

2 February 2011

Ms V Fitt  
Headteacher  
Ms A Nutter  
Executive Headteacher  
Houndsfield Primary School  
Ripon Road  
London  
N9 7RE

Dear Ms Fitt

### **Ofsted 2010–11 survey inspection programme: nurture groups**

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of your staff and pupils, during my visit with Jane Wotherspoon HMI on 18 January 2011 as part of our survey on the use of nurture groups for pupils who are vulnerable to underachieving.

The visit provided valuable information which will contribute to a national report. Published reports are likely to list the names of the contributors or contributing institutions but individuals and institutions will not be identified in the main text without your consent.

This letter briefly summarises our discussion at the end of the visit.

### **Strengths of the nurture group provision**

- Senior leaders believe that effective nurture group provision is a very important aspect of the school's work with vulnerable pupils. In particular, they have clear plans for extending the current provision to support families which they believe will strengthen the nurture group work. This vision for the future is supported by an honest evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of the different approaches to provision at Key Stages 1 and 2.
- Nurture group provision takes place within the context of a caring school which knows its pupils well. In Key Stage 1, there is full-time provision for five pupils in Rainbow Class while, at Key Stage 2, a 'well-being team' of staff provides individual and small-group support across all mainstream classes. This support is tailored to meet the different needs of the pupils and may be provided within the mainstream class or in a small withdrawal group. All nurture group and the well-being team staff are committed and work hard to provide support.
- Monitoring and assessment are regular and include the academic progress of pupils as well as their social and emotional development. The records

show that most pupils make progress as a result of the support they receive. School leaders are aware of the need to sustain this progress when pupils return to their mainstream classes.

- Well-considered reintegration procedures enable pupils to make a smooth transition from Rainbow Class to mainstream classes. Pupils who continue to receive support at Key Stage 2 are very positive about how this has helped them feel happier in school and, in turn, has improved their work. The well-being staff provide an effective model of adult relationships which encourages the pupils to trust adults and to learn.
- Parents of pupils who currently attend the nurture group are positive about their children's experience and progress. They feel that their children are happier to come to school since being in Rainbow Class.

**Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:**

- reviewing the amount of time that pupils in Rainbow Class spend learning and socialising with their peers to ensure that they have more opportunities to develop and sustain wider friendships
- ensuring that their curriculum has sufficient breadth and balance to provide the academic building blocks for pupils' future progress in mainstream classes
- providing parents with more regular but informal contact with staff in Rainbow Class so that they are clearer about their children's progress and can pass on any of their concerns
- reviewing how the range of support and intervention provision in the school can be brought together to provide a flexible but coherent approach to meeting the needs of a greater number of pupils.

I hope that this visit has been useful in the further development of this aspect of the school's work.

As I explained previously, a copy of this letter will be published on the Ofsted website. It may be used to inform decisions about any future inspection. A copy of this letter is also being sent to your local authority.

Yours sincerely

**Maureen York**  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**