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Ms Virginia Fraher
Principal
London Fields Primary School
Westgate Street
London
E8 3RL

Dear Ms Fraher

SPECIAL MEASURES: MONITORING INSPECTION OF LONDON FIELDS PRIMARY SCHOOL

Following my visit with Maria Coles, Additional Inspector to your school on 15 January 2008, 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 March 2007. The monitoring inspection report is attached and the main judgements are set out below.

Progress since being subject to special measures – good

Progress since previous monitoring inspection – satisfactory

Newly qualified teachers may be appointed from September 2008 up to a maximum of three.

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 to the Secretary of State, the chair of the IEB and the Executive Director of Standards & School Effectiveness for Hackney.

Yours sincerely

Adrian Lyons
H M Inspector

Report from the second monitoring inspection: 15 January 2008

Evidence

Inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with the executive principal, the headteacher, the chair of the Interim Executive Board, representatives from the learning trust and senior and middle leaders.

Context

There have been no significant changes since the last monitoring visit.

Achievement and standards

Recently established systems of internal monitoring show some improvement in standards and achievement. However a legacy of underachievement has led to too many pupils working below national expectations for each age group. Progress needs to accelerate sharply in order to close the gap.

There was no specific area for improvement identified by the inspection in March 2007 for this section

Personal development and well-being

It is clear that the positive transformation seen at the time of the last monitoring visit has been maintained. Harmonious relationships among pupils, and between staff and children are evident in lessons and around the school. Good behaviour management systems were observed in operation leading to the avoidance of confrontations and enjoyable lessons.

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

- Improve behaviour to ensure that all pupils enjoy school and are safe from harm or harassment – good

Quality of provision

The focus of this visit was on the quality of provision in the Foundation Stage. The environment is safe and secure and the children are well supervised. They are happy and enjoy coming to school and demonstrate positive relationships with the adults who teach and look after them. The classrooms and outdoor area for the Reception classes are very small and this limits the number and range of activities that can be prepared for children. There is evidence of a good balance between child initiated independent activities and those which are adult led. However, not all activities demonstrate high quality and purposeful learning opportunities.

There have been improvements in the cohesion and planning of provision in all three classes. However the leadership acknowledges that further improvement is needed

so that the Reception age children can build on what they have learned in Nursery. The consistent use of assessments is now helping to better inform teachers of what children can do and what they need to learn next.

There is evidence of the inculcation of good behaviour so that all children, however new, follow classroom routines and interact well with their peers. Most children take turns, put their hands up to answer questions and help with tidying up equipment. Teaching is satisfactory overall and is sometimes good.

Standards on entry to the school are below national expectations especially in communication, language and literacy and in personal and social development. The current cohort of children demonstrate very low levels of speaking and listening and many are at an early stage of English acquisition. Current assessment shows that some progress has been made in acquisition of sounds and letters due to the use of a new phonics programme, but it is too early to see the long term impact of this on standards of literacy.

Overall in the school, inspectors were able to confirm the school's view that teaching and learning are satisfactory with small proportions of good and inadequate teaching. In order to bring about the step change in pupil progress required there is a need to eradicate inadequate teaching and significantly raise the proportion of good teaching. The provision for the large proportion of pupils with English as an additional language is unsatisfactory.

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

- Improve the teaching to raise standards in English, mathematics and science, and ensure that pupils of all abilities achieve as well as they can – satisfactory
- Improve the curriculum, teaching and care provided for children in the Foundation Stage – satisfactory

Leadership and management

The executive principal, headteacher and senior leaders are an effective team driving forward improvement. Since the last monitoring visit, senior leaders have been joined by middle leaders in forming a coherent leadership team. Senior leaders are less distracted from their strategic role by having to manage operational matters. Middle leaders have been coached by advisors from the Learning Trust. They are beginning to take on responsibilities such as talking to the rest of the staff about their subject.

There has been a lot of good work in giving classroom teachers information on their pupils to improve teaching and learning. Teachers are beginning to use this data and as a result, now have a clearer understanding of national expectations in different subjects. However, this knowledge does not yet consistently inform teachers' planning for different groups of pupils. Assessments are now regular and used as a basis for termly 'raising attainment meetings'. These meetings between senior leaders and class teachers identify pupils making less than expected progress. This information affects planning and the deployment of resources.

Good monitoring systems which combine classroom observation with the monitoring of books and data analysis, ensure that senior leaders now know the school well. Robust action continues to be taken to raise the quality of education in the school. Since the last monitoring visit staffing has been stable and the leadership of the Foundation Stage has been resolved through a recent appointment.

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

- Improve the quality of leadership at all levels by establishing clear priorities for improvement that take account of the views of pupils and parents – good

External support

The Learning Trust continues to monitor and support improvement in the school. The trust has been instrumental in strengthening the senior leadership. Middle leaders are partnered with advisory teachers. The trust has ambitious plans for the school's removal from a category of concern and is committed to on-going support for the school beyond its removal.

Priorities for further improvement

- Improve the consistency and quality of provision in the Foundation Stage.
- Improve the quality of teaching to good overall so as to accelerate progress and raise standards.
- Improve provision for students for whom English is an additional language.