

26 January 2011

Ms M Igoe  
Headteacher  
Columbia Primary School  
Columbia Road  
Bethnal Green  
London  
E2 7RG

Dear Ms Igoe

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

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of your staff and children, during our visit on 11 January 2011 as part of our survey of 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 their consent.

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

### **Strengths of the nurture group (School House) provision**

- The school has a strong commitment to the School House provision, which has become an integral part of a broader range of support for pupils. The provision is well regarded by children, staff and families.
- Parents and carers interviewed are very positive about the difference that the School House makes to their children. They understand why their child attends the School House and feel well informed about their children's progress.
- The School House provides support for identified children for three mornings or three afternoons each week, typically for two or three terms, spending the rest of their time with their class group. This is consistent with its aims.
- Each School House group is staffed by a senior teacher and a support assistant. These senior teachers also work with mainstream classes at other times during the week and this gives them a close understanding of

the children's needs. This arrangement also helps informal communication between staff about children's progress.

- The school's culture of ongoing professional dialogue and debate ensures that information is regularly shared between School House and mainstream staff.
- The same targets are used in the School House and in the classroom, which provides continuity in children's learning. Children, staff and families understand these targets well and use them effectively.
- The case studies provided by the school demonstrate that the School House is successful in developing the skills children need to learn more effectively in lessons.

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

- refining systems for monitoring children's social and emotional development to gain a clearer picture of their progress in the School House
- considering how to extend further the opportunities provided in the School House for children to work collaboratively.

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

**Heather Yaxley**  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**