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22 June 2021

James Ayton  
Executive Headteacher  
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Cambridgeshire  
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Dear Mr Ayton

### **Special measures monitoring inspection of Ramnoth Junior School**

Following my visit with Richard Kueh and Damian Loneragan, Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI), to your school on 8 and 9 June 2021, 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 that have been taken since the school's previous monitoring inspection.

The inspection was the second monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection that took place in March 2019. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The monitoring inspection report is attached.

This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic began. We discussed the impact of the pandemic with you and have taken that into account in our evaluation.

Having considered the evidence, I am of the opinion that at this time:

**Leaders and managers are taking effective action towards the removal of special measures.**

**The trust's statement of action is fit for purpose.**

**The school's action plan is fit for purpose.**

**Having considered the evidence, I am of the opinion that the school may appoint newly qualified teachers.**

I am copying this letter to the chair of the board of trustees, and the chief executive officer of the Elliot Foundation multi-academy trust, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Cambridgeshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted reports website.

Yours sincerely

Stefanie Lipinski-Barltrop  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## **Report on the second monitoring inspection on 8 and 9 June 2021**

### **Context**

This was the second monitoring inspection since the school's section 5 inspection in March 2019. The first monitoring inspection took place in March 2020. Since then, leadership capacity has been strengthened. An executive principal was appointed to lead Nene and Ramnoth schools in September 2020. The head of schools (with responsibility for Nene and Ramnoth schools) was appointed in September 2019. Since the previous monitoring inspection, no teachers have left the school and two newly qualified teachers have joined. The trust continues to take responsibility for governance through its operations group. The number on roll has increased from 266 to 282 pupils.

In November 2020, the school received a remote monitoring visit led by two HMI. This focused on how leaders were managing the return to full education for pupils, following the COVID-19 pandemic. In March 2021, it received an additional remote monitoring inspection. Inspectors judged that leaders and those responsible for governance were taking effective action to provide education in the current circumstances.

### **The progress made towards the removal of special measures**

The executive principal, the head of schools and members of The Elliot Foundation Academy Trust (the trust) have continued to make improvements since the previous monitoring inspection. The school is moving in the right direction. Leaders have a strong vision for improvement and clear plans are in place to address areas of weakness. Leaders and staff are united in their determination to make the school better for its pupils. They work as a cohesive team, and parents recognise the improvements that are being made. Leaders have high expectations, but manage staff's workload well. Morale is high as a result. Focused training and guidance are helping staff to improve their practice.

Leaders' consistent and effective approach to managing pupils' behaviour is demonstrating great success. Staff and pupils understand the school's 'Rainbow chart' approach to behaviour management. Low-level disruption in lessons is rare. Incidents of poor behaviour in the classroom and on the playground are sporadic. Leaders deal with misbehaviour swiftly. No poor behaviour was observed during the inspection.

Reading is well taught. It has a high profile and is at the heart of the school's curriculum. The head of schools ensures that it is given appropriate time and emphasis. Reading sessions develop fluency and comprehension. Teachers match books to pupils' needs. Pupils understand well what they read. The well-stocked library has a rich range of fiction and non-fiction books for pupils to read. Staff

check reading diaries to make sure that pupils read often. Vibrant wall displays encourage pupils to read. Pupils take their responsibility as reading ambassadors seriously. The outdoor area consists of a reading and gardening area. This area has been carefully thought through to encourage pupils to read with their friends.

Leaders have thought carefully about how to improve the quality of education for their pupils. This has led to leaders redesigning the curriculum. Teachers' subject knowledge in English and mathematics is much improved. Leaders' work to bring about improvements in the mathematics curriculum is proving successful. Planning ensures that learning is sequenced in the right order so that pupils build upon their knowledge. Teachers' ongoing assessment identifies what individual pupils do and do not understand and remember. Teachers use this knowledge to plan the next steps in pupils' learning.

At the previous monitoring inspection, the foundation curriculum and its leadership were not sufficiently developed. These aspects of the school's work continue to improve. Leaders have provided training to support teachers in the delivery of the foundation subjects. The sequences of learning in the foundation subjects now match the ambition of the curriculum well for most subjects. Curriculum plans in the foundation subjects have been introduced recently. It is too early for their impact upon pupils' knowledge and understanding to be fully evident. In addition, teachers' assessment of pupils' work in these subjects is not precise enough. Teachers do not always spot the gaps in pupils' knowledge and go over things again if pupils have not remembered them. As a result, pupils do not achieve as well as they should.

Leaders do not make sure that all pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) achieve as well as possible. Leaders understand these pupils' needs and provide teachers with information about how to meet them. Where teachers make the necessary adaptations to learning, pupils with SEND make gains in their knowledge and understanding. However, some teachers do not make use of this guidance, which means that some pupils with SEND do not receive the support that they need. As a result, these pupils do not learn the intended curriculum as securely as they should.

At the time of the previous inspection, the attendance of a small number of disadvantaged pupils was too low. This remains the case. Some pupils with SEND and some disadvantaged pupils do not attend school regularly enough. This means that these pupils are missing learning and falling behind.

### **Additional support**

The trust has an in-depth understanding of what is working well and what still needs to improve. The operations group provides leaders with strong guidance and support. The trust's investment of ample time and resources, including through external appointments and staff training, is developing leadership capacity. Trust

leaders' checks and reports on the impact of leaders' actions help to make clear what has been achieved and identify priorities for further improvement.

The action plan continues to be reviewed and monitored by the operations group. This ensures that actions taken are having the intended impact. Local governance is planned to resume later this academic year, with the formation of a community council.

## **Evidence**

Inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with the executive principal, the head of schools, the designated leader of safeguarding, teachers, support staff and several groups of pupils, including the school council. They held an online meeting with the chief executive officer of the Elliot Foundation Academy Trust, along with two members of the operations group who have responsibility for local governance. They visited lessons and listened to pupils read aloud to staff. In addition, they analysed 22 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including 11 free-text responses from parents, and 23 responses to the staff questionnaire.