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3 July 2007

Mr Gary Boyd  
The Headteacher  
Southwold Primary School  
Detmold Road  
London  
E5 9NL

Dear Mr Boyd

### Ofsted Monitoring of Schools with Notice to Improve

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when Usha Sahni HMI and I inspected your school on 26 June, for the time you gave to our phone discussion and for the information which you provided before and during our visit. I would also like to thank the pupils we met, formally and informally, who were most courteous and helpful.

This letter will be posted on the Ofsted website. Please inform the Regional Inspection Service Provider of any factual inaccuracies within 24 hours of its receipt.

As a result of the inspection on December 2006, the school was asked to:

- Improve standards and achievement in English, mathematics and science.
- Improve the overall quality of teaching and learning in Years 3 to 6 to ensure the needs of all pupils are fully met.
- Enable teachers to achieve consistency in how they assess and record pupils' attainments, in order to inform their planning and to help in the tracking of pupils' progress.

The inspection report also judged the curriculum not to be effective in catering for the needs of all learners as it does not offer enough opportunities for more able pupils to excel.

Having considered all the evidence I am of the opinion that at this time the school is making satisfactory progress in addressing the issues for improvement and in raising the pupils' achievements.

### Achievement and standards

Although attainment remains well below the national average, there are signs of improvement. Higher staff stability and morale, together with the success of

measures to improve behaviour, have had a positive impact on learning. After some uncertainty about the accuracy of the data, it is now clear that pupils enter and leave the Foundation Stage with below average levels of attainment. Thereafter, results of recent teacher assessments show pupils making better progress in English, mathematics and science in Years 5 and 6 than at the time of the last inspection. The standard of pupils' written work is still low, however, and too many do not take enough care over presentation.

### Teaching and learning in Years 3 to 6

While there have also been some improvements in the quality of teaching, too much is still only satisfactory. Teachers are not yet planning or organising lessons so that pupils of all levels of attainment are appropriately challenged. If underachievement at Southwold is to be tackled successfully, the quality of teaching overall needs to be at least good. At present, the rate of advance in this key area is too slow and the monitoring and management of the performance of teachers is not sufficiently rigorous. Judgements made about teaching are not focused enough on the impact teachers are having on pupils' progress.

### Assessment

Systems for tracking and monitoring pupils' progress are much better. Teachers now have a much surer grasp of how well pupils are doing against national benchmarks and this has facilitated a number of successful interventions to stop identified pupils from falling behind. However, assessment information is not yet being used enough to inform teachers' planning. Marking is regular, but not of consistent quality either in its accuracy or helpfulness.

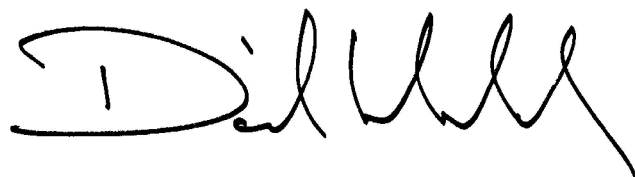
### Curriculum

The curriculum is being extensively revised for the autumn. While present arrangements are satisfactory, they still do not provide adequately for higher-attaining pupils. Nevertheless, the school offers a number of additional options, such as the Saturday school, and there are booster classes for those pupils who need them.

The headteacher and his senior team know the school's strengths and weaknesses. Over the past 12 months they have succeeded in stabilising the school and put in place a number of measures which are slowly beginning to turn it round. The Learning Trust has fulfilled the obligations for support laid out in the statement of action, although the school would have preferred more specialised support more broadly spread across year groups. The school and the Trust need now to focus much more sharply on key issues raised in the last Ofsted report in order for progress to be made with the degree of urgency required.

I hope that you have found the visit helpful in promoting improvement in your school.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. Hornbrook". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "D" and a long, sweeping tail.

David Hornbrook  
Her Majesty's Inspector