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19 July 2016

Mrs R Nixon  
Headteacher  
Barnby and North Cove Community Primary School  
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Barnby  
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Suffolk  
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Dear Mrs Nixon

### **Requires improvement: monitoring visit to Barnby and North Cove Community Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 30 June 2016, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the findings of my visit. 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 February 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 last section 5 inspection, in order to become a good school.

### **Evidence**

During the visit, I met with you, the two part-time associate headteachers, the chair of the governing body and one other governor, and the lead standards and excellence officer from the local authority, to discuss the actions being taken to improve the school. I scrutinised a range of documents, looked with pupils at the work in their books, and visited lessons for all year groups.

## **Context**

Since the section 5 inspection, you have had extended leave. The governing body worked with the local authority to put in place two interim headteachers from March 2016. Following a phased return, you are now back in school, ably supported by the associate headteachers, four days a week. Leaders and governors have ensured that the school has continued to make improvements and that changes in leadership have not impacted negatively on pupils' outcomes. Currently, there is interim leadership of special educational needs and/or disabilities, and mathematics. This has stretched the capacity of current leaders but, again, has not affected pupil outcomes. Morale of staff is good. They have been working hard to do what is required of them to improve teaching, learning and pupil outcomes.

## **Main findings**

New systems for checking on teaching and pupil progress have been introduced, particularly in relation to teacher assessment and mathematics. Additional training has been provided to ensure that teachers fully understand these systems. Extensive work has clearly been done to ensure that teachers' judgements of pupils' outcomes are accurate. Leaders have undertaken moderation with other schools, and the local authority has checked teachers' assessments of children in the early years and in Years 2 and 6. These checks have shown that teachers are confident and competent in assessing pupils' work in reading, writing and mathematics. Links with other schools which have good practice, for example in the early years, have been established. Teachers and pupils have undoubtedly benefited from these links, as was clearly evident during my visit today.

Interim leaders implemented a programme of support for the governing body prior to the governance review, which has now taken place. This ensured that governors know their responsibilities and carry out focused monitoring visits to evidence improvements made in, for example, reading. Governors are beginning to ask leaders pertinent questions. However, the school's plans for improvement, while now sharper than they were, still do not relate closely enough to pupil outcomes. You acknowledge that by providing clearer plans, governors will be better able to see the effectiveness of the actions taken by leaders. Governors now receive comprehensive information about the current performance of all pupils. This includes pupils who are more able, those who are disadvantaged and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Governors are, therefore, in a better position to challenge leaders, and to see for themselves, during their focused visits, the impact of improved teaching and learning on pupil achievement.

Teachers are using assessment information well and planning effectively to meet the needs of pupils in mixed-age classes. We saw adults skilfully asking pertinent questions to encourage pupils to think carefully about what they are learning. As a result, pupils, from the very youngest children to the oldest, were able to say what they were learning and how they could make their work even better. They were also

aware of the targets that they had to work on to do so. The quality of writing in the Reception class is impressive. Adults' gentle guidance and high-quality questioning ensure that children are keen to write for a variety of purposes. Pupils throughout the school are proud to show their work, which is more often than not of very good quality.

During my visit, I looked at pupils' work in their books, talked to pupils about their work and scrutinised leaders' monitoring of pupil outcomes. The school's assessment information of pupils currently in the school shows that achievement of all groups of pupils is increasing. Early indications are that the proportion of children who will achieve a good level of development at the end of the Reception Year in 2016 will be above the current national average. This picture is mirrored in Year 1 and Year 2. Outcomes for pupils at the end of Year 6 are currently substantially increased on 2015 results. More pupils than previously are attaining age-related expectations in reading, writing and mathematics, and an increasing proportion are making at least expected progress. A growing number of pupils are also making more than expected progress.

Support provided by the local authority since the last inspection has been frequent and effective in supporting leaders to raise pupils' standards and improve teaching. Focused work with senior teachers has increased the school's capacity to better understand the part they play in whole-school monitoring and evaluation of standards. However, it is noted that this capacity may be diminished in September due to a, thus far, unfilled vacancy. Governors and leaders are working closely with the local authority to fill this role.

Ofsted will continue monitoring the school until its next section 5 inspection. I will ensure that you are informed of the date for the next 'Getting to Good' seminar that Ofsted organises for headteachers and chairs of governors.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body and the director of children's and young people's services for Suffolk.

Yours sincerely,

Ruth Brock  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**