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Ms Wynne
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Dear Ms Wynne

Ofsted survey inspection programme – Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) - three year longitudinal survey.

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my final visit on 25 and 26 June to look at work in ESD.

The visit provided valuable information which will contribute to our national evaluation and reporting. Published reports are likely to list the names of the contributing institutions, but individual institutions will not be identified in the main text. All feedback letters will be published on the Ofsted website at the end of each half-term. This is a follow up monitoring visit which is intended to assess the progress the school has made in developing ESD throughout the school.

The evidence used to inform the judgements made included: interviews with staff, pupils and parents, scrutiny of relevant documentation, observation of four lessons, a class council meeting, the 'green' summer fair as well as the school 'outdoor' and 'indoor' environment.

Since the last visit, the school has continued to make good progress in developing sustainability throughout the school and in the local community. There has been clear progress made against the action points from the last visit. The overall effectiveness of provision continues to be outstanding.

Achievement and standards

Achievement and standards in ESD continue to be good overall with some aspects outstanding.

- Pupils have a firm grasp and understanding about the issues linked to sustainability and the need to lead more sustainable lives. They are able to articulate their concerns based on a clear understanding of

these issues. There is, however, orthodoxy to some of the answers which would be challenged through increased enquiry and debate.

- The most able pupils are more aware of the intricacies of the various issues. For example in discussing the ethics of Fair Trade these pupils did not just state the obvious fact that the farmer gets a better income. They were able to explain the impact on other individuals in the chain and develop the idea of fair shares for all.
- In the main, girls tend to articulate and reason better than the boys. Girls tend to be clearer speakers and communicators.
- The behaviour of the pupils is good and has been further improved. Pupils are keen to show that they can be responsible and have taken the new 'traffic light' behaviour policy to heart. As one Year 5 pupil identified 'he felt he had let the school down' by being issued with a card and he 'needed to make an extra effort during the afternoon to get his 'green' status back'.
- Pupils thrive and relish being given responsibility. This was particularly exemplified by their mature attitudes during the 'green' summer fair where pupils designed, organised and managed many of the activities.
- Very positive attitudes and values are being nurtured throughout the school. Parents and pupils identify that the care culture is an integral part of the school ethos. This 'care' culture was exemplified by an observed dialogue among pupils discussing how the older ones can help and support the younger pupils during lunch and break times.
- Pupils are interested in making a difference within their community. They are aggrieved when issues arise which impact on their environment and quality of life. This has been translated into several campaigns such as the need for traffic calming outside the school as well as anger about the increased numbers of cigarette ends littering the pavements near the school following the ban on smoking indoors in public places.
- Pupil voice is developing well. The children are aware that they have both rights and responsibilities as democratic citizens. They are passionate about certain issues and are confident that they can make a difference. They are beginning to think beyond the immediate boundaries of their school. For example, in a debate at Camden Town Hall, they were the only school to look at improving the community environment and not just their school environment.
- Pupils make very effective use of writing, especially persuasive writing, to engage with issues. Since these are real issues, the pupils see the point of the writing. The learning is relevant and maintains pupils' interest with resultant high quality outcomes.
- Very good use is made of a limited outdoor environment to encourage pupils to stay healthy. Pupils enjoy the opportunity to let off steam at break times and do so in a sensible and considerate manner. They understand the value of eating fresh food and enjoy the opportunity to grow their own vegetables and fruit in the small school garden.

Quality of teaching and learning of ESD

The quality of teaching and learning about sustainability is good overall with some aspects which are outstanding.

- Planning is detailed with clear links made to where the context of the lesson provides opportunities to develop learning about sustainability.
- Teachers have excellent working relationships with their classes and these are managed well. Pupils are very clear about routines and structures.
- The quality of the learning about sustainability is good because the greater majority of pupils have a good understanding of the need to look after the environment and to lead sustainable lives.
- Pupils are applying their learning about living sustainable lives. This was well exemplified by their suggestion, through their council meetings, that school rucksacks should be Fair Trade rucksacks.
- Very good use is made of teaching and specialist support to engage all pupils. Teaching assistants are very unobtrusive in their support, frequently clarifying points and ensuring that all pupils, including those with learning or language difficulties, can engage with the task set by the teacher.
- Tasks set can be challenging, requiring pupils to think and make connections. In a lesson where pupils were studying the East End of London, the changing use of a building over a couple of hundred years from church, to synagogue, to mosque, engaged pupils in thinking about the richness and complexities of diversity of an area close to where they live.
- Children are very comfortable learning together. In all observed lessons pupils were very good collaborative learners. They are used to working with their 'talk buddies' and there are many positive strategies being used by the teachers to engage pupils and encourage them to share ideas.

