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25 June 2015

Mr Matthew Jordan  
Headteacher  
Gunton Community Primary School  
Gainsborough Drive  
Lowestoft  
NR32 4LX

Dear Mr Jordan

**Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Gunton Community Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 24 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 school since the most recent section 5 inspection.

The visit was the first monitoring inspection since the school 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 not taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection

Plans are not sharply focused on rapidly bringing about improvement. The school should take immediate action to:

- define more precisely how the actions for improving leadership will address the specific weaknesses identified in the last section 5 inspection report
- provide clear guidance to all school leaders on their role in monitoring, evaluating and improving their areas of responsibility
- ensure that all areas of the new national curriculum are taught effectively.

## **Evidence**

During the inspection, I held meetings with you, the deputy headteacher, the assistant headteacher, five members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection. I looked at work in pupils' books and visited classrooms to observe teaching. I met with the school council and evaluated the school's action plan, along with associated documentation.

## **Context**

Since the previous inspection two teachers have left the school and an assistant headteacher has been appointed.

## **Main findings**

Insufficient progress has been made in addressing the weaknesses that were identified at the previous inspection. For example, senior leaders are still not holding teachers to account for the quality of their work. Although action is being taken to ensure that there is no inadequate teaching, the checks that are made on the quality of teaching and learning across the school lack rigour and are not helping to raise standards. Effective action has not been taken to improve the role of middle leaders. Consequently, significant weaknesses remain in the quality of leadership at many levels. This is because you have not provided sufficient clarity about middle leaders' roles and responsibilities and, as a result, middle leaders are not being given sufficient guidance and support. Although high quality work was seen in some year groups, this was not the case across the school and in subjects such as science and history the work seen was of a very poor standard in many classes.

Some progress has been made in addressing the weaknesses that were identified in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Staff have benefited from visiting an outstanding nursery class and are developing a clearer understanding of what constitutes effective teaching and learning in the early years. As a result, the nursery classroom is now bright and well organised and adults plan a range of interesting activities for the children. Parents are also now playing a more active role in children's learning and are encouraged to look at and contribute to children's 'learning journeys' each week.

Governors continue to play an active role in school life and are keen to see rapid improvements. However, currently senior leaders are not providing sufficient information for governors to carry out their role effectively. For example, insufficient information regarding the quality of teaching and learning across the curriculum is provided. This means that they are not able to hold senior leaders to account as well as they should.

I will return to the school in the Autumn term 2015 to review progress.

## **External support**

The local authority was providing 'light touch' support to the school prior to the inspection in March 2015, and it has not done enough to support and challenge school leaders since the school was judged to require improvement. The local authority recently appointed an adviser to work with the school but it is too early to judge the impact of this work. Some support has been provided for the early years and this is beginning to have a positive impact on the quality of provision.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for Suffolk.

Yours sincerely

Paul Tomkow  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**