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27 November 2007

Mrs Liz Hills  
The Executive Headteacher  
Eveline Lowe Primary School  
Marlborough Grove  
London  
SE1 5JT

Dear Mrs Hills

### SPECIAL MEASURES: MONITORING INSPECTION OF EVELINE LOWE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Following my visit to your school on 20 November 2007, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector to confirm the inspection findings.

The visit was the second monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures in February 2007. The monitoring inspection report is attached and the main judgements are set out below.

Progress since being subject to special measures – satisfactory

Progress since previous monitoring inspection – good, because the school now has established governance and management systems which are appropriate to promote further improvement.

Newly qualified teachers may not be appointed.

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

I am copying this letter and the monitoring inspection report to the Secretary of State, the chair of the Board of Governors and Director of Children's Services for Southwark.

Yours sincerely

Robin Hammerton  
HM Inspector

## SPECIAL MEASURES: MONITORING OF EVELINE LOWE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Report from the second monitoring inspection: 20 November 2007

### Evidence

HMI observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with the executive headteacher, members of staff, pupils including the school council, the chair of governors and a representative of the local authority (LA).

### Context

On 1 October, the school entered into full federation with a nearby primary school, with the headteacher of that school acting as executive headteacher of both schools, under a single governing body. Plans for the permanent management structure of the federation are currently under consultation. These changes mean that the impasse described in the July monitoring letter, which was making progress in improving the school very difficult, no longer exists.

### Achievement and standards

As the school anticipated, unvalidated results from the 2007 national assessments show some improvement from 2006 in all subjects at both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. However, standards remain significantly lower than the national average at both these key stages. In the Foundation Stage also, standards are too low, especially in language development. Pupils' progress across the school, whilst improved, remains too slow and too few pupils reach the higher attainment levels. There are some differences in the achievement of different groups of pupils, which the school has correctly identified. However, these are not major. The school's improved assessment data indicate that there have been some small but notable further improvements in pupils' progress this term, particularly in Key Stage 2.

Progress on the areas for improvement identified by the inspection in February 2007:

- Raise achievement in English, mathematics and science – satisfactory

### Personal development and well-being

This is a caring school and pupils continue to be friendly, generally well-behaved and keen to take responsibility. HMI observed some deterioration in behaviour only in a few Key Stage 1 lessons where the teaching lost some focus or pace. Pupils are pleased about the improvements this term. They comment that 'the school is getting better because we are rewarded for improving'. A new house points system is popular whilst the recent introduction of a different reading scheme has boosted the self-esteem of many pupils who are achieving greater success. Consequently, most pupils enjoy school although attendance remains well below the national and local averages. The school is developing closer links with a new educational welfare officer to address this.

The assembly programme is developing well, effectively promoting togetherness and learning about moral and other issues. This is helped by the active involvement of local clergy. There is, however, scope for further spiritual development and reflection

time within assemblies. As at the last monitoring inspection, there are some missed opportunities for pupils' multi-cultural development.

### Quality of provision

Joint planning within the two schools of the federation along with careful monitoring and well-organised training have led to more consistent approaches to teaching and learning across the school. Assessment data are now much better organised and readily available to staff. There has been some early progress in the use of this data to provide work that matches all pupils' needs in Key Stage 2, where better marking and pupils' knowledge of their personal curricular targets are supporting the improved achievement. In Key Stage 1, whilst most pupils engage in the tasks set, lessons proceed at too slow a pace and not all pupils are sufficiently challenged. Higher attainers need more difficult work to improve their progress. In the nursery, pupils learn to co-operate and work and play independently in a better learning environment. However, insufficient attention is paid to using assessment records when planning activities.

In some lessons observed across the school, checking by staff of pupils' understanding was not rapid enough. This left some pupils making repeated mistakes for too long and hindered others in moving their learning forward. Staff feedback to pupils is not always clear enough to show individuals or groups of pupils how to improve their work. The deployment of teaching assistants lacks consistency. They make a strong contribution to a new reading initiative and in some lessons are well deployed to help specific pupils; but, in other lessons, they are passive and under-used.

The curriculum has been suitably adapted to bring added emphasis to literacy and numeracy. However, members of staff are clear that it is important to retain curriculum breadth and creativity.

Progress on the areas for improvement identified by the inspection in February 2007:

- Make better use of assessment in lessons in order to accelerate pupils' progress and raise standards – inadequate, though with some early signs of progress.

### Leadership and management

The full federation provides the school with a much stronger foundation for further improvement. The new governing body, shared by the two schools involved, is well organised and perceptively led by its chair. A good committee structure has been quickly established which is appropriate for ensuring effective decision making in the current circumstances.

The executive headteacher provides unfaltering and rigorous leadership. She is clear in her expectations for the short and long terms and ensures that the school evaluates itself correctly and honestly. For example, the strengths and weaknesses in teaching are precisely identified. This provides a strong basis for further improvement. The executive headteacher is loyally and very effectively supported by senior colleagues working across both schools.

Staff strongly welcome the changes this term and are pleased to have the opportunities to work with colleagues from the other school in the federation. At present, rightly, several systems and structures from that school are being implemented at Eveline Lowe. This is bringing some immediate improvements and greater consistency of practice. However, despite their overall satisfaction, members of staff are concerned that the expertise within the Eveline Lowe team should not be under-used. This important point is understood by senior managers and the chair of governors.

The governing body, working with the executive headteacher and LA, has proposed a new staffing structure for the federation. This is well thought out and fit for purpose. A fair recruitment process is planned with a view to having the new arrangements in place for January 2008. The school recognises that the effective implementation of this structure will be vital to the future success of the schools and that it will need to be evaluated regularly and carefully.

Progress on the areas for improvement identified by the inspection in February 2007:

- Improve the quality of monitoring and self-evaluation to provide a more accurate picture of teaching, learning, standards and achievement – good
- Ensure that the new development plan is implemented effectively to quicken the pace of improvement – satisfactory progress; this issue is now dealt with and progress against it will not be evaluated on future visits.

#### External support

The LA continues to provide good support, with its most important school improvement functions being split between two officers. The newly appointed school improvement partner takes the more formal role and has provided an incisive and useful commentary on the school's progress this term. This supports the school's self-evaluation well. An experienced senior adviser provides very useful day-to-day and strategic assistance. With the executive headteacher, she ensures very effectively that the school's plans are rigorous, with clear and appropriate objectives and timescales. The work of LA advisers and consultants is well-targeted and effective in supporting current improvements.

#### Priorities for further improvement

- Ensure that the effectiveness of the federation management structure is regularly evaluated and that it successfully brings about improvement across the school. (This will become a new area for development under the leadership and management section and will be specifically evaluated at the next monitoring inspection.)
- During lessons, ensure that staff monitor more robustly and efficiently the progress of pupils towards learning objectives and targets in order to provide better feedback to help pupils improve their work and avoid repeated mistakes.
- In Key Stage 1 in particular, increase the pace of lessons and raise the level of challenge for pupils, especially those who are potentially higher attaining.