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17 July 2015

Hilary Day  
Headteacher  
Elm Tree Community Primary School  
Ranworth Avenue  
Lowestoft  
NR33 9HN

Dear Mrs Day

### **Special measures monitoring inspection of Elm Tree Community Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 16 July 2015, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings. Thank you for the help you gave during the inspection and for the time you made available to discuss the actions which have been taken since the school's recent section 5 inspection.

The inspection was the first monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection which took place in March 2015.

### **Evidence**

During this inspection, meetings were held with you and members of your senior leadership team, the Chair of the Interim Executive Board and a representative of the local authority. I met with a small group of pupils and you took me on a tour of the school. I checked the school's single central register and looked at a number of school documents. The local authority's statement of action and the school's action plans were evaluated.

### **Context**

No permanent members of staff have left or joined the school since the last inspection. However, there have been a significant number of resignations and approximately half of the teaching staff will leave at the end of this academic year.

An existing member of staff has been promoted to the post of inclusion leader. The governing body has now been replaced by an interim executive board.

### **The quality of leadership and management at the school**

The local authority had issued the school with a warning notice prior to the last inspection. Although you were disappointed, you were not surprised by the special measures judgement. You have accepted the report's findings and have started to take action to address its recommendations.

You very quickly arranged for reviews to be carried out of both governance and pupil premium spending. Although the governing body has now been 'stood down', the findings of the review of governance will be very useful to the incoming interim executive board. The timely review of the school's use of the pupil premium means that a specific action plan is already in place to improve outcomes for disadvantaged pupils.

The school's action plan was rewritten in response to the special measures judgement. You were supported in writing the plan by an external adviser, and the plan has been through a number of iterations. The plan is clearly a working document; it has been evaluated and updated to reflect the actions you have already taken.

The plan does not show clearly enough how the school will address the points identified in the last inspection, when they will be addressed and how success will be measured and evaluated. It is not evident from this plan that the school will be able to improve sufficiently to no longer require special measures within the prescribed timescale. It is not clear how the school will tackle teaching that does not improve quickly enough.

The local authority's statement of action includes suitable milestones, appropriate actions and clear monitoring activity. The plan includes a range of appropriate support and the role of the local authority is clear.

Following the monitoring inspection, the following judgements were made:

The local authority's statement of action is fit for purpose.

The school's action plan is not fit for purpose.

The school may not appoint newly qualified teachers before the next monitoring inspection.

I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State, the Chair of the Interim Executive Board and the Director of Children's Services for Suffolk County Council. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Wendy Varney  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

cc. Maureen Eade, Chair of the Interim Executive Board for Elm Tree Community  
Primary School  
cc. Sue Cook Director of Children's Services for Suffolk