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Ms Lucy Bates  
Headteacher  
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NR29 3LA

Dear Lucy Bates

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Ormesby Village Junior School**

Following my visit to your school on 10 March 2017, 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 September 2016. 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 in order to become a good school.

### **Evidence**

During the inspection, meetings were held with you, and the chair and vice-chair of the governing body, to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection. I had a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority. I also held a brief conversation with a national leader in education who was making her first visit to the school, to gain her initial views. The school improvement plan was evaluated. You shared with me a range of documents to show how you are monitoring improvements to pupils' progress and attainment. An opportunity to walk the school with you enabled me to see pupils at work in lessons.

## **Context**

Since the last inspection, no changes to staffing have helped to stabilise the school. Pupil numbers have remained broadly the same. You continue to share your time between the village's infant and junior schools. The infant school was inspected in February 2017. Your leadership and that of your governors were recognised as key reasons why the school was judged to be good. You continue to engage with Norfolk's 'better to best' programme to secure further improvements to the junior school.

## **Main findings**

You and your governors have a realistic view of the school's performance last year, and its recent improvement. You provide strong leadership. This, and the knowledge and experience provided by your governors, is enabling the school to strengthen provision, and pursue further improvement. You share the views of your governors that there are no barriers in the way preventing the school from becoming good by the time of its next inspection.

Governors told me that the last inspection was 'a wake-up call'. Since then, a lot of work has been done by you and your staff to improve the school. Increased monitoring of lessons and scrutiny of pupils' work is holding staff more accountable for the progress made by pupils in their classes. Other leaders have been trained to increase their understanding of what to look for when monitoring teaching and learning. Governors have increased their scrutiny of the school's work. Leaders of core subjects have been invited to meet with governors to share with them their plans for improvement.

You feel that teachers now show a better understanding of their roles in raising achievement. They acknowledge that it is up to them to build on what pupils have already achieved in key stage 1, and ensure that they make sustained progress throughout key stage 2. Additional staff training in teaching mathematics and regular sharing of the best use of resources to aid learning are leading to greater consistency in teaching. Staff have also had opportunities to visit local schools to observe and learn from good practice.

Your analysis of pupil outcomes in 2016 is honest and accurate. You recognise that significant improvements are needed to pupils' reading, writing and mathematics this year. Your latest assessment data shows that based on assessments carried out at the end of last term, most pupils are making better progress than in the past. The large majority of Year 6 pupils are meeting or exceeding expectations in reading. Progress is less pronounced in writing and mathematics, but is rising. Assessments also show that fewer boys, compared with girls, exceed expectations in reading, writing and mathematics.

Observations of pupils at work in lessons confirmed that currently pupils are making improved progress. Expectations of the quality and quantity of work in their books are higher. Pupils were keen to show their work and talk about what they were doing. Their books in English and humanities, and topic-based learning, show a good range of written work, in a range of different styles. Work is presented neatly, and marked in line with the school's own policy.

Older pupils in the three mixed-age classes are now grouped according to their ability in mathematics to ensure that middle-ability pupils and the most able are sufficiently challenged. You feel that investing in training to promote 'cooperative learning' is paying off. Pupils are becoming much more effective at working together and supporting each other.

### **External support**

The local authority has been slow to respond to your concerns raised with them about the school's current performance. However, since the start of this year a local authority improvement partner has been allocated to the school to support you and your staff. The local authority plans to implement an improvement board, so it can monitor improvements on a monthly basis.

You have embraced the support provided by the 'better to best' programme. The training opportunities and the visits to schools in London for staff to observe good practice brokered for you are highly valued. Further support from a national leader in education is helping you to monitor and evaluate the school's effectiveness.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Norfolk. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

John Mitcheson  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**