

Details from The White Paper

Old Ford Primary School in Tower Hamlets focused on teaching and transformed standards in every classroom.

The school had suffered from ten years of poor results. A large school by primary standards, the proportion of pupils on free school meals is very high, with a majority speaking English as an additional language. In 2001, Ofsted judged the school to have serious weaknesses.

New headteacher Amanda Philips took a rigorous approach. In her first week Amanda, with two senior local authority officers, undertook a full review of the quality of teaching and gave direct and detailed feedback to each teacher, along with strategies to improve. A rubric for teaching good lessons was introduced, and dates were set to reassess the quality of their teaching.

Each teacher received tailored support on what needed to improve, including one-to-one mentoring, modelled support and opportunities for teachers to observe those performing better. Formal observations were used and day-today drop-ins became part of accepted practice.

Today, Ofsted reports are glowing. By the end of key stage two, pupils in the school are working above national expectations. The school has won numerous awards and has been designated a National Support School and National Teaching School in recognition of the role it plays in helping other schools to improve.