



Press Office 2
Educ

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND SCIENCE
ELIZABETH HOUSE, YORK ROAD, LONDON SE1 7PH
TELEPHONE 01-928 9222
FROM THE SECRETARY OF STATE

*Prime Minister
Lady Young
mentioned this HMI
report on ILEA, which
is released to the
press today. Para 3
of this letter summarises
it. You might also
glance at the
summary chapter, 21.*

M A Pattison Esq
Private Secretary
10 Downing Street
LONDON SW1

Dear Mike

MS

HMI REPORT ON ILEA

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MR 12/11

1. I attach a copy, for the Prime Minister's information, of HM Inspectorate's Report on the Inner London Education Authority. Reports by the Inspectorate are made to the Secretary of State, and are usually sent in confidence to the local education authority concerned. On this occasion, as Lady Young mentioned to the Prime Minister when they discussed ILEA recently, the Report is being made public - tomorrow morning - at the request of the Authority.
2. The Report is based on records of HMI inspections of educational establishments in ILEA over the past five years. Its findings should not, therefore, be considered in isolation, but should be seen in the context of what is achieved or achievable by local education authorities with comparable circumstances and problems. Although the present document is necessarily confined to provision in ILEA, HMI have, in separately conveying their findings to the Ministerial Committee on the Future of ILEA, also given the Committee a comparative assessment of ILEA alongside other major urban authorities, and this will form an annex to the Committee's report.
3. The key parts of the report are sections 2 (on the community within which ILEA operates), 4 (an assessment of ILEA's response to this), and 21 (a summary of HMI's conclusions on the quality and effectiveness of provision). Briefly summarised, the conclusions are that nursery education in ILEA is generally of a satisfactory standard and is improving. Primary education, although patchy, is now broadly satisfactory, and the great improvement seen in the last five years is continuing, particularly in the basic skills and their application to other parts of the curriculum. Overall, however, the secondary school sector needs considerable improvement. While some schools are good by any standard and others are actively seeking to improve, too many expect too little of their pupils at all ability levels and, despite the Authority's encouragement, are reluctant to analyse their performance critically. For special education there is a wide range of provision, much of it satisfactory, but with cause for serious concern about standards in some schools (for example, for the maladjusted). Further and higher education is well-provided and generally satisfactory, particularly at the art colleges and in work for lower-ability students. Initial

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teacher training is mostly sound, and in some subject areas of very good quality; in-service training is generously provided and of generally good quality. Similar findings apply to adult education and youth work, some aspects of which have achieved national reputation.

4. The picture which emerges is of a committed and generous authority with considerable analytical powers to identify problems. But it does not always adequately evaluate new approaches, avoid unnecessary duplication, or ensure that schools derive the greatest benefit from the resources available. Yet there is enough good practice in all sectors to justify confidence that further improvement can be achieved, through the development of in-service training and the raising of teachers' awareness and expectations.

Yours ever

Mary Bowden

MRS M E BOWDEN
Private Secretary