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30 June 2015

Colin Tapscott  
Headteacher  
Gusford Community Primary School  
Sheldrake Drive  
Ipswich  
IP2 9LQ

Dear Mr Tapscott

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Gusford Community Primary School**

Following my visit to your academy on 29 June 2015, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection findings. Thank you for the help you gave me and for the time you made available to discuss the actions you are taking to improve the academy since the most recent section 5 inspection.

The visit was the first monitoring inspection since the academy was judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection in March 2015. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Senior leaders and governors are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection. The academy should take further action to:

- Ensure that all groups of pupils are adequately challenged, particularly in writing and mathematics, with high expectations expressed by teachers.
- Rapidly develop teachers' subject knowledge to enable them to recognise, and then teach lessons that promote good progress.
- Undertake the scheduled pupil premium review and use the findings to facilitate rapid improvements to improve the outcomes for disadvantaged pupils.

### **Evidence**

During the inspection, meetings were held with you, other senior leaders, the governing body and a representative from the sponsoring trust. We discussed the

actions taken since the last inspection and you, or a member of the senior leadership team, accompanied me on an extended tour of the school. We observed learning in each class, looked at work books and spoke to pupils. I visited the Nursery provision and the behaviour support classroom. I met with phase leaders and the English team. We reviewed the provisional data for summer 2015.

## **Context**

An assistant headteacher is currently on maternity leave. She has not been replaced and her role has been distributed amongst other members of the senior leadership team. In response to behaviour concerns, a behaviour support teacher started in April 2015, running the 'passport' class. The Key Stage 2 special needs leader is absent and the role is shared amongst other staff members.

## **Main findings**

You and the senior leadership team have a clear understanding of the actions required to address the areas for improvement. You have created plans that are strategic, measure impact and establish long-term school improvement. You are not just tackling the effect, but the cause of underachievement.

Pupils are starting to develop a more positive attitude to their learning. Throughout the tour, every child was purposefully engaged and there were no instances of disruption or pupils who appeared distracted. Skills for learning are being explicitly taught in several classes and pupils are benefiting from this. The four school core values also support improved learning skills and these are widely evident throughout the school.

Standards and progress have improved and, in some cases, are broadly in-line with, or exceed, national expectations. You are aware of areas that require particular attention and are successfully raising aspiration for pupils' achievement. The improved standards can be partially attributed to marking and feedback in pupils' books, which is uniformly used in all classes. Pupils are beginning to benefit from this guidance by using teachers' responses to improve their learning and correct any misunderstandings.

You have developed professional development programmes to support classroom practice for both teachers and teaching assistants. There is evidence that teaching assistants are used well in class and directly support individual pupils or support small groups.

Early years achievements have improved since the inspection. Here the children learn in a nurturing, ordered environment. Activities are linked to topics, and staff are effective in providing stimulating adult-led activities, although some child-initiated activities are less interesting because they are not well prepared. You

recognise that the developing strengths in Reception are not mirrored in Nursery, where provision is not strong.

Ofsted may carry out further monitoring inspections and, where necessary, provide further support and challenge to the academy until its next section 5 inspection.

### **External support**

The Active Learning Trust provides support to senior and middle leaders and teaching staff. This support is strategically planned to enable the school to become a good school within the time period required. A representative from The Active Learning Trust being on the governing body has strengthened governance. The trust's hub leader for Ipswich is allocated to the school. He has a clear and accurate understanding of the strengths and areas for development and will continue to provide support. The school takes part in several learning networks, both inside and outside the trust and they are used to facilitate professional development for all staff.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Director of Children's Services for Suffolk local authority and the chief executive of The Active Learning Trust.

Yours sincerely

Deborah Pargeter  
**Associate Inspector**