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24 March 2011

Ms Julia Burns
The Headteacher
Mowlem Primary School
Mowlem Street
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Bethnal Green
London
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Dear Ms Burns

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools: monitoring inspection of Mowlem Primary School

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 23 March 2011, for the time you gave to our phone discussions and for the information which you provided before and during the inspection. Could you please convey my thanks to the Chair of the Governing Body, the local authority's Head of Achievement Birth to 11, and the pupils and staff I spoke to during the inspection.

As a result of the inspection on 28 and 29 September 2009, the school was asked to address the most important areas for improvement which are set out in the annex to this letter.

Having considered all the evidence I am of the opinion that at this time the school has made

satisfactory progress in making improvements.

and

satisfactory progress in demonstrating a better capacity for sustained improvement.

In 2010, attainment improved compared to the previous year and pupils demonstrated stronger progress in their learning. Pupils' attainment increased significantly in mathematics and the proportion of pupils who gained Level 5 in this key subject rose to an above-average position. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities attained as well as other pupils. In lessons seen, the pupils made varying levels of progress. Data indicate that Year 6 pupils are on track to achieve

their attainment targets this year, which are lower than 2010 although sufficiently challenging. Attainment in writing is being addressed throughout the school and pupils are making better gains in their writing in most year groups especially Year 4. In lessons seen, pupils worked well in pairs and in groups, making good use of the opportunity to extend their learning through focused discussions. These opportunities are having a sound impact on developing pupils' speaking and writing skills.

Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is satisfactory and sometimes good. Pupils welcome the initiatives to improve behaviour in the playground which is having a positive effect on reducing poor behaviour.

Pupils' attendance is average and the school is making good efforts to reduce the proportion of pupils who are persistently absent.

Teachers are using opportunities well to develop pupils' oracy skills. In the stronger lessons, teachers injected good pace into pupils' learning activities. Practical activities featured strongly in many lessons. For example, pupils developed their writing skills from their investigation of local amenities and services in their community. Some pupils say they have more opportunities to speed read and develop their writing. In some lessons, teachers assessed pupils' progress quickly, enabling them to move on well in their tasks. One good example was seen where the teacher and a teaching assistant modelled a piece of descriptive writing which allowed pupils to effectively build on their understanding and application of connectives and adjectives. Pupils are informally setted by ability in subjects, although this does not always result in more able pupils being challenged as well. Some marked work seen was of a good quality that clearly identified how well pupils were achieving. However, the quality of marked work is variable and teachers are not consistently identifying what pupils need to do to improve their work.

Actions to improve the quality of teaching have resulted in some improvement. The proportion of good lessons has risen slightly and plans are in place to improve weaker teaching. Teaching is not yet consistently good. Leaders are assessing the quality of lessons regularly. However, action points to improve individual teachers' practice are not monitored effectively. In addition, they are not time bound and therefore improvements are slow. Action plans identify the key priorities and include specific timeframes for improvements to pupils' outcomes. The headteacher has a satisfactory understanding of the progress that has been made against these action points. However, the multiple action plans make it difficult for school leaders to have a complete overview of the full impact of the actions taken. The key responsibilities and accountabilities of other senior leaders are unclear, and this is hindering the rate at which school actions are progressing.

The local authority is providing good support for the school to improve teaching and to build capacity at senior leadership level.

I hope that you have found the inspection helpful in promoting improvement in your school. This letter will be posted on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Samantha Morgan-Price
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in September 2009.

- Improve teaching so that it is consistently good by the end of the academic year through:
 - ensuring that teachers make good use of assessment information to set work at the correct level, matching the ability of all the pupils
 - making sure that pupils understand, through explanation, feedback and marking what they are expected to do to succeed in and improve their work.
- Improve the rigour of planning and monitoring by ensuring that school development plan targets are specific and measurable. This is to be completed by the end of December 2009