Quality of curriculum

The quality of the ESD curriculum continues to be developed and remains outstanding.

- The well planned curriculum, linked to detailed teacher planning, ensures that pupils progressively build on their knowledge and understanding about sustainability. The frequent reinforcement of ideas ensures good learning about key issues and the need to lead sustainable lives.
- The school makes very good use of the outdoor environment to engage pupils in their learning. This includes making them aware they are living in a large city. They are taught to stay safe in their urban environment but also to appreciate the diversity of their surroundings.

- Pupils have been given a raised awareness of what is around them and this has broadened their experiences. In addition, visits outside London, for example to the partner school in Derbyshire, have introduced pupils to a rural environment which was alien to many of them. This has created a sense of awe and wonder and a realisation that there is more to the world around them than bricks and concrete. Visits to the seaside also build up their understanding of the diversity of physical environments closer to home.
- The curriculum is used well to empower pupils to engage in debate about local issues. Pupils are familiar with the democratic process and frequently contribute to local debates, including in the nearby Camden Town Hall. Pupils are aware of the need to be active citizens if they are to influence local change.
- The curriculum is well suited to the children's needs. It is a relevant curriculum which engages their interest and celebrates the cultural and religious diversity of the school. Issues linked to sustainability add relevance to what the children are learning.
- The curriculum is enriched by making effective use of specific teacher and teaching assistant skills. For example, a teaching assistant, with specific skills in art, led a lesson where pupils explored texture and at the same time produced art work linked to their view of a sustainable world.

Leadership and management of ESD

Leadership and management of ESD continue to be outstanding.

- Sustainability is central to the life of the school and is seen as being strategic to the development and growth of the school.
- The leadership of the school has an ongoing commitment to ensure that the school is a sustainable school, not only in what is taught but in what can be achieved by the pupils themselves to improve both the school and local environment.
- Management has engaged well with the agenda identified in previous inspection visits and ensured real progress has occurred in terms of developing the school council and especially community links.
- The school council is now more clearly part of the decision making structure of the school. Communication between class and school councils is good and pupils are aware of the participatory process. Meetings are now part of the timetable and curriculum structure and are seen as being important. All pupils' contributions are respected and valued.
- Recycling, reusing and especially reducing is part of the fabric and way of life in the school. As a result the school has minimised waste in many areas, especially energy and water. There is also a strong ongoing commitment to ethical purchasing wherever possible.
- Although the school building is not constructed to be particularly environmentally friendly, the school has gone some way in reducing

their carbon footprint in line with its sustainable policy. There is a real strong commitment to managing the environment in as sustainable way as possible.

- The pupils look after and respect their environment. It is litter free and pupils have high expectations.
- The school is a very inclusive community. Parents hold the school in high esteem and unanimously identified the care agenda as a central to what the school does well. They are appreciative of the way the school is working hard to raise the aspirations of all their children. The links with the community and with parents are a real strength.
- There is increased involvement from the school community. Fathers, as well as mothers, now take a more active part in the day to day life of the school. A parents' action group meets regularly and some members are also involved in cultivating an organic fruit and vegetable garden on the school premises.
- The school's work toward community cohesion is particularly strong. Good links have been established with the London Islamic Network for the Environment (LINE) which resulted in strong support for the 'Power Down' campaign and particularly engaged Muslim parents. The pledges made by many families has led to increased awareness at home and encouraged more families to try to lead more sustainable lives.
- The school is becoming very effective at increasing understanding amongst members of the wider school community and is building bridges between the diverse cultural and religious groups in the school. For example, despite being a mainly Muslim school, the local Anglican priest is welcomed as being part of the school community.
- The school's involvement with groups such as 'Camden Sustainable Schools' and the 'London Sustainable Schools Forum' has been vital in influencing wider decision making. The school is taking a lead in the dissemination and sharing of good practice.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- continuing to develop the school council to become a real change agent, not only in the school but also in the local community
- opening up the debate in more lessons to encourage pupils to look at evidence judgmentally to enable them to debate real issues from a variety of viewpoints rather than from an expected perspective
- continuing to work towards making the school a real hub of the community with sustainability at its core
- engaging boys' interests better by introducing them to positive male role models whenever possible.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop ESD in the school.

As I explained in my previous letter, a copy of this letter will be sent to your local authority and will be published on Ofsted's website. It will also be available to the team for your next institutional inspection.

Yours sincerely

Leszek Iwaskow
Her Majesty's Inspector of Schools
Specialist Adviser for Geography and ESD