 2014

FOLLOW-UP TO THE INSPECTION OF VICTORIA PRIMARY SCHOOL, BALLYHALBERT, BT22 1DQ (401-1488)

The original inspection of Victoria Primary School in November 2012 highlighted strengths in the children's exemplary behaviour and their positive attitude to their learning.

It also highlighted the following areas for improvement, which were the need:

- to review and ensure greater equity in the responsibilities of the curricular leaders, in order to prioritise and implement, in a strategic and manageable manner, the actions to bring about sustained improvement; and
- for the teachers to come to an agreed understanding of what constitutes effective learning and teaching, in order to raise further the children's attainment in literacy and numeracy.

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

- the school received staff development and support from the South Eastern Education and Library Board's Curriculum Advisory and Support Service (CASS);
- the staff completed in-house training and shared good practice;
- the staff adopted a more collegiate approach to the development of whole school written planning and this is monitored systematically by the coordinators;
- the starting time for the school day has been brought forward which provides better opportunities for the children to engage in the learning process and the staff to make more effective use of all of the available time for learning;
- the transition period for the year one children has been shortened which allows the teacher to build more effectively on the children's previous learning experiences; and
- the principal has worked tirelessly to build up good relationships and better communication with the parents and the wider community

The Education and Training Inspectorate carried out two monitoring visits and a follow-up inspection on 15 September 2014.

The action plans received by the Department of Education following the inspection were of a very good quality and were adjusted appropriately in the light of feedback given by the Inspectorate during the interim visits. The school's development plan was amended in light of the inspection findings.

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

- roles and responsibilities within the school have been clarified and there are improved opportunities for the co-ordinators to monitor and evaluate their respective areas of responsibility;

- the literacy and numeracy co-ordinators and teams benefitted significantly from the support provided by CASS; they provide very effective leadership, including guiding the teachers well through whole-school staff development and monitoring carefully the developments and improvements in the provision;
- there is a more systematic and collaborative approach to whole school planning;
- there is very effective collation and analysis of performance data to inform teaching and learning;
- there is evidence of improved standards achieved by most of the children in literacy and numeracy;
- the quality of most of the teaching in the lessons, observed during the follow-up process, ranged from very good to outstanding;
- the staff give a high priority to active learning in all classes; the teachers have high expectations and use an appropriate range of activities, teaching strategies and effective questioning to meet the needs of all the children;
- the collegiate approach to school improvement since the inspection, supported well by the excellent leadership of the principal; and
- the very good opportunities for the children to take responsibility for their learning and to contribute to aspects of school improvement.

CONCLUSION

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

